

Ready for service: Airbus Helicopters delivers the first new-generation EC175 rotorcraft

Two EC175s are received by NHV for oil and gas missions

Marignane, France, 11 December 2014 – A double-handover ceremony today marked Airbus Helicopters' first deliveries of its new-generation EC175, with two of these 7-metric-ton category rotorcraft provided to NHV for oil and gas missions in the North Sea.

The milestone EC175s will be utilized on core applications for which Airbus Helicopters developed this medium-sized rotorcraft: the airlift of crews and supplies to oil and gas platforms at sea, along with search and rescue in support of such off-shore operations.

Airbus Helicopters designed the EC175 to meet evolving mission needs in the oil and gas industry, offering outstanding performance and unmatched cost efficiency – with the capability of carrying a full payload to 90 percent of the North Sea's offshore installations.

“Today is a very special day for all of us. The delivery of this first EC175 is indeed a key milestone for NHV, for our customer community and for our company”, said Airbus Helicopters President Guillaume Faury.

A total of 16 EC175s have been ordered by NHV in its strategy of owning a young, modern fleet. NHV will begin EC175 service this month from the Dutch North Sea base of Den Helder.

“We are proud to be the EC175's first operator, continuing a long partnership with Airbus Helicopters that began in 1997 with a Dauphin rotorcraft, and which now includes Super Puma AS332 L2, EC155 B1 and EC145 helicopters,” explained Eric Van Hal, the CEO of NHV. “Our EC175s are joining an industry-leading fleet of Airbus Helicopters rotorcraft that was expanded through the announcement of our merger this year with Blueway.”

The EC175 is certified to the latest airworthiness standards, covering both the helicopter and its new Helionix® avionics suite – providing increased safety through reduced pilot workload, enhanced situational awareness, improved flight envelope protection and system redundancy.

Powered by Pratt & Whitney Canada's latest PT6 turboshaft engine version – the PT6-C67E, which was developed specifically for this helicopter – the EC175 has become the industry's benchmark medium-sized twin-engine rotorcraft across a full range of missions, including airlift duties in oil and gas operators, search and rescue, emergency medical services, public services, VIP and executive transport.

Contributing to the EC175's competitive edge is its recommended cruise speed of 150 kts., while the maximum cruise speed exceeds 165 kts. – all achieved at extremely low vibration levels.

Excellent power performance for the EC175 includes hover out of ground effect (HOGE) with a maximum 7.5-metric-ton take-off weight at 5,800 ft. at ISA+20°C conditions; one engine inoperative (OEI) hover performance, which ensures safety during hoisting for search and rescue missions; and extensive power reserve ensuring heli-deck performance (PC1) at maximum take-off weight in ISA+20°C conditions.

The helicopter's radius-of-action in an oil and gas mission configuration enables 16 passengers to be transported to offshore rigs at distances of 140 nautical miles (NM.) on crew change flights, extending to nearly 200 NM. when 12 passengers are carried. Further certification of the EC175 at an increased maximum take-off weight of 7,800 kg. will offer operators the ability to further expand the radius-of-action by 40 NM., or to carry 300 kg. of additional payload.

High levels of mission flexibility are ensured with the Helionix® avionics, which extends the undisputed superiority of in-flight envelope protection, pilot assistance and situational awareness that have been proven on Airbus Helicopters' EC225 rotorcraft. In addition, the Rig 'N Fly GPS-navigation-assisted software will be incorporated in the EC175's avionics suite to make approaches to, and take-offs from, platform-based helipads safer and simpler.

Airbus Helicopters' EC175 delivery start-up is backed by the company's commitment to provide a mature helicopter with a dedicated task force and tools that include validated support and services deliverables, as well as established training capabilities. The support and services offer already has been validated – including in operational conditions with Airbus Helicopters' EC175 prototype – through a dedicated test campaign to accelerate aircraft maturity.

As part of its investment in support and services resources, Airbus Helicopters installed and certified an EC175 Level D full-flight simulator at its Marignane, France headquarters, which enabled pilot training to begin prior to the start-up of EC175 deliveries. Another EC175 Level D full-flight simulator will be located in the United States, serving oil and gas operators in the Gulf of Mexico.

About Airbus Helicopters

Airbus Helicopters, formerly Eurocopter, is a division of Airbus Group, a global pioneer in aerospace and defense related services. Airbus Helicopters is the world's No. 1 helicopter manufacturer and employs more than 23,000 people worldwide. With 46 percent market share in civil and parapublic sectors, the company's fleet in service includes some 12,000 helicopters operated by more than 3,000 customers in approximately 150 countries. Airbus Helicopters' international presence is marked by its customer centers and participations in 21 countries, and its worldwide network of service centers, training facilities, distributors and certified agents. Airbus Helicopters' range of civil and military helicopters is the world's largest; its aircraft account for one third of the worldwide civil and parapublic fleet. The company's chief priority is to ensure the safe operation of its aircraft for the thousands of people who fly more than 3 million hours per year.

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Press Release



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