



ITPS CANADA ORDERS LEONARDO M-346 T BLOCK 20 ADVANCED JET TRAINERS TO MEET EVOLVING TACTICAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The aircraft will support expansion of NATO and Allied tactical fighter pilot training at the International Tactical Training Centre in North Bay, Ontario

The contract includes six M-346 T Block 20 aircraft – with options for an additional six units - which are expected to enter service starting in 2029

Ottawa, 26 May 2026 - With a rapidly growing number of air forces dealing with the need to deliver modern training to the next generation of fighter pilots to cope with evolving operational requirements, and as combat air technology becomes more and more sophisticated, the ITPS Canada is responding with the introduction of Leonardo's advanced capabilities and integrated training solutions for the task into its aircraft fleet.

ITPS Executive Chairman Giorgio Clementi signed a contract for six M-346 T Block 20 lead-in jet trainers – with options for an additional six aircraft - at a signing ceremony at Venegono in Italy which also included a final evaluation flight of the aircraft. Clementi stated that "The M346 continues Italy's illustrious track record of producing world leading jet trainer aircraft. The new trainers are expected to enter service at the company's International Tactical Training Centre base in North Bay (Ontario) starting in 2029, providing a major contribution to the first capability enhancement project of the ITTC fleet, currently active in providing training to several international customers and to meet advanced tactical training service demand from in excess of ten different air forces globally.

With more than 25 years of experience delivering advanced and specialist flight test and military tactical training in Canada to over 29 air arms to date, ITPS has been active in providing innovative solutions to satisfy the evolving operational requirements of modern air forces.

In October 2025, ITPS CEO Dave Lohse conducted an airborne evaluation of the Leonardo M-346 advanced jet trainer in the airspace north of Ottawa International Airport.

Following the evaluation flight, Lohse said: "The M-346 is an exceptionally capable advanced jet trainer that aligns closely with the operational requirements of modern fighter pilot training. The aircraft's performance, digital flight control system, and advanced training architecture make it an ideal platform to support the next phase of growth for the International Tactical Training Centre.

As allied air forces look to expand training capacity and interoperability, the M-346 will help enable ITTC to welcome pilots from Canada and partner nations to train together in a modern and operationally focused environment."

Stefano Bortoli, Leonardo Aeronautics Division's Managing Director, said: "The M-346 has made remarkable progress in recent years, from both a system evolution and continued market success perspective, becoming the backbone of one-of-a-kind integrated training capabilities hosting a rapidly growing number of Air Forces on a global scale. The decision of ITPS to select and procure the M-346 to deliver world class lead-in fighter training for the next generation of pilots and allow them to face rapidly changing and increasingly challenging operational scenarios, provides further

evidence of the undisputable high performance of the system. We're committed to working with ITPS to make sure they can maximize the benefits of this latest technology and capability in order to maintain and even expand the quality level of the service their customers deserve."

The M-346 is the core element of a cutting-edge and continuously evolving advanced flight-training system that has already demonstrated its effectiveness: a success story that has logged over 160,000 hours in flight with more than 160 aircraft sold to date, enabling several air forces in Europe and worldwide to train pilots for flying high-performance fighters such as, among others, the Eurofighter Typhoon, F-35 and next-generation 'combat air systems'.

Twenty countries – including Canada - already train their pilots on the M-346 or have selected the aircraft, in the multirole light fighter version. Thanks to its high-performance, capabilities and manoeuvrability, the M-346 has also been selected by the Italian Air Force as the future aircraft for the "Frecce Tricolori", Italy's national aerobatic team.

[M-346 photo](#)

About Leonardo:

Leonardo is an international industrial group that develops multi-domain technological capabilities for global security. A key player in the major strategic programmes in Aerospace, Defence and Security, it employs over 62,000 people worldwide and operates in the Electronics, Helicopters, Aircraft, Cyber & Security and Space sectors. The company has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the United States, and is active in 150 countries also through subsidiaries, joint ventures and investees. Leonardo is a technological and industrial partner to Governments, Defence Administrations, Institutions and businesses. Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2025 Leonardo recorded new orders of €23.8 billion, an order backlog of €46.6 billion and consolidated revenues of €19.5 billion. Included in the MIB ESG Index, the company has also been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) since 2010.

About ITPS Canada:

ITPS Canada is a Canadian corporation providing advanced military tactical training and flight test training as well as Engineering, Maintenance Repair and Overhaul services. Consisting of three divisions, including the International Test Pilots School, the biggest independent provider of Experimental Flight Test training in the world, the International Tactical Training Center, providing advanced and lead-in fighter training and ITPS Engineering, providing aircraft sustainment maintenance, repair and overhaul capabilities to the ITPS fleet and customers worldwide. Employing over 200 staff at facilities in London, Ontario and North Bay.

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