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Major Bundeswehr order: Rheinmetall to supply German military with tens of thousands of artillery shells

The German Bundeswehr has contracted with Rheinmetall to supply it with artillery ammunition. Worth around €109 million (including value added tax), the framework contract encompasses the supply of over 32,000 rounds, with an option for a further 11,000 worth around €37 million (including VAT). Delivery is slated to begin in 2019. The contract runs for a period of five years. Rheinmetall Waffe Munition will produce the 155mm artillery ammunition in Unterlüß.

The ammunition ordered by the Bundeswehr is the 155mm DM121, which can attain ranges of up to 30 kilometres when fired from the PzH 2000 self-propelled howitzer. Featuring insensitive characteristics, this high explosive round can also be used in training operations and field exercises. Annual consumption will therefore be in the region of several thousand rounds. Just awarded, the order follows a first batch of 30,000 procured by the Bundeswehr in 2009.

Developed by Rheinmetall, the DM121 features outstanding performance parameters. The shell, which contains several kilos of high-performance explosive, can reach targets up to 30 kilometres away. It is also highly accurate: at the maximum range, approximately 85% of all shells land within an area the size of a football pitch. Owing to the interplay of high-quality components, the DM121 is capable of penetrating a several-centimetre-thick wall of reinforced concrete before detonating in controlled fashion on the opposite side. Designed to operate safely and reliably at temperatures ranging from -46°C to +63°C, the DM121 attains the same excellent degree of effectiveness in all climate zones worldwide. The insensitive explosive not only produces a devastating effect on and in the target, but also protects friendly forces if the ammunition is hit by hostile fire or exposed to other forms of mechanical stress, etc.

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