



ASEAN Helicopter Safety Team set up to improve safety in civil helicopter operations

Airbus Helicopters hosts inaugural steering committee meeting in Singapore

Singapore, 30th June 2014 – With Asia poised to be the fastest growing helicopter market in the coming years, key industry players from the ASEAN Helicopter Safety Team (AHST) held the inaugural steering committee meeting this month to initiate actions to improve safety in civil helicopter operations in this region.

AHST was founded in late 2013 to expand the mandate of the global International Helicopter Safety Team (IHST) with actions in the 10-country region covered by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as China. Similar Safety Teams in Asia have also been established in India and Japan.

With safety as an utmost priority for Airbus Helicopters, coupled with its extensive network of local entities in this region, Airbus Helicopters Southeast Asia welcomed the opportunity to work with AHST to kick-start the Safety Team's actions in Southeast Asia.

Airbus Helicopters has been a key supporter and contributor of the IHST since its inception in 2006. Demonstrating its deep belief in helicopter safety and the IHST initiative, Airbus Helicopters personnel participate actively in the various safety teams set up around the world, including holding senior appointments at the IHST executive committee level.

The inaugural AHST meeting, held at Airbus Helicopters Southeast Asia based in Singapore, saw a gathering of 15 participants from a diverse industry group comprising manufacturers, operators, regulators and customers.

Leading the steering committee is David Leithner, the Flight Safety and Quality Manager of CHC Helicopters in Miri, Malaysia, who stated that "In uniting stakeholders from the helicopter industry, AHST is committed to establishing international partnerships that can reverse negative helicopter industry safety trends and improve the helicopter safety culture overall."

AHST bases its safety improvement approach on collaborative efforts within the helicopter industry – encouraging the development of risk awareness and implementation of safety actions by sharing lessons learnt through accident analysis.

"Such voluntary efforts amongst stakeholders will complement regulatory actions and greatly enhance safety standards, moving us one step closer to the IHST's aim of reducing international civil helicopter accident rates," added Leithner.

In moving forward, Leithner said AHST will continue to expand its line-up of industry stakeholders and regulators, and implement an active outreach program that facilitates the promotion and distribution of readily-available safety publications and toolkits. The outreach program also will be used to capture input and feedback on the state of the regional industry and its challenges.



“The broad representation of experts at AHEST’s inaugural steering committee meeting demonstrates the strong commitment of key stakeholders to jointly address safety issues in the helicopter sector,” added Derek Sharples, the managing director of Airbus Helicopters Southeast Asia, who welcomed attendees to the company’s facility at Singapore’s Seletar Aerospace Park. “We are honoured to have played a key role in kick-starting this initiative for ASEAN and see this as our responsibility as a major helicopter manufacturer to ensure its success.”

About ASEAN Helicopter Safety Team (AHEST)

AHEST was founded in late 2013 to expand the efforts of the International Helicopter Safety Team in the Asean area and China through a collaboration that engages and joins stakeholders from industry and government across the region.

Amongst its core initiatives is an active outreach program to create awareness about key factors leading to operational incidents and about readily available tools and resources which can assist all types of organizations to address safety related issues and to mitigate the risks associated with helicopter operations.

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 subsidiaries 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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