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Rheinmetall modernizes British logistic vehicles fleet – supply of 382 EPLS retrofit kits

Rheinmetall, through its joint venture Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles (RMMV), is supporting the programme to modernize part of the British military's fleet of logistic vehicles with a new loading system. A total of 382 retrofit kits for the Enhanced Pallet Loading System, or EPLS, will be supplied and integrated into the tried-and-tested HX trucks of Her Majesty's Armed Forces. Booked in the first half of 2018, the RMMV contract is worth over €43 million. Shipping and retrofitting are to be completed by the end of January 2021.

During the period 2005 to 2013, the British Army procured more than 7,500 HX logistics vehicles. As the backbone of the Royal Logistics Corps, this "military off the shelf" family of vehicles has proven highly effective. However, the growing demand for transport solutions for containers has continued to rise. Based on operational experience, RMMV, MAN Truck & Bus UK Ltd and British Ministry of Defence (MOD) officials drew up a plan to retrofit existing flatbed vehicles with a hook lift system.

The modernization programme is a team solution. The contract with the MOD has been entered into by MAN Truck & Bus UK Ltd, who will lead the project management and undertake the conversion of the vehicles in the UK. RMMV are responsible for supplying the conversion kit, which will be produced by the company's plant in Vienna. The hook loading system is made by HIAB, a company Rheinmetall has cooperated with in many comparable international projects, e.g. in Australia, Norway, Sweden and New Zealand.

The programme is a compelling example of the close partnerships RMMV and MAN maintains with its customers, encompassing post-design service throughout the product's entire lifecycle. It also highlights the prolonged supportability of the HX family of vehicles, which set the global standard for robustness, mobility, performance, flexibility and modularity.

Rheinmetall's subsidiaries in the United Kingdom, Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles UK (RMMV UK) and Rheinmetall Defence UK (RD UK), are well-established suppliers to the MOD. They support the British military in a number of areas, including vehicle systems, ammunition and technical assistance. In addition to providing support services for tactical logistic vehicles during deployed operations, the team is currently working on a proposal for enhancing the combat effectiveness of the Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank, and with Artec GmbH, is working to propose the Boxer 8x8 wheeled armoured vehicle to meet the requirements of the UK's Mechanised Infantry Vehicle (MIV) procurement programme.

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