

## Airbus and Alta Ares sign partnership to develop Europe's air defence solutions

**Berlin, 11 June 2026** - Airbus Defence and Space and Alta Ares, a European defence technology company specialised in counter-drone systems and on-board artificial intelligence, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to cooperate on the development and integration of European counter-drone solutions.

“Against the current geopolitical backdrop, defending against suicide drones is a priority that urgently needs to be tackled and integrated into our broader air defence solutions,” said François Lombard, Head of Connected Intelligence, Airbus Defence and Space. “Our counter-drone strategy aims to provide armed forces with cost-efficient and cutting-edge solutions, which can be fully integrated in the air defence ecosystem. To protect Europe and its allies, it is crucial to fill this capability challenge in today’s asymmetric conflict theatres.”

Both companies are dedicated to accelerating the deployment of resilient, next-generation air defence solutions. By combining Airbus’ system and software integration expertise with Alta Ares’ battlefield-proven AI-powered tactical air defence, the partnership will deliver next-level air superiority. Alta Ares' counter-drone systems have been operationally deployed in Ukraine since 2024.

“Modern air defence is neither a software issue nor a hardware issue. It's both, at the same time – and at scale”, said Hadrien Canter, Co-Founder and CEO of Alta Ares. “Integrating Pixel Lock and our interceptors into Fortion IBMS means operators get a single, coherent sensor to shooter chain from detection to neutralisation. That's what theatre commanders are actually asking for.”

As an integrator, Airbus Defence and Space will leverage Fortion IBMS (Integrated Battle Management Software), its combat-proven Command & Control (C2) solution, and Fortion SAMOC suite, its surface-to-air missile operation centre solution designed to counter threats from various effectors and missiles.

As a capability provider, Alta Ares deploys its integrated counter-UAS solutions and offers a new tactical air defence layer thanks to a combination of software and hardware solutions. In addition, Alta Ares –alongside Airbus – will continue the development and deployment of the Black Bird, a medium-range (30 km) interceptor engineered for high-speed targets like cruise missiles, and the X-Lock, a short-range (15 km) system designed to counter drone threats.

The integration of these solutions into Airbus’ air defence battle management suite IBMS acts as a force multiplier and contributes to developing a European ecosystem of fully integrated solutions for various air defence threats.

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