



Estonia, KrattWorks develops a target drone that simulates Russian Shaheds to train air defenses

The Estonian company aims to unveil a reliable prototype of the new aerial target by the end of 2027.

Published on 09/10/2026

Estonian company KrattWorks is developing a new target drone designed to replicate the flight characteristics of jet-powered Shaheds used by Russia against Ukraine. The system will allow armed forces to train to intercept these threats using realistic targets. The first prototype is expected to be unveiled by the end of 2027.

The project stems from the need to adapt air defense training to the evolution of Russian attack drones, which are increasingly faster and more difficult to intercept than earlier piston-engine versions.

A target that replicates Shahed behavior

The new unmanned aircraft will be designed to simulate the performance and operational behavior of jet-powered Shaheds, allowing operators of anti-aircraft systems and interceptors to train against targets representative of real threats.

Ranno Pajuri, KrattWorks' head of business development, explained that the company already has software adaptable to different platforms, but that higher speeds create additional technical challenges.

The goal is to produce a prototype reliable enough for operational demonstrations by 2027. Final technical specifications for the new drone have not yet been released.

The initiative is part of a sector in which counter-drone system manufacturers are seeking to develop low-cost interceptors that can be produced in large quantities using readily available components.

Experience gained in Ukraine

KrattWorks works with the Ukrainian Armed Forces, to which it has already supplied one-way attack drones and reconnaissance platforms, including the Ghost Dragon ISR.

The company studies UAV attacks conducted during the conflict and the evolution of operational tactics to update its systems and make training more realistic.

Ukraine is among the potential users of the new target drone, which could allow air defense units to train against simulations of the latest Shaheds.

KrattWorks currently manufactures its systems in Estonia and says it has the industrial capacity needed to increase production. The company also does not rule out partially relocating manufacturing activities to customer countries if order volumes justify it.

DART and DART-R: targets already available

The new project will complement a range of target drones already developed by the Estonian company.

These include the DART, a fixed-wing aircraft intended for training with heavy machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, and air defense missiles.

According to specifications published by the manufacturer, the DART has a wingspan of 2.2 meters, a cruising speed of about 200 km/h, and a claimed endurance of 110 minutes.

The DART-R, meanwhile, is a flying-wing target that can be fitted with radar reflectors to alter its signature and simulate different types of aerial threats. This model can also reach 200 km/h.

The PARM completes the range: a quadcopter designed for live-fire training against small drones.

These systems are already intended for air defense training, while the future jet-powered Shahed simulator will represent a further development of the family.

Ukraine intercepts only 57% of jet-powered Shahed drones

The need to train against faster targets is also evident in data released by the Ukrainian authorities.

According to a report published in September 2026 by the Institute for Science and International Security, Russia deployed approximately 5,166 drones from the Shahed family in August alone, including aircraft used as decoys.

On September 28, the Ukrainian President's Office reported that its armed forces had achieved an overall drone shootdown rate of 70%, taking into account both piston-engine and jet-powered versions.

For jet-powered Shahed drones alone, however, the stated rate falls to 57%.

Kyiv is therefore accelerating trials of new interceptors, some of which are already being used by operational units, although they require further refinement before large-scale deployment.

The increased performance of attack drones is creating new requirements for both interceptors and detection, tracking, and engagement systems.

KrattWorks also targets the U.S. market

Alongside development of the new target, KrattWorks is strengthening its international presence.

The company plans to promote its solutions at the AUSA Annual Meeting 2026, scheduled for October 12-14 in Washington, with the aim of expanding business opportunities in the United States.

The company already operates in several European markets and is seeking to extend its presence into Asia and Africa as well.

The new Shahed simulator thus enters a growing market: training systems capable of replicating increasingly complex aerial threats without requiring the use of actual attack drones during exercises.

For European armed forces, the availability of targets representative of Shahed drones would make it possible to assess the performance of air defense systems and prepare operators for the characteristics of threats encountered daily in Ukrainian skies.

News link: <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2026/10/09/estonias-krattworks-crafting-shahed-like-dummy-drone-for-target-practice/>