

PRESS RELEASE

SMALL-CALIBRE AMMUNITION: FRANCE REBUILDS A SOVEREIGN SUPPLY CHAIN WITH FN BROWNING GROUP

HERSTAL - PARIS, 16 JULY 2026



Selected by the Directorate General of Armaments (DGA) and the French Ministry of the Armed Forces under the "Small-Calibre Ammunition" (MPC) tender, FN Browning Group has been tasked with re-establishing a sovereign domestic capability for the production of small-calibre military ammunition.

The French Ministry of the Armed Forces today announced that, following the MPC tender conducted by the DGA, it has selected FN Browning Group to rebuild a sovereign small-calibre ammunition production capability in France.

This decision marks a decisive milestone: it restores to France national control over a strategic production capability that is essential to the autonomy of its armed forces.

The contract between FN Browning and the DGA runs for 15 years. Its purpose is to safeguard France's strategic autonomy in the production of 5.56 mm and 7.62 mm ammunition. The company will produce several tens of millions of rounds each year, at a rate that can be adjusted in line with evolving national requirements.

A site and value chain rooted in France

The assembly plant will be built at Clérieux, in the Drôme, on a primer-manufacturing site

currently operated by one of the companies owned by FN Browning.

The allocation of investment reflects the balance of a partnership in the service of sovereignty:

- FN Browning is undertaking all investment in infrastructure, staffing and training, as well as the transfer of technology;
- The DGA is making the investment in movable assets, in particular the purchase of the production machinery, of which it will remain the owner at the end of the 15-year contract.



THEO FRANCKEN MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Since taking office, I have consistently said that Belgium does not want to be merely a customer of the French defence industry. We want to be a genuine partner, with our companies receiving their fair share of the economic return generated by our defence cooperation. By awarding this contract to FN Browning, France is choosing world-class quality, proven industrial expertise and a reliable European partner. It is a win for France, for FN Browning and for a stronger, more resilient European defence industrial base.

The full roll-out of production capabilities on national territory will take place over a three-year period, until full industrial capacity is reached.

Consolidated sovereignty

By its very structure, this project establishes France's strategic autonomy, its industrial sovereignty and its lasting command of a small-calibre ammunition production capability. Delivered jointly by French and Belgian companies, it also honours the military cooperation between the two countries.

The bid put forward by FN Browning brings together the human, technical and technological expertise of three companies owned by the group, including FN Herstal, which has manufactured military ammunition since the 19th century and is a world benchmark in the sector; it contributed, in particular, to the development of the NATO standards for the 5.56 mm and 7.62 mm calibres.



PIERRE-YVES JEHOLET VICE-PRESIDENT AND MINISTER FOR THE ECONOMY, INDUSTRY, DIGITAL AFFAIRS, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

This contract sends a powerful signal: when a major country such as France sets out to rebuild a strategic supply chain, it places its trust in FN Browning's expertise. It is a source of pride for Wallonia and a demonstration that our industrial champions have a full and rightful place in building a Europe that is stronger, more sovereign and better prepared for the security challenges of tomorrow.



JULIEN COMPÈRE CEO OF FN BROWNING GROUP

FN Browning Group is honoured to support the DGA in re-establishing a sovereign capability for the production of small-calibre military ammunition in France. This reindustrialisation, driven by cooperation between French and Belgian companies, illustrates the complementarity and the essential cooperation of Europe's defence industries, to the benefit of our industrial dynamism and our collective security.

A guaranteed dual-supply arrangement will further ensure the continuity and resilience of the production chain. The supply of propellant powders will be provided in particular by Eurenco, the French-owned European leader in energetic materials.

About FN Browning Group

FN Browning Group is a world leader in the design, manufacture and marketing of premier solutions for defence, security, hunting and sport shooting. Owned by an entity of the Belgian federal state (the Walloon Region), FN Browning Group has an industrial presence in nine NATO countries and six European Union member states. The group employs 4,100 people and operates more than twenty production sites worldwide.

In France, FN Browning Group employs 500 people across five industrial sites.