

German military draws up €450 million wish list

Germany's underequipped military, the Bundeswehr, wants to spend hundreds of millions on new weapons. Some of the money will go toward leasing drones from Israel, but first the government needs a new budget.



As criticism grows that Germany's military hardware is fast becoming obsolete, German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen will ask the government for a massive cash injection to update the Bundeswehr's equipment.

According to a list obtained by two German newspapers, von der Leyen is requesting €450 million euros (\$553 million) for 18 items. A Defense Ministry spokesman said the Bundeswehr would present its procurement requests to the Bundestag "soon."

"We hope that the material situation of the Bundeswehr will be improved," Defense Ministry spokesman Holger Neumann said at the government's press conference on Monday.

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Germany's defense minister wants more money

Part of the money is intended for upgrades to Germany's Puma tanks and maintenance of its NH-90 helicopters. Money would also go toward a nine-year contract to lease Heron TP drones capable of carrying arms — all in all the cost of this deal will be €1 billion.

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Plans for future

The coalition agreement signed between the conservatives and the Social Democrats in March sanctions the leasing of the Israeli drones as a stopgap measure until the development of an EU drone within the framework of the European Defence Union.

Read more: What Germany's first armed drones could do

The coalition agreement foresees investments of €10 billion to modernize the Bundeswehr, but von der Leyen has said she doesn't think that sum will be sufficient. The latest request for funds will have to be approved by the government when it draws up its budget for 2018.

Earlier this year, an internal Bundeswehr document that was leaked to the press questioned whether the German military was well enough equipped to fulfill

its duties — a situation termed “scandalous” by members of the opposition.

Equipment problems in the German armed forces*

	Stock	Operational
 Eurofighter, fighter jet	114	38
 Tornado, fighter jet	93	29
 Transall, transport aircraft	50	21
 NH90, utility helicopter	40	5
 Tiger, attack helicopter	43	7
 Sea King, utility helicopter	21	3-5
 Sea Lynx, multipurpose helicopter	22	4

Source: Bundestag Armed Forces Commissioner, Annual Report 2016 | * selected examples

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Germany spent about €37 billion on defense in 2017 — the ninth-highest defense budget in the world. That sum is scheduled to increase to €39 billion in 2018. But German military spending falls far short of the 2 percent of national GDP targeted by NATO.

Source: <http://www.dw.com/en/german-military-draws-up-450-million-euro-wish-list/a-43493661>

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