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## Airbus Helicopters Forging Ties With Innovative SMEs

Marignane, December 18, 2014 - Airbus Helicopters officially launched its new *Open Innovation* platform at an event attended by Airbus Helicopters' Executive Vice President of Engineering, the PEGASE center of excellence and a number of French SMEs. The program gives creative companies looking to break into new markets the opportunity to support Airbus Helicopters in its innovation strategy.

The launch featured an appraisal of the calls for expertise made since 2012 as part of the Helicopter of the Future project. Though responding to a specific set of objectives, these calls have yielded convincing results and have paved the way for Airbus Helicopters' fresh approach to innovation.

Created to support new technologies applicable to the helicopter industry in the short term, the *Open Innovation* platform allows innovative companies to offer their services to Airbus Helicopters. Selection is based on predefined criteria, which include the following: a sufficiently high degree of technological maturity, the possibility of a rapid return on investment, the ability to integrate the specific characteristics of the aerospace industry, and a positive impact on customer satisfaction and quality of service.

The *Open Innovation* platform offers the creators of selected projects a partnership with Airbus Helicopters through a predefined contractual framework encompassing specific aspects of innovation, such as the development of expertise and intellectual property, and the potential for industrial development over time.

Though the program is aimed primarily at small and medium-sized enterprises, it is open to all legal entities possessing a suitable industrial or scientific framework.

Jean-Brice Dumont, Airbus Helicopters Executive Vice President Engineering: "Airbus Helicopters has always sought to make SMEs an integral part of its industrial strategy, and the *Open Innovation* program is the latest proof of that. Thanks to a mutually beneficial and enriching partnership for all parties, it gives innovative SMEs an opportunity to make themselves known and develop."

Currently oriented towards French companies, the program will very shortly be opened up to businesses around the world.

Companies wishing to sign up for the *Open Innovation* program or obtain more information may access the portal at the Airbus Helicopters website, the Partner Portal <https://partner.eurocopter.com/OpenInnovation/> or, from February 2015, at <https://partner.airbus.com/OpenInnovation/>.

## **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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