

Italy partners with the UK on Tempest

The Statement of Intent (SOI), signed at the DSEi conference yesterday, commits both governments to further develop their Combat Air capability relationship.

The agreement covers existing platforms such as Typhoon and F-35, as well as Tempest, the programme initiated by the UK to develop a next generation combat air system.

The Statement of Intent outlined a number of commitments from both countries:

- Closer Government alignment on future Eurofighter Typhoon enhancements;
- Deepening discussions on Tempest military requirements;
- Developing a combat air roadmap, identifying opportunities to integrate advanced technologies from Eurofighter Typhoon into Tempest;
- Developing an innovative, agile and co-operative industrial framework to deliver Tempest;
- Launching pilot studies to demonstrate new, collaborative ways of working;

The agreement was the result of the joint Government feasibility study, which was launched following publication of the UK's Combat Air Strategy at the Farnborough Airshow in July 2018.

The study concluded that the UK and Italy are natural Combat Air partners, with both Air Forces (the Royal Air Force and the Aeronautica Militare) operating the same, potent fleet of Eurofighter Typhoon and F-35.

Informed by these systems, both Air Forces have a strong overlap in views on the characteristics necessary for the next generation of combat aircraft. Both Air Forces also share a close alignment on doctrine, training, and operational experience.

The UK and Italy have a proven 50-year track record of working closely together on Combat Aircraft development and support through the Panavia Tornado and Eurofighter Typhoon programmes.

Both Governments confirmed a common desire for a strong industrial base to develop key capabilities and boost prosperity in both nations. The agreement also paves the way for closer industrial collaboration, including through shared industrial entities such as Leonardo and MBDA.

Last month, the UK and Swedish governments a comprehensive [Memorandum of Understanding](#) on future combat air, committing the parties to work on a joint combat air development and acquisition programme.