
PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Air National Guard recommend fielding Leonardo's BriteCloud 218 decoy after successfully completing an extensive US Defense Department test programme

- **BriteCloud's world-first miniaturised jamming technology delivers a major upgrade in aircraft protection compared to traditional expendable countermeasures**
- **The decoy will be designated AN/ALQ-260(V)1 in U.S. Armed Forces service**

Rome, 24/11/2022 – The U.S. Air National Guard (ANG) has issued a 'fielding recommendation' for Leonardo's BriteCloud 218 expendable active decoy, tested on US F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft. This means that the service, which has conducted an extensive testing and live trials campaign with BriteCloud since 2019, is confident that the decoy meets and, in some instances, even exceeds operational requirements, delivering an increased platform protection capability to 4th generation fighter aircraft like the F-16.

The U.S. Air Force has subsequently designated BriteCloud 218 as AN/ALQ-260(V)1, identifying it as an airborne electronic warfare countermeasure. BriteCloud is unique in the combat air countermeasure market, packing latest-generation DRFM jamming technology into a compact expendable that can be launched from standard countermeasure dispensers. Unlike traditional chaff and flares, BriteCloud employs a sophisticated on-board electronic warfare capability designed to counter radar-guided threats.

Designed and manufactured by Leonardo in the UK, BriteCloud has already entered service with the UK's Royal Air Force. As a world-first technology, BriteCloud has been undergoing evaluation for potential service with U.S. Armed Forces under the Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD) Foreign Comparative Testing (FCT) programme. The fielding recommendation by the ANG is one of the final stages of the programme and gives the green light to BriteCloud 218 as proven effective and fit for operations.

The BriteCloud 218-variant rounds evaluated under the FCT are standard-sized rectangular countermeasures measuring just two by one by eight inches. This means they are compatible with common dispensers including the AN/ALE-47 and are ready to equip other 4th generation fighters such as the F-15, F/A-18, F-16 and A-10 fighters. BriteCloud 218 is also an effective protection capability for smaller uncrewed platforms, with the German Armed Forces successfully trialing the system with target drone aircraft last year.

Leonardo's original BriteCloud 55 decoy (a slightly larger variant, compatible with round 55mm flare dispensers such as those on the Eurofighter Typhoon and Saab Gripen C/D), is used by the UK's Royal Air Force. BriteCloud's unique combination of latest-generation threat protection with extremely low integration costs continues to generate significant international interest and Leonardo is in talks with a number of Air Forces about the capability.

Leonardo, a global high-technology company, is among the top world players in Aerospace, Defense and Security and Italy's main industrial company. Organized into five business divisions, Leonardo has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the USA, where it also operates through subsidiaries that include Leonardo DRS (defense electronics), and joint ventures and partnerships: ATR, MBDA, Telespazio, Thales Alenia Space and Avio. Leonardo competes in the most important international markets by leveraging its areas of technological and product leadership (Helicopters, Aircraft, Aerostructures, Electronics, Cyber & Security Solutions and Space). Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2021 Leonardo recorded consolidated revenues of €14.1 billion and invested €1.8 billion in Research and Development. The company has been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) since 2010 and has been confirmed among the global sustainability leaders in 2021. Leonardo is also included in the MIB ESG index.

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