

## **Leonardo and the Italian Air Force launch “International Flight Training School” initiative: expertise and advanced technology serving military pilot trainees**

- The collaboration between Leonardo and the Italian Air Force would be further extended to training of pilots in the fixed-wing, rotary-wing and unmanned domains
- Leonardo is the leading international training solutions provider, with products covering the entire training syllabus from basic, with the new M-345, to advanced and lead-in fighter training with the M-346

**Rome, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018** – Leonardo’s CEO, Alessandro Profumo, and the Italian Air Force Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Enzo Vecciarelli, today signed a collaboration agreement that will strengthen the training services already offered by the Air Force’s 61st Wing and will establish an all new “International Flight Training School” (IFTS) to support military pilot training. The agreement was signed at an official ceremony held today at the Farnborough International Air Show in London, UK.

The IFTS will ensure the further growth and internationalization of the Italian Air Force’s training school while at the same time increasing its capabilities and the range of pilot training solutions offered to the customers. The IFTS will leverage the existing training assets and expertise in advanced military pilot training of the Italian Air Force in addition to Leonardo supplying four additional M-346 aircraft, new systems and services starting from 2019.

Based on the current plan, the IFTS will be able to deliver courses for Italian Air Force and international Air Force crews, fulfilling the training demands for military pilots worldwide. Starting from 2021, the Italian Air Force’s entire advanced and pre-operational training syllabus will be moved to a new, dedicated facility.

In order to maximize the success of this initiative, Leonardo has been in discussions with two major international players and leading companies in the training sector, Babcock International Group Plc and CAE, with the aim to reinforce IFTS capabilities.

Alessandro Profumo, Leonardo’s CEO, said: “as recently announced in our industrial plan, and thanks to the agreement with the Italian Air Force, we’re officially entering the fighter pilot training service business. The International Flight Training School is based on a solid collaboration programme between Leonardo and the Italian Air Force and the resulting operational synergies will allow us to seize new market opportunities and develop international collaborations. We plan to extend this business model to cover training across fixed-wing, rotary-wing and remotely-piloted platforms.”

Italian Air Force Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Enzo Vecciarelli, said: “this initiative is the result of our desire to join two national champions to generate synergies for the benefit of the Nation. The Italian Air Force will strengthen its commitment in the advanced training field, developing a new cooperation model with Leonardo. The ongoing training programmes will benefit from new resources, including new trainers provided by Leonardo at no additional cost to the Air Force. This will maximize the quality of our military training pilots, who will fly 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighters. It will also meet the growing demand for training services from international partners”.

The Italian Air Force’s advanced training syllabus, based around Leonardo’s innovative integrated training system, has already been demonstrated to be modular and versatile among pilots of several nations and meeting the needs of different air forces. The syllabus meets the requirements of Air Forces whose trainees have undertaken training modules for fourth and fifth generation fighters with the 61° Stormo at Galatina Air Base (Lecce).



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Leonardo's integrated training system is based on the M-346 jet, designated the T-346A by the Italian Air Force. It is the backbone of the 61° Wing, which trains pilots and instructors from Italy and nations such as the USA, Spain, France, Austria, the Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Argentina, Greece and Kuwait. The M-346 has already been purchased by Italy, Israel, Singapore and Poland for a combined order book of 72 units.

Operational training, carried out by the Italian Air Force with the T-346A, prepares pilots to transition to the latest-generation combat aircraft including the Eurofighter and the F-35. The Galatina Air Force Base is also equipped with live-virtual-constructive (LVC) training technologies, including advanced CAE-built M-346 full-mission simulators. Leonardo's LVC enables trainees on the ground to interact with pilots in the air, flying real aircraft, during the same training missions.

## Notes to editors

**Leonardo** has designed, manufactured and supported over 2000 trainers, sold to more than 40 nations. Today, the Company is the world leader in pilot training, thanks to a product range that covers the entire training syllabus: from basic, with the new M-345, to advanced and lead-in fighter training, with the M-346. The Company's range of solutions also includes a Ground Based Training System (GBTS), fully integrated with the aircraft and able to provide high quality training while improving efficiency. These platforms and systems allow Leonardo to offer a turnkey training solution for customers worldwide, delivering the highest quality standards at all stages of training.

Through the flight training school at 61<sup>st</sup> Wing Galatina Air Base **the Italian Air Force** delivers training services for its own pilots. Courses include Phase II (flight line selection), "fighter track" Phase III (fighter pilot licence) and Phase IV (Lead In-to Fighter Training). The T-346A is the cornerstone of operational training allowing the introduction of the ITS (Integrated Training System) and proves a terrific change in military pilot training for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighters. The entire training system, used the Phase IV, allows new military pilots to be trained in complex scenarios thanks to its technological capabilities and flying an aircraft with outstanding avionics and aerodynamical performance. Thanks to the LVC (Live, Virtual and Constructive Simulation) technology featured by the advanced simulation system of the T-346, trainees can interact with pilots in flights during the same training mission. Using unique, world-class technology systems, established heritage and excellent standards, Galatina Air Base has become the point of reference for flight training, both at national and international level. 61<sup>st</sup> Wing hosts pilots coming from various nations: Argentina, Austria, France, Greece, Kuwait, The Netherlands, Spain and USA. The training school has also been training instructors from Spain, USA, France and Austria since September 2017.

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