

News from Saab 11 June 2025

Saab achieves AI milestone with Gripen E

Saab, in collaboration with Helsing, today announced the successful completion of the first three flights integrating Helsing's Artificial Intelligence (AI) agent 'Centaur' into a Gripen E fighter jet. As part of Saab's 'Project Beyond', the flights, where the first flight, was conducted on May 28, mark a significant advance in bringing AI capabilities to military aircraft. It is also yet another proof point of Gripen E's unparalleled ability to rapidly update software without disregarding safety requirements.

During the flights, the Gripen E gave control to Centaur which successfully autonomously executed complex manoeuvres in a Beyond Visual Range (BVR) combat environment and cued the pilot to fire.

"This is an important achievement for Saab, demonstrating our qualitative edge in sophisticated technologies by making AI deliver in the air. The swift integration and successful flight testing of Helsing's AI in a Gripen E exemplifies the accelerated capability gain you can get from our fighter. We are excited to continue developing and refining how this and other AI agents can be used, while once again showing how our fighters will outperform faster than the opponent can evolve," said Peter Nilsson, head of Advanced Programmes, from Saab's Aeronautics Business Area.

Thanks to the unique design of Gripen E, the fighter can fly with the AI software onboard and fully integrated without being restricted to solely military test ranges or have to rely on an experimental X-plane to do flight trials with the software.

"Within Project Beyond and other programmes, we utilise the power of software to rapidly explore and blur the lines between "now" and the future; in software there are no generations, only speed," says Peter Nilsson.

The third flight, conducted June 3, focused specifically on Centaur's performance, pitting it against a real Gripen D aircraft in a series of dynamic BVR scenarios with real-time data integration utilising sensor data to track the target aircraft.

The team tested Centaur's adaptability by varying starting distances, speeds, aspects, and even disabling C2 data to assess its robustness.

Saab's and Helsing's joint Project Beyond team was set up using Gripen E to explore how trustworthy AI can be used against future threats. The team will now

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analyse the flight data and continue training the AI agent to further enhance its BVR capabilities, with a further series of flights throughout the remainder of the year.

The project, fully sponsored by Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), is part of the Swedish Concept programme for Future Fighter Systems.

Saab is a leading defence and security company with an enduring mission, to help nations keep their people and society safe. Empowered by its 25,000 talented people, Saab constantly pushes the boundaries of technology to create a safer and more sustainable world. Saab designs, manufactures and maintains advanced systems in aeronautics, weapons, command and control, sensors and underwater systems. Saab is headquartered in Sweden. It has major operations all over the world and is part of the domestic defence capability of several nations.

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