

Eurocopter continues its industry-leading environmental action support for the global helicopter sector

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Eurocopter is pledging continued support of open and clear communications on helicopter environmental issues, with plans to publish updated emissions and sound-level ratings for its fleet while also extending the environment-related dialog with operators worldwide.

The Eurocopter ratings result from the company's industry-leading efforts to propose the use of standardized environmental performance indicators to rate helicopter CO₂ emissions and sound levels.

"Eurocopter believes that transparent environmental communications by the rotary-wing aircraft industry is essential to building a relationship of trust with the public, and it encourages industry stakeholders as well to invest heavily in the protection of the environment," Eurocopter President & CEO Lutz Bertling said.

As part of its efforts to advance the environmental agenda, Eurocopter introduced its concept at Heli-Expo 2010 for environmental performance indicators related to sound levels and CO₂ emissions. In these ratings, Eurocopter proposed that published and/or certified information be used to derive sound level and CO₂ emission values, which would be expressed on a color scale from A+ to D. This type of presentation already is widely used for efficiency ratings, with one typical application being the ratings applied to home appliances sold in many countries.

When Eurocopter announced these proposed initial environmental performance indicators, the company also challenged helicopter manufacturers to join its efforts in providing customers and the general public with better and simpler means of interpreting the environmental characteristics of rotary-wing aircraft.

Other helicopter producers – along with engine manufacturers and research institutes – followed Eurocopter's initiative, resulting in the creation of an ad hoc Environmental Committee that was formed under governance of the American Helicopter Society. Specialists from this committee met a total of four times in the U.S. and Europe from September 2010 to October 2011, working on refining the technical details of Eurocopter's rating proposal.

Following a board of directors meeting in October 2011, the American Helicopter Society decided to terminate the Environmental Committee's actions, while acknowledging the very high quality and value of its work to date. Eurocopter appreciates the technical developments that were performed within this committee and recognizes the American Helicopter Society's key role during the years in encouraging rotorcraft sound level reduction.



The committee's efforts resulted in proposals for slight modifications of Eurocopter's initial environmental performance indicators, and the company now plans to integrate these recommendations in its definitions of environmental indicators – and will shortly publish revised ratings for the Eurocopter fleet.

Eurocopter also will extend the environmental dialogue to its operators worldwide in ensuring the rating methodology is understood and accepted by the various actors impacted by this effort.

In addition to ongoing Eurocopter efforts in defining better environmental communication channels, the company is continuing to develop new ways of decreasing the environmental footprint of its helicopters. This includes advanced Eurocopter noise reduction technologies such as the Blue Edge™ rotor blades and the Blue Pulse™ active rotor flap system, along with the planned demonstration of a diesel-powered helicopter in the Clean Sky European research program.

“Our broad spectrum of actions and commitments underscore that Eurocopter is truly thinking without limits when it comes to the helicopter industry and environmental protection,” Bertling concluded.

About Eurocopter

Established in 1992, the Franco-German-Spanish Eurocopter Group is a division of EADS, a world leader in aerospace and defense-related services. The Eurocopter Group employs approximately 20,000 people. In 2011, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world's number one helicopter manufacturer with a turnover of 5.4 billion Euros, orders for 457 new helicopters and a 43 percent market share in the civil and parapublic sectors. Overall, the Group's helicopters account for 33 percent of the worldwide civil and parapublic fleet. Eurocopter's strong international presence is ensured by its subsidiaries and participations in 21 countries. Eurocopter's worldwide network of service centers, training facilities, distributors and certified agents supports some 2,900 customers. There are currently more than 11,300 Eurocopter helicopters in service in 149 countries. Eurocopter offers the most comprehensive civil and military helicopter range in the world and is fully committed to safety as the most important aspect of its business.

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