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PRESS RELEASE

LEONARDO: ROLL-OUT OF THE FIRST M-346 PAN FOR THE ITALIAN AIR FORCE'S FRECCE TRICOLORI AEROBATIC TEAM

- **Aircraft testing, personnel training and development of the aerobatic flight programme get underway**
- **The programme is progressing on schedule: 15 new aircraft will replace the MB-339 PAN fleet, with production and deliveries scheduled between 2027 and 2028**
- **Lorenzo Mariani, CEO and General Manager of Leonardo: *"This programme represents a major success for Leonardo and for Italy, whose Frecce Tricolori are one of the most recognisable symbols of the country's technological excellence worldwide."***

Rome, 26 November 2026 – The renewal of the Italian Air Force's National Aerobatic Team (Pattuglia Acrobatica Nazionale – PAN) fleet enters a new phase with the roll-out of the first of 15 M-346 aircraft in a dedicated configuration and the start of aircraft testing. The programme's progress was outlined today during a dedicated event attended by institutional and industry representatives. Activities are proceeding on schedule and as planned, with the training of pilots and technicians, close collaboration between industry and the Italian Air Force, and the development of a renewed aerobatic flight programme that will benefit from the new aircraft's distinctive and advanced capabilities.

The M-346 PAN project (according to the designation assigned by the Italian Air Force to Leonardo's M-346 aircraft for the Frecce Tricolori) encompasses not only the aircraft themselves, but also a comprehensive technical and logistics support package, training and simulation systems for pilots and maintenance personnel, as well as infrastructure upgrades at Rivolto Air Base (Udine), home to the 313th Aerobatic Training Squadron, to accommodate the aircraft, training systems and associated equipment. The aircraft will be manufactured and delivered from Leonardo's production facility in Venegono Superiore (Varese) between 2027 and 2028.

"This programme represents a major success for Leonardo and for Italy," said **Lorenzo Mariani, CEO and General Manager of Leonardo**. *"Our close collaboration with the Italian Air Force and the Italian Ministry of Defence has enabled us to achieve this important milestone, laying the foundations for further achievements.*
This renewed confidence in a Leonardo aircraft, set once again to earn worldwide recognition for its aerobatic capabilities, building on its proven success in training and operational roles with several air forces fills us with pride.
Behind every aircraft are designers, engineers, technicians, skilled workers and entire industrial supply chains. Behind it are investments in research and development, expertise and a culture of industrial excellence and dedication that is passed down through generations and continually renewed.
The new Frecce Tricolori aircraft is not just about the future of the National Aerobatic Team. It is about the future of Italy continuing to turn excellence, expertise and industrial vision into a symbol recognised and admired around the world."

"It is a truly moving experience to see this remarkable achievement of Italian technology take to the skies. The transition from the illustrious MB-339 to the M-346 marks another step forward, embracing the

challenges of the future while remaining true to the values that have always defined the Frecce Tricolori," **said Lieutenant General Antonio Conserva, Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force.**
"The Italian flag that we will continue to fly in skies around the world symbolises our national unity, the professionalism of the men and women of the Italian Air Force and the wider defence community, as well as our country's ingenuity, creativity, and technological and industrial excellence.
Behind every new chapter in the history of the Frecce Tricolori lies an extraordinary wealth of expertise, passion and professionalism shared by Italian Air Force personnel and the skilled workforce of our national industry. This heritage is built on education, training and the ability to work together as a team.
It is this same excellence that enables the Italian Air Force, alongside the other branches of the Armed Forces, to deliver the defence and deterrence capabilities essential to safeguarding our society's most precious values: freedom and democracy."

The M-346 PAN aircraft will replace the MB-339 PAN fleet after more than 40 years of operational service, during which the Frecce Tricolori, through numerous air displays in Italy and abroad, have showcased outstanding excellence and the strength of collaboration between the Italian Air Force and industry. Featuring a special livery styled by *Pininfarina* that combines tradition and innovation, the M-346 PAN brings enhanced performance and maneuverability, greater technological sophistication and advanced standards that will make air displays even more spectacular, ushering in a new era of success for the Frecce Tricolori in Italy and internationally.

The configuration retains the outstanding performance and maneuverability of the M-346 advanced trainer and multirole light fighter, as well as its avionics and digital control systems, while incorporating equipment specifically required for aerobatic flight, including a smoke generation system, video streaming capabilities, avionics modifications concerning flight controls and cockpit, auxiliary fuel tanks and an on-board access ladder to facilitate ferry flights for operational requirements and travel to destinations on the aerobatic display calendar.

"Through its choices over the years, the Italian Air Force has supported the company's growth, helping us achieve the high level of competitiveness and capabilities that continues to distinguish us today. This latest achievement also reflects the continued evolution of the M-346 system at a significant stage in the programme's life cycle. The M-346 is now well positioned to pursue major new commercial and industrial cooperation opportunities worldwide, both as a trainer and multirole aircraft and as a platform for aerobatic teams," said **Stefano Bortoli, Managing Director of Leonardo's Aircraft Division**.

Media Gallery:
https://leonardo.canto.global/v/M346PANRollOut/

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.

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