

New Era in Arrow Weapon System: Operational Arrow-3 Interceptors Transferred to Israeli Air Force Aerial Defense Array

Defense-aerospace



Israel has today declared Initial Operational Capability for its Arrow-3 missile interceptors, which allow longer range, higher altitude (exo-atmospheric) and more precise engagement of incoming ballistic missiles. (IAI photo)

The Arrow Weapon System (AWS), the upper-most tier in the Israeli strategic capability, enters into a new era this morning in its defense from ballistic missiles threats. Before today, the AWS consisted of Arrow-2 interceptors, and has now added for the first time the Arrow-3 operational interceptor (made by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)/MLM).

The Arrow-3 interceptor is a world-class missile that, together with the Arrow-2, expands the defense envelope provided to the State of Israel. The Arrow-3 interceptor capabilities enable longer range, higher altitude (exo-atmospheric) and more precise ballistic missile engagements. The combined interception capabilities of the Arrow-2 and Arrow-3 will significantly reduce the possibilities of ballistic missiles impacting the State of Israel.

This morning in a formal ceremony, the Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO), a division of the Israeli Ministry of Defense, transferred the operational Arrow-3 interceptors to the Israeli Air Force (IAF) Aerial Defense Array. The Arrow-3 development program, one of the joint programs between Israel and the United States, was exceptionally co-managed by the U.S. Missile Defense Agency and IMDO.

The U.S. contribution to the program is a key reason Israel has achieved this remarkable accomplishment. Additionally, Boeing (U.S.), the major subcontractor to IAI/ MLM, played a prominent role in the development and production of the components for the innovative Arrow-3 interceptor.

During the integration process of the new interceptor, the weapons system components were fully upgraded. These substantial improvements are the results of the finest minds in the defense industry, who diligently worked day and night to achieve this milestone. The Battle Management Center (made by Elbit) has new significant capabilities as well as the radar detection array (made by IAI/ ELTA), which improved its ability to take on the increasingly growing threat.

As the threats continue to grow and new emerging threats surface, IMOD, IMDO and the U.S. are dedicated to the continued development and enhancement of the Israeli Ballistic Missile Defense elements and systems to provide the appropriate defense solutions. Undeniably, the Arrow Weapon System's unique and expanding capabilities place Israel among the most advanced countries in the World in the ability to defense against ballistic missile threats.

Boaz Levi, IAI's Vice President and General Manager of the Systems, Missiles & Space Group: "Arrow-3 is the result of many years of development efforts, based on a solution designed by IAI which have today come to fruition. This is a milestone for the Israel's Defence Establishment, and for Israel's defense industries.

The Israel Air Force now has an additional level of air defense allowing missile interception at very high altitudes in space, and together with the Arrow-2 system, provides the best possible solution for defense against ballistic missiles.

Many industries participated in the system development, with responsibility for major building blocks in the program, among them ELTA an IAI subsidiary, Rafael Advanced Systems, Israel Military Industries and Elisra. On a personal note, Levi added that "handing over the system today to the Air Force, for me, closes a circle, and fulfills a dream, as someone who both accompanied and led the development and design of the system for many years."