



# French Ministry of the Armed Forces' innovation strategy

An ambitious project with an unprecedented budgetary effort: one billion euros per year from 2022

**T**he Armed Forces Minister visited the marines and commandos base in Lorient earlier this autumn. The objective was the inauguration of new infrastructures within the framework of the military programming law (LPM) 2019-2025 and the presentation of the innovation strategy of the armed forces.

The 2019-2025 LPM plans to increase the annual budget devoted to innovation by 25%, to reach 1 billion euros in 2022. "An absolute priority for our strategic autonomy," explains Florence Parly. A large part of these investments is dedicated to the development of disruptive technologies, necessary for the preparation of the future capabilities of our armed forces. In total, in 2020, 821 million euros will be devoted to innovation.

## Definnov, an investment fund of 200 million euros

The Minister of the Armed Forces announced the creation, by the end of the year, of the Definnov investment fund, in co-operation with BpiFrance. Endowed with 200 million euros, it will be dedicated to the development of dual technologies (civil and military) and transversal, through equity financing of innovative companies. This fund is added to Definvest, endowed with 100 million euros.

In 2019, energy, artificial intelligence, space and even cyber defense were the priority areas for the Ministry of the Armed Forces. In 2020, priority is given to the hypersonic field, to anti-drone warfare, to directed energy weapons (lasers, electromagnetic weapons), to new technologies in the field of sensors and critical components, and to quantum technologies.

## With the 'Red Team', focus on anticipation

All these areas appear in the reference document of the Defense Innovation Orientation 2020 (DrOID), which sets the objectives of the Ministry of the Armed Forces in terms of innovation. At the same time, the ministry will continue its long-term research and development (R&D) investment effort and its openness to civil innovation and the startup



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ecosystem to seize opportunities for the rapid integration of new high value-added technologies.

The other priority of the innovation strategy entrusted to the Defense Innovation Agency (AID): the work of foresight and anticipation, intended to prepare for the wars of the future. As such, the agency is piloting the 'Red Team', a long-term project launched in 2019 with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the General Directorate of Armaments and the General Directorate of International Relations and Strategy. "The Red Team is perhaps the symbol of the openness of the Ministry of the Armed Forces in terms of innovation," explained Florence Parly. It is to overturn the table. Accept to change perspective and see your convictions upset. This team of science fiction writers is responsible for imagining scenarios of threats and conflict for the horizon 2030-2060. Clearly, consider valid assumptions and guide the ministry's innovation efforts by imagining appropriate solutions. ■