



# EUROPEAN AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND

## AIR-TO-AIR REFUELLING





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## **EATC, A MAJOR PLAYER IN AIR-TO-AIR REFUELLING**

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In the past years EATC has built up a large expertise in AAR. The number of tankers has increased steadily as all EATC member nations either own national AAR capabilities or are multinational partners of AAR capabilities. Moreover EATC liaises closely with other partners and multinational organisations such as EDA, JAPCC, and MCCE, hereby consistently increasing the level of interoperability.

During operations, it may be required for a tanker from one nation to refuel an aircraft from another nation. AAR contributes to one of EATC's main pillars of air mobility through pooling and sharing.

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## **EATC, THE AAR CENTRE OF EXPERTISE**

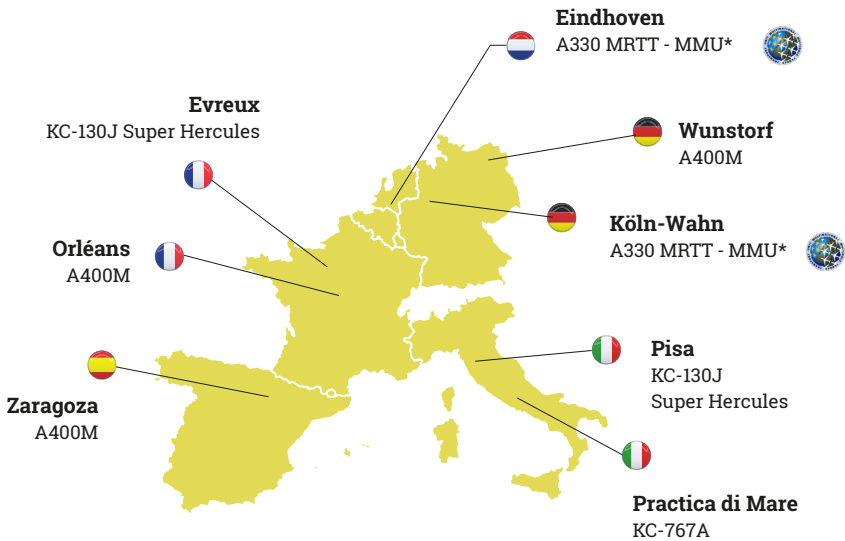
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EATC is a recognised centre of expertise in AAR. The operational experts, who are in close contact with the “National AAR Coordination Centre” (NAARCC), plan AAR missions from an early stage and guarantee successful joint and combined operations. The experts from EATC's functional division are engaged in enhancing interoperability and standardising AAR related tactics, techniques, and procedures in cooperation with the member nations. Together they have recently developed the “trail missions” handbook, which aims to harmonise the planning, tasking and execution of trail missions required to deploy fighters over strategic distances. Furthermore, EATC runs the sole European multi-national training for tanker aircraft: the European Air-to-air Refuelling Training (EART).



# THE AAR PORTFOLIO

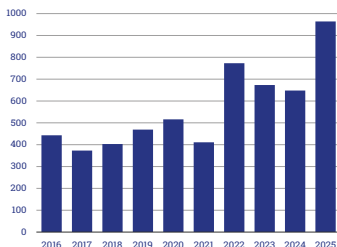
EATC can draw upon a large and diverse portfolio of different tanker aircraft equipped with boom and basket refuelling systems. Bilaterally certified tankers are capable of providing service to fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters from EU and NATO nations. The most flexible asset within EATC’s portfolio is the A330 MRTT, which is equipped with both boom and drogue AAR systems and offers a huge capacity of around 109.000 tons of fuel (depending on the mission profile). The Multinational A330 MRTT unit, stationed in Eindhoven and Köln-Wahn, will reach full capability in the coming years.



(\*) Multinational A330 MRTT unit:



## AAR FIGURES



2016 - 2025: nearly 5700 AAR missions

2025: EATC commanded 41 AAR assets executing 964 missions



# EUROPEAN AIR REFUELLING TRAINING - EART

In 2012, AAR was identified as a capability shortfall in Europe and a plan to further develop this capability was set up by the European Defence Agency (EDA). Lessons learnt from operations asked for more training dedicated to tanker crews. Thus EATC, supported by EDA, developed the European Air Refuelling Training (EART)\*.

EART is the sole European training event for tanker aircraft organised in conjunction with a large fighter exercise like the Dutch Frisian Flag or the Spanish Ocean Sky/Sirio. EART offers tanker's air and ground crews the possibility to become familiar with scenarios they are not regularly exposed to and to maintain proficiency.

The event is also a unique opportunity for exchanging information and procedures and building interoperability within the European AAR community. EART is moreover used as a test-bed for EATC experts to develop, refine and validate common procedures and receive immediate feedback from all actors.

EART was initially designed for strategic tankers like the A310, A330 MRTT, KC767 or KDC10. Today EATC also manages additional non-strategic tankers like the A400M or the KC130J, able to perform AAR missions in support of fixed and rotary wings. In order to also foster interoperability in this area, EATC is currently investigating new training opportunities.



**LinkedIn**



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