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Mobility, survivability, lethality: Rheinmetall's medium-calibre Lance turret system gives APCs added punch

Tracked and wheeled infantry fighting vehicles and armoured personnel carriers continue to play a vital role on the modern battlefield. They give the infantry added mobility and offer protection against ballistic threats, mines and IEDs. Moreover, when adequately armed, they are able to weigh in immediately with vital fire support: after all, force protection is only half the battle. Scalable, highly accurate firepower remains as crucial as ever, whether the mission is territorial defence at home or confronting asymmetric threats in remote areas of operation around the globe. Numerous nations are currently ordering new systems or upgrading their existing inventories. Rheinmetall's innovative Lance turret system meets the needs of modern warfighters.

At Eurosatory 2012, visitors can view a Lance training demonstrator at the Rheinmetall pavilion. Moreover, General Dynamics European Land Systems - Mowag is showcasing a Piranha V mounted with a Lance turret.

The Lance turret system

Rheinmetall's Lance turret system features a highly modular design, ensuring maximum flexibility and future growth potential. The degree of protection (comprehensive protection in accordance with STANAG 4569 is standard) and the number of crew (two-man or unmanned with fully remote control) is entirely up to the customer. The company's electro-optical SEOSS Sector and SEOSS Panoramic sights provide both commander and gunner with a 360° view.

Its main armament is normally a Rheinmetall MK30-2/ABM 30mm automatic cannon, though similar weapons of this type may also be used. Up to 200 rounds of two different types of ammunition can be loaded without leaving the safety of the fighting compartment. A 7.62 x 51mm or .50 cal. machinegun serves as secondary armament. The Lance turret system also comes with a 66mm or 76mm smoke/obscurant grenade launcher. Potential add-ons include a laser warning system, identification friend or foe technology, an integrated C4I system, an SAS close-range reconnaissance system or an antitank guided missile system. Its open architecture is another important advantage, ensuring future growth potential and the option of subsequent retrofitting with updated technology. All of this ultimately translates into lower lifecycle costs.

In 2009 Spain's Infanteria de Marina opted to purchase the Lance turret system.

The MK30-2/ABM automatic cannon

The standard armament for Rheinmetall turret systems is the MK30-2/ABM automatic cannon. An open bolt, gas-operated weapon with mutually independent breach movement and ammunition feeding, this 30mm x 173 system is based on the globally acclaimed Mauser MK30-2 used in infantry fighting vehicles operated by the armed forces of Spain, Portugal and Austria.

Made in Oberndorf, a cradle of the modern German arms industry, the MK30-2/ABM features a high rate of fire – up to 500 rounds per minute – as well as Rheinmetall's state-of-the-art ABM airburst ammunition technology. At ranges of up to 3,000 metres, it is extremely effective against land, air and sea targets. Easy to operate and highly reliable, this weapon system combines a long maximum effective range with excellent accuracy, making it the best-possible main armament for modern infantry fighting vehicles.

The German Bundeswehr has selected the MK30-2/ABM as the standard armament for its new Puma infantry fighting vehicle.

Effectiveness, mobility, survivability – and seating for nine

Effectiveness, mobility, survivability – the three parameters governing the combat effectiveness of modern IFVs – come together in a harmonious whole in the GTK Boxer: and with an enough room left over for an entire infantry section.

Rheinmetall presented a concept study of the highly mobile Boxer wheeled vehicle equipped with a prototype Lance medium-calibre turret system to a wide audience at Eurosatory 2010. In the meantime, development has progressed at a fast pace, resulting in a fully functional system. A Lance turret system, a series Boxer module and a modified series mission module have since been combined into one system and tested at the Rheinmetall test centre in Unterlüß, successfully verifying the results of the study.

In a dynamic driving and live fire demonstration in front of a high-profile delegation, the Boxer and Lance provided compelling evidence of their effectiveness. The conclusion drawn from this impressive presentation: the combination of a highly protected, highly mobile and mission-proven vehicle platform with the world's most advanced manned medium-calibre turret has clear battlefield potential. Moreover, in addition to the decisive parameters of protection, mobility, situational awareness, C4I capabilities and lethality, this configuration offers the major advantage of a spacious fighting compartment.

This successful testing of the Lance turret-mounted GTK Boxer underscores once again Rheinmetall's commitment to supplying today's armed forces with a comprehensive array of modular systems, all available without delay. At a time when new and unforeseen security challenges can arise virtually overnight, this provides military planners and policymakers with maximum freedom of action and peace of mind.

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