

German Air Force receives first upgraded A400M aircraft from Airbus

Airforce-technology



The German Air Force has taken delivery of the first upgraded A400M transport aircraft from Airbus Defence and Space.

The new aircraft is the sixth of its type to serve the air force and the first with new capabilities, making it suitable for tactical operations and allowing it to fly in areas subject to military threats.

It received a series of upgrades including improvements to self-defence systems, air-drop cargo loads, and paratrooping.

According to the company, the aircraft is fitted with a defensive aids sub-system (DASS) incorporating a missile warning system, radar warning receiver, and an expendables dispensing system to eject flares and radar-confusing chaff.

Airbus Defence and Space A400M programme manager Kurt Rossner said: "The A400M programme has made enormous progress this year in implementing these critical capabilities on the aircraft.

"In addition to having twice the payload-range of the legacy transports like the C-160 and C-130 that it is replacing, it can now also operate from any runway that those older aircraft could use."

The aircraft can now operate on unprepared runways, fly as low as 150ft above the ground, refuel other aircraft as a tanker, and safely take-off and land in extremely high temperatures. It is also capable of carrying military and humanitarian loads of up to eight tonnes each.

The A400M is certified to operate from grass runways and to operate in temperatures up to 55°C at sea level, as well as to receive fuel in-flight from a tanker, and as a tactical tanker itself to refuel fighters and other large aircraft by day.

Image: A400M of the German Air Force. Photo: courtesy of Anna Zvereva.