

Magura V7: the technological evolution that rewrites naval warfare

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The **Magura V7**, the latest variant of the naval drone developed by Ukraine, has accomplished one of the most surprising military feats of recent years: the **downing of two Russian Su-30 Flanker jets** in the Black Sea. This unprecedented event – confirmed by General Kyrylo Budanov, head of the Ukrainian Defense Intelligence Directorate (HUR), and later by President Volodymyr Zelensky – represents **the first time in history** that fighter jets have been shot down by an unmanned surface vessel (USV) naval drone.

Initially, it was thought that a **Magura V5** or the "Sea Dragon" version equipped with Soviet AA-11 Archer missiles had been used. However, intelligence sources and naval analyses, including **Naval News**, revealed that the attack was carried out by the **Magura V7**, a larger and more advanced model. Approximately **8 meters** long, compared to the V5's 5.5 meters, the V7 features an optimized structure, a **reshaped bow for better seaworthiness**, and a more comprehensive sensor suite. Most importantly, it carried for the first time **two AIM-9**

Sidewinder air-to-air missiles of U.S. manufacture, mounted on rails that appear to be liftable for launch.



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This new type of armament offers a range of up to **10 kilometers**, comparable to that of the Archer missiles, but with superior reliability and precision. It is a leap in quality that **transforms a naval drone from a simple kamikaze vehicle into a long-range attack platform**, capable of engaging aerial targets with lethality never before seen on autonomous surface units.

A combined strategy that changes the rules of the game

The success of the Magura V7 is not only technological but also **strategic**. Ukraine has been able to fully exploit the integration between its naval drones and **combined operations units**, which unite naval special forces and intelligence. These coordinated teams operate with speed, flexibility, and, above all, in a **multidomain** mode, combining naval, aerial, and cyber elements into a single operational network.

The two Russian Su-30s shot down on May 2 were sent to **intercept Ukrainian USVs** heading towards targets in the Black Sea. But instead of finding passive targets, they encountered **drones armed with air-to-air missiles**, capable of returning fire and shooting them down. It is a radical change in the threat balance: what was until recently considered a low-tech means can now **destroy fourth-generation fighter jets**.



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The Magura V7 also demonstrates an important capability for **modularity**: although the current main armament consists of Sidewinders, nothing excludes the possibility of alternative configurations. The absence of an explosive charge at the bow – typical of kamikaze boats – suggests that the drone can be adapted according to the mission, increasing its operational versatility. This makes it **one of the most dynamic weapon systems** currently deployed in the field.

The future of naval warfare and the international response

The introduction of the Magura V7 marks a **turning point in contemporary naval warfare**. Ukraine, despite not having a traditionally strong navy, has managed to **balance forces in the Black Sea** by leveraging advanced autonomous technologies. Its armed USVs are **rewriting the rules of maritime engagement**, forcing even major naval powers to rethink doctrines and defense systems.

The threat posed by these drones no longer concerns only ships: now **attack aircraft and helicopters are vulnerable** during patrol or interdiction operations. This capability radically transforms the concept of air superiority in coastal areas and confined naval theaters.



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International interest in Ukrainian USVs, and particularly in the Magura V7, is set to grow. Major powers – the United States, China, the United Kingdom, and Turkey – are already working on similar systems, but the operational experience accumulated by Kyiv offers a **real competitive advantage**. Future conflicts will increasingly feature **armed maritime drones**, capable of striking with precision and at low cost, without risking human lives.

Ultimately, the Magura V7 is not just a weapon: it is a **symbol of the new era of naval warfare**. Ukraine, forced to innovate under the pressure of an invasion, has ended up anticipating trends that will become central in global military strategy in the coming years.

News link: https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/05/first-image-of-ukraines-sidewinder-armed-magura-v7-surface-drone/