



KMW has raised the remote weapon station on the Boxer A1 APC so that it can engage targets close to the vehicle. (Photo: Bundeswehr)

GERMANY BEEFS UP BOXERS FOR AFGHANISTAN

The German Army is examining feedback from the first operational deployment of its new Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW) 8x8 Boxer APCs as it plans the deployment of additional Boxers to Afghanistan early next year.

Development of the vehicle was launched in 1998 as a joint British-French-German project to develop a wheeled multirole armoured platform with high levels of protection and mobility. France left the project at an early stage, but the Netherlands joined in early 2001. The British Army withdrew from the programme in 2003, as it needed a vehicle substantially lighter than the 33t Boxer that could be carried inside a C-130 Hercules transport.

The German Army has ordered 272 Boxers in four variants. By mid-September 2011, the service had received 46 APCs, 18 command post vehicles, ten driver trainers and one ambulance. The Royal Netherlands Army is scheduled to receive 200 Boxers in five variants.

Following the decision by Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg in June 2010 to send Boxers to Afghanistan as part of a series of measures to boost the protection of German forces, the BWB defence procurement agency and KMW began discussing what enhancements should be made to the vehicle before deployment. After analysing the threats to German and other coalition vehicles, KMW began developing add-on armour kits to protect against explosively formed projectiles and IEDs.

A critical design review in January finalised the Boxer A1 configuration for employment. Modifications included: fitting an IED protection

kit; integration of a jammer against radio-controlled IEDs; raising the remote weapon station by 300mm, allowing it to engage targets closer to the vehicle; integration of directional smoke grenade launchers; and a theatre-specific camouflage paint scheme.

The first five Boxer A1 APCs were delivered in May, and all subsequent vehicles will be produced to this standard. The 40 original production models will be upgraded to the A1 standard at a later date. According to Jens Lell, KMW's Boxer programme manager, the company has examined four distinct solutions to boost protection against RPG attack, although there is as yet no requirement for this.

2012 REINFORCEMENTS

The five Boxer A1s were airlifted by chartered An-124s from Germany to Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, on 22 July, and the following month were deployed operationally for the first time. As with other German vehicles, KMW field service representatives support the Boxer in-theatre using the company's MultiBox containerised support system. The Bundeswehr plans to deploy additional Boxers to Afghanistan in early 2012.

KMW officials told *Land Warfare International* that they expect to offer the Boxer for the UK's Future Rapid Effects System Utility Vehicle project. The MoD has said that the programme will be re-launched in 2016 in order to achieve a 2022 in-service date.

By Ian Kemp, Munich

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