



The Hitrole Turret Case: Uncontrolled Firing at the Range and Lince Armored Vehicles Blocked

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Following a technical issue that occurred on June 10 at the Monte Bivera range (Friuli), the Army General Staff and the Directorate of Land Armaments of Defense have ordered the precautionary technical halt of a specific configuration of the remote-controlled **Hitrole** turrets installed on light armored vehicles (VTLM) **Lince**. The measure affects **an estimated core of about six systems**, blocked both on national territory and in operational theaters abroad (including potentially hostile contexts such as the Eutm mission in Somalia).

Incident Dynamics and Exclusion of Human Error

The episode occurred during a live-fire exercise of the Alpini of the 2nd Regiment of Cuneo, units destined for rotation in foreign contingents. During the execution of short bursts against targets placed at a short distance (less than 150 meters), the system exhibited an anomalous behavior not prompted by the firing console:

- **Kinematic malfunction:** The turret rotated autonomously to the right, simultaneously reducing the elevation (lowering the fire).
- **Accidental impact:** The automatically produced bursts hit the hood of a second Lince armored vehicle positioned in line on the right side.
- **Material damage:** The hit vehicle sustained severe structural damage to the armor and engine compartment, rendering it currently completely unusable. Fortunately, no injuries were reported among the personnel.

The analysis of the footage recorded by the Go Pro camera worn by the tank commander (a Volunteer in initial service) definitively excluded any human error or incorrect maneuver by the operator on board, confirming the total autonomy and anomaly of the weapon system's reaction.

Industrial Framework and Operational Impact

The involved Hitrole system is part of a batch of 81 turrets purchased by the Army in 2009 as part of a contract worth a total of 23.8 million euros (about 300,000 euros per unit), subsequently integrated by an additional batch of 80 units in 2014, for a total estimated investment of around 50 million euros including logistical support and spare parts packages.

Techno-Logistic Parameter	Detail / Detection
Supplier / Competence	Leonardo Spa (former Oto Melara plant in La Spezia)
Units affected by the halt	About 6 units of the 2009 configuration (out of 161 total purchased)
Status of technical investigations	Vehicle transferred to La Spezia;
Tactical repercussions	Temporary recourse to foot patrols or alternative platforms not equipped with equivalent remote protection

The technical checks conducted by Leonardo Spa technicians at the La Spezia plant have not yet allowed the isolation of the root cause of the software or hardware defect that generated the uncontrolled targeting. Until the investigations are completed and safety margins are restored, the affected units operate with operational limitations in deployment theaters,

highlighting the criticality of dependence on complex remote-controlled weapon systems.