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PRESS RELEASE

**FRENCH MINISTRY FOR THE ARMED FORCES
AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Paris, 18 May 2026

The DGA orders 16 vehicles equipped with an X-band radar from Saab and Scania to modernise the French Army's air detection and surveillance capabilities

- On 14 April 2026, the French General Directorate of Armaments (DGA) placed an order for eight VARDA systems (short for "véhicule avancé radar de détection aérienne") consisting of Saab's Giraffe 1X X-band radar integrated onto a tactical vehicle manufactured by Scania. This order follows an initial order for eight systems placed on 29 December 2025.
- These 16 systems will replace part of the Army's low altitude ground-to-air defence detection and surveillance capabilities, which rely in particular on the NC1 30 and NC1 40 radars commissioned in 1995.
- These orders were placed by the DGA under the Rapid Acquisition Force framework, in less than a year. In the absence of an immediately available French solution, the DGA opted for an off-the-shelf acquisition from two Swedish industrial partners.
- The first eight systems will be delivered in 2026, with the next eight following in the first half of 2027.

The French Army's accompanying low-altitude ground-to-air defence capabilities rely enable to establish an accompanying air defence bubble to protect ground forces deployed on operations.

Pending the delivery of the surface-to-air defence and anti-drone versions of the Serval vehicle, these orders are intended to bolster the French Army's ground-level detection capabilities, providing an interim solution from 2026 onwards.

The DGA has selected a solution proposed by the Swedish manufacturers Saab and Scania, featuring tried-and-tested equipment that is readily available and best meets operational requirements.

This procurement, carried out under the Rapid Acquisition Force, demonstrates the DGA's ability to respond swiftly to the urgent needs of the armed forces by acquiring off-the-shelf systems, or those requiring minimal modification, from our European partners. This mechanism, established in 2023, reduces the time taken to procure equipment, from the expression of the requirement to its entry into service by the Armed Forces.

Saab's Giraffe 1X active electronically scanned array radar will be able to detect a wide range of aerial threats across a 360° field of view, from micro-drones to combat aircraft, at ranges of several kilometres. It therefore offers advanced capabilities in counter-drone operations and supports a C-RAM (Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar) mode, enabling the detection and tracking of munitions from their launch point to their point of impact. Furthermore, this multi-mission radar is a compact system that can be rapidly deployed and integrated onto various platforms. Ultimately, it is intended for integration into the Serval vehicle.

For the record, two Giraffe 1X radars were deployed in Paris (France) and Marseille (France) by the French Air and Space Force during the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games to supplement the detection capabilities of heavy anti-drone systems.

Scania's multi-purpose carrier vehicle (V3P), which will carry the Giraffe 1X radar, will be adapted to the Army's operational requirements. In particular, the rear platform will accommodate not only the radar but also a power pack meeting the radar's electrical autonomy requirements. The interior of the cab will also be fitted out with additional seats and screens to accommodate a driver, a flight commander and three operators simultaneously. These vehicles will be manufactured in Angers (France). The integration of the radar onto the chassis will also be carried out by Scania.

This acquisition is part of a close collaboration between France and Sweden. The DGA has worked in coordination with its Swedish counterparts to ensure that the equipment is compatible with existing systems and to facilitate its rapid integration into the armed forces. This international cooperation strengthens ties between the two countries and contributes to the interoperability of defence systems.



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