



# Flash information mission on ground-to-air defense in France and Europe

## Summary of the report



### Rapporteurs

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In the context of this flash mission, the rapporteurs noted that ground-to-air defense (GTAD) in France and in the majority of European countries had been placed for too long in a situation of "operational comfort", i.e. a situation in which no serious consideration was given to challenging our air superiority because of a geo-strategic context that favored an expeditionary model in the face of asymmetric adversaries (OPEX and asymmetric combat).

This approach has led to the depreciation of certain aspects of the GTAD, particularly in the area of weapons programs. If the nature of France's expeditionary commitment justified this approach, recent commitments and crises (Sahel, Levant, Nagorno-Karabakh and Ukraine) as well as the emergence of new disruptive technologies and tactics among our main competitors lead to a change of strategy.

Because it has once again become a key element for the success of military operations and for the permanent protection of the national territory (infrastructures and critical activities), the rapporteurs have been led to question the credibility of our GTAD in a high-intensity conflict or in accompanying an army corps as a framework nation in the framework of NATO. In this respect, France contributes to the Alliance's BMD with the deployment of the Mamba system, perfectly interoperable within the NATO chain of command, in Romania.

In this context, the rapporteurs make a double observation.

Firstly, the French GTAD provides a multi-layered protection capability that responds to a broad spectrum of threats. However, it is not a watertight protective dome. Secondly, one cannot speak today of a capability gap concerning the French GTAD, unlike some of our European partners.



However, the rapporteurs jointly make a series of recommendations to enable the transformation of the GTAD so that it becomes fully effective by 2035. The majority of these recommendations concern the capability aspect, i.e. the equipment designed and placed in the service of the GTAD. Thus, in the short term, it would be advisable to gain in 'thickness', both in terms of systems and ammunition, because the GTAD does not have the volume of forces necessary to support, in the long term, all the operational contracts that have been set for it, particularly in the case of a high-intensity conflict.

The French GTAD will also have to be modernized, in particular to allow continuous ground-to-air protection in theaters of operation. In terms of adaptation of the existing system, a significant effort should be made to acquire mobile Mistral capabilities under armor, i.e. integrated on vehicles of the Scorpion range.

In addition to the kinetic potential of the GTAD, the rapporteurs also point to the need to strengthen the GTAD's surveillance and detection capability, both in terms of the performance and relevance of radars and the coordination of the various actors, particularly within NATO. A command and control center with a single vision and precise rules of engagement shared by all NATO member countries should be set up.

In conclusion, the rapporteurs stress that in all segments, ground-air defense has become a priority instrument of France's defense, whether it is a question of supporting the nuclear deterrent by avoiding attacks below the threshold of vital interests or of protecting our battle corps by missiles or artillery against saturating attacks. Moreover, the need for reassurance of Europe's eastern flank calls for an urgent response. However, it is now a question of reconciling the short term with the preparation of the future through a common and coherent policy in the service of European sovereignty, otherwise Europe's defense will be weakened.

Following the announcement of an investment of 5 billion euros over the period 2024-2030 in the framework of the multi-annual programming law by the Minister of the Armed Forces, the rapporteurs welcome the fact that ground-air defense is once again at the heart of the concerns of the French armed forces.