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Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles logistic vehicles for Germany: the success story continues

Official handover ceremony for new palletized load-handling system and delivery of 3,000th Unprotected Transport Vehicle

The Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles success story continues. At a ceremony in Munich, Michael Wittlinger, Chairman of the Management Board of Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles GmbH, and Armin Papperger, Chairman of the Executive Board of Rheinmetall AG, together with the Head of the Land Support Division of the German federal procurement authority Bundesamt für Ausrüstung, Informationstechnik und Nutzung der Bundeswehr (BAAINBw), First Director at the BAAINBw Jan Gesau, officially handed over the key for the new generation of palletized load-handling system to the German Armed Forces – represented by the Commander of the Bundeswehr Logistics Command and General Bundeswehr Logistics, Major General Gerald Funke, Brigadier General Frank Schmitz, Head of the Planning Department at the Joint Support Service Command and Brigadier General Dr. Thomas Czirwitzky as representative of the German Army Office.

A further cause for celebration was the delivery of the 3,000th Unprotected Transport Vehicle, or UTF. The fact that the logistics vehicles are a showcase project in which politics, the armed forces and industry work together successfully was also expressed by the presence of other high-ranking visitors from politics, the Bundeswehr and partner companies. Among others, the Bavarian State Minister of the Interior, Joachim Herrmann, the Deputy Chairman of the Defence Committee of the German Bundestag, Henning Otte, as well as Karsten Klein MdB, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and Bernhard Loos MdB from the Economic Committee took part in the ceremony.

In June 2020 the Bundeswehr entered a framework agreement with Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicle Systems (RMMV) for the supply of up to 4,000 palletized load-handling systems. The framework agreement runs until 2027. Known in German as “Wechseladersysteme”, or WLS, these palletized load-handling systems are mounted on RMMV’s successful family of HX military trucks ensuring high commonality to the already fielded Unprotected Transport Vehicles, or UTFs. The prime feature of the WLS is the hook loader, developed by the Hiab company. This means that the flatracks in use with the Bundeswehr can be picked up and set down on almost any terrain without the need for additional handling equipment. Alternatively, the vehicles can also transport an interchangeable flatbed or a container via the standardised 20-foot ISO interfaces.



► Key facts

- Official handover of keys for new generation of palletized load-handling systems (WLS)
- 3,000th Unprotected Transport Vehicle (UTF) delivered
- High-performance logistic vehicles from the tried-and-tested HX family
- Production capacity set to expand

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A large share of the Bundeswehr's WLS trucks feature a protected cabin. The protected WLS will substantially enhance the survivability, sustainment capability and tactical flexibility of the logistic formations of the German Federal Armed Forces.

The WLS is a critically important component of NATO's Very High Joint Readiness Task Force VJTF 2023, which the Bundeswehr will be furnishing. In March of this year, instruction began for military drivers in the first protected WLS.



For several years now, the Unprotected Transport Vehicle family has been contributing to the operational effectiveness

of the German Bundeswehr's logistic formations. In July 2017 the Bundeswehr contracted with Rheinmetall MAN to supply its new "UTF mil gl in den Zuladungsklassen 5t und 15t" family of unprotected trucks capable of carrying payloads of 5 and 15 tonnes.

"The UTF is a showpiece project that paved the way for new procurement methods," says Michael Wittlinger. "It was the first large-volume flexible framework agreement. Financed by the German government's pandemic recovery package, additional vehicles were called-off and delivered. By the beginning of May, 3,000 vehicles had been transferred to the customer – almost a thousand more than envisaged in the original framework agreement for delivery by 2024. RMMV is therefore well ahead of schedule in this project."

Armin Papperger also emphasised the high importance of the WLS and UTF for the company in his speech. "Both projects from the field of logistics vehicles are closely interwoven, not only from a technical point of view. They are among our lighthouse projects. WLS and UTF show how defence programmes can be carried out in exemplary fashion. This success is the result of close cooperation built on mutual trust between the German parliament, the armed forces and the defence industry – for which great thanks are due to all those involved!"

A large portion of the value added in the WLS and UTF projects – over 75 percent – is generated in Germany. In close coordination with the Bundeswehr, RMMV has boosted its UTF capacity to 1,000 vehicles per year. Against the background that logistical transport capacities are likely to increase further and more vehicles will be needed, the production capacity for the Bundeswehr will be further expanded. RMMV is also moving to greatly increase delivery capacity for WLS trucks. Rheinmetall MAN thus remains a strong, efficient and reliable partner of the Bundeswehr, capable of meeting its delivery commitments even under extremely difficult circumstances, as demonstrated during the coronavirus pandemic and the Ukraine crisis.

Both the WLS and UTF are based on RMMV's robust HX vehicle family. Designed for military use right from the start, they display outstanding mobility even in tough terrain. The wide distribution of the HX vehicle family around the world brings major advantages when it comes to interoperability and logistics. Among other countries, the circle of user nations now includes the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Hungary and Denmark. In cooperation with the armed forces of Germany and other partner nations, RMMV is eager to write new chapters in the success story surrounding the company's tried-and-tested HX vehicles.