

# News story: MOD submits final Typhoon proposal to Belgium

A Typhoon F2 fighter jet pilot from 29 Squadron applies the afterburners as the aircraft takes off from RAF Coningsby. Crown copyright.

The proposal comes with the full support of the governments of the four Eurofighter nations – Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK – as partners in Europe's largest collaborative military aircraft programme.

The proposal includes 34 Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft, underpinned by the offer of a deep strategic, defence and industrial partnership between the Governments of Belgium and the UK.

Speaking in Brussels, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

These proven jets offer Belgium a formidable capability which forms the backbone of European air power, as well as a comprehensive long-term defence and industrial partnership with the UK. A unique partnership with the RAF and integration with our world-leading support service mean Belgium's selection of the Typhoon would be a powerful demonstration of us working together to support security across the continent in the face of intensifying threats.

Speaking at the press conference in-country, Air Vice Marshal Keith Bethell said:

Our world-class Typhoon has led the way in combat air power and this demonstrates the continued confidence in the capability the Typhoon has to offer. With more than 20,000 flying hours on global operations to date, the Typhoon offers unparalleled reliability and proven interoperability with our allies

As well as the jets, the UK are offering Belgium the opportunity to benefit from the RAF's experience of over ten years operating the Typhoon, and to further strengthen over 70 years of co-operation between the two forces. It proposes integration with the RAF's Typhoon support arrangements which is considered the most cost-effective next generation combat aircraft support service. The proposal also includes a comprehensive package including a training partnership which would see personnel from Belgium and the UK jointly train and exercise together.

The UK MOD is leading the proposal on behalf of the Eurofighter Typhoon partner nations and companies. The invitation from Belgium to submit a final offer demonstrates the strong confidence in the jet. The proposal to Belgium

represents the most inclusive international equipment partnership presented to another European partner by the Eurofighter Typhoon programme.

The proposal also offers Belgium the opportunity to establish a National Network Cyber Centre, a Cyber Innovation Centre and a Cyber Research Partnership, all underpinned by a partnership between the UK and Belgian governments.

As 'the true European solution to meet Belgium's Air Combat Capability Program', the selection of the Typhoon would also act as a catalyst for greater aerospace and defence industrial cooperation across Europe. There would be opportunities for Belgian industry to work more closely with the Eurofighter Typhoon industrial partners which include some of Europe's largest defence companies. Through closer industrial cooperation Belgium and Belgian industry would also be positioned for partnership in the development of next generation combat air capabilities.

The Typhoon is a highly capable, combat proven, air defence and ground attack aircraft with full swing-role capabilities. In addition to supporting RAF operations protecting the UK in the skies above Britain and globally, the Typhoon has already been purchased by nine nations around the world. Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson was in Qatar at the end of last year to witness Qatar's purchase of 24 Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft which will help sustain thousands of jobs in the UK and across Europe.