GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

Published on 19/10/2025

The Italian Army, and in particular its leading airborne force — the Paratroopers Brigade “Folgore” — is at an important evolutionary crossroads. With the introduction of the lightweight and highly mobile Flyer 72 (Ground Mobility Vehicle) — set to redefine the concept of rapid infantry insertion — a tactical update is needed: no longer just "arrive," but transform movement into action with speed and discipline, according to the international principle of ***“dismount before contact”***, meaning to dismount and fight immediately. The vehicle is not designed as an armored platform but as a tool for rapid transport, “updated” mobility, and operational surprise.

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

Mobility, Agility, and New Operational Paradigm

The Flyer 72, already part of the Italian program with an expected delivery of about 199 vehicles to the Folgore (program worth ~ 229.6 million euros), represents a turning point: a lightweight vehicle, air or helicopter transportable, capable of operating on difficult terrains, with an adaptable module for reconnaissance, light assault, evacuation, or command.
For the Folgore, which traditionally operates by drop/parachuting and rapid theater insertion, this platform offers the possibility to reduce reaction times, streamline tactical operations, and operate with greater flexibility.

However, the very lightness and mobility entail a compromise: compared to heavy armored vehicles, protection is reduced. The new paradigm is not “stay in the vehicle and fight,” but “dismount from the vehicle and fight quickly from a ground position.” It is a mindset that requires discipline, training, and solid procedures.

The Tactical Techniques the Folgore Must Adapt

1. Rapid Disembarkation and Occupation of Cover

As soon as the Flyer enters the tactical zone, the team must have ready disembarkation (dismount) procedures and occupation of natural covers (vegetation, depressions, minor buildings). The vehicle serves as an “insertion transport,” not a combat bivouac. In other words: mobility and immediate transformation into infantry. The U.S. commander who led the ISV doctrine states that *“as we get into a tactical zone, that’s where you alter your movement techniques and you dismount”*.

2. ISR Integration (Reconnaissance, Drones, Advanced Observers)

The security of the Flyer's movement depends on quality preemptive reconnaissance: aeronautical/FPV drone, infantry observers, direct link with the team. The Folgore must equip or integrate assets that allow early-warning and terrain scanning before the vehicle's entry. Without this function, rapid mobility risks turning into vulnerable exposure.

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

3. “Mount/Dismount” Training Under Operational Stress

Realistic exercises must include: disembarkation under fire (even simulated), defensive occupation, immediate transition from movement to shooting, tactical casualty and exfiltration. The Flyer becomes the “engine branch” of the action, the team the action point. The drill must

be quick: a few seconds for disembarkation, immediate occupation of position.

4. Integrated Fire and Air/Helicopter Support

The Folgore's ability to operate in “remote” or difficult spaces also requires support: light mortars, artillery, helicopter/tactical aviation attacks. The Flyer is an insertion platform: firepower comes from other assets. Coordination between the Flyer team and supports becomes crucial.

5. ROS (Operational Remounting and Logistics) and Strategic Projection

The Folgore maintains its nature as an airborne force: the Flyer must be integrated into the phases of drop/parachuting or rapid landing, with remounting procedures, “light” maintenance in theater, modular logistics. Doctrines and Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) must be updated accordingly.

Applicable Operational Examples

- **Advanced Patrol Flyer + Reconnaissance Team**: a small advanced team with Flyer precedes the main column, detects any obstacles/threats, the integrated team enters immediately and occupies an interdiction point until the main force arrives.
- **Rapid Insertion in “Green or Semi-Urban” Zone**: drop/parachuting, Flyer collection, advancement on off-road terrain, disembarkation and position occupation within less than 10 minutes — the Folgore can exercise “vertical + horizontal” mobility.
- **Rapid Exfiltration Drill with Tactical Casualty**: after assault or reconnaissance, the team embarks on the Flyer, exits the theater in coordination with aviation/helicopter or rapid terrestrial route. Also train the phase of “quick vehicle abandonment.”

Critical Issues and Challenges to Address

The integration of the Flyer is not without risks. The Folgore must keep some considerations in mind:

- Protection remains more limited compared to armored vehicles: if reconnaissance fails or the enemy is strong, speed may not be enough.
- Maintenance and support logistics: a lightweight vehicle still requires parts, assistance, and industrial coordination (the program involves production with Italian partners, such as the

collaboration between Flyer Defense and Tekne).

- Tactical culture: the mindset “we arrive and fight immediately” requires discipline and continuous training. It is not enough to have the means: they must be used correctly.

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

GMV Flyer 72: Deploy Before Contact - The Challenge of the Paratroopers Brigade Folgore

For the Paratroopers Brigade “Folgore,” the introduction of the Flyer 72 represents a clear opportunity to increase operational capabilities, mobility, and tactical flexibility. But the effectiveness of the vehicle will entirely depend on the ability to change mindset, training, and doctrine. The lightweight vehicle is not a substitute for infantry or an armored vehicle to be used as “cover,” but an accelerator of rapid insertion: **the team exits, disembarks, and will fight from the ground**.

The combination “paratrooper + lightweight vehicle” can express an operational advantage only if accompanied by clear procedures, support integration, effective reconnaissance, and continuous training. The mobility vs protection compromise becomes sustainable only if the tactic is disciplined, the training intense, and the integration with other assets perfect.