MINISTÈRE
DES ARMÉES

Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

FRENCH MINISTRY FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, 29 april, 2025

French Navy tests an offensive drone on a real target at sea

- On April 26th, 2025, off the coast of Toulon, a USV (unmanned surface vehicle) drone detonated against the hull of a decommissioned cargo transport craft (CTM) from a French Navy offshore patrol vessel (OPV).

- The aim of the experiment was to confirm the French Navy's ability to deploy a remotely-operated naval munition from the sea.

- This experiment, which took place against a backdrop of increasingly unstable international context, is part of the latest experiments conducted by the French Navy in order to enhance crew and ship readiness for high-intensity combat.

Given the tougher international context, it now seems appropriate for the French Navy to carry out such experimental campaigns at sea. The POLARIS approach, launched in 2021, aims to conduct training actions as closely as possible to the conditions of actual operations, and to stimulate innovation.

In December 2024, a French nuclear attack submarine (SNA) fired an F21 heavy torpedo against the hull of the ex-PHM Premier Maître L'Her, causing the sinking after dislocation. The Lafayette-class frigate Courbet also successfully completed a shock test, with the detonation of a naval mine last February. And in March 2025, the Landing helicopter deck (LHD) Tonnerre led the DRAGOON FURY exercise, testing severels offensive and defensive drones and drone systems in a full-scale amphibious operation with french army units.

In line with France's international commitments, particularly with regard to the protection of the environment and marine life, the safety of sea users and the preservation of the environment were the subject of specific measures before and during the experiment. In addition, the target hull was preliminarily depolluted and stripped of its fuels and fluids. The target had also been protected in the impact zone with metal plates and tires acting as a shield to limit the risk of sinking.

The results and analysis of the experiment conducted on April 26th will enable us to perfect remotely-operated naval munition systems, both in terms of implementation and guidance, as well as pyrotechnics.

Images are available on the French Navy's media library:
https://www.mediatheque.marine.defense.gouv.fr/

Contact médias :

Centre médias du ministère des Armées
media@dicod.fr
09 88 67 33 33

Délégation à l'information et à la communication de la défense
DICoD
Centre médias du ministère des Armées
60, boulevard du général Martial Valin
CS 21623 - 75009 Paris Cedex 15