

## **Eurocopter's Helibras subsidiary to modernize 36 AS350 Ecureuil helicopters operated by the Brazilian Army Aviation Command**

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The Helicópteros do Brasil (Helibras) subsidiary of Eurocopter signed a contract for a major upgrade program on the Brazilian Army's fleet of 36 AS350 Ecureuils. This modernization includes the rebuilding of three of these aircraft.

This activity, involving AS350s operated by the Brazilian Army Aviation Command (Comando de Aviação do Exército), will begin during 2011 – with its completion expected in 2018. The work is to be carried out at Helibras' facilities in Itajubá, which are located in the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais.

Eurocopter's single-engine, multipurpose AS350 entered service with the Brazilian Army Aviation Command more than two decades ago, and Helibras' upgrade program will ensure the continued operation of these helicopters for at least 25 additional years.

Included in the modernization program is the installation of a glass cockpit with three large liquid crystal displays, the integration of an Automatic Flight Control System (AFCS) with autopilot and the use of improved seats for pilots to provide better visibility and enhanced protection.

Much of this upgrade package developed by Helibras can be applied to AS350 Ecureuils flown by other operators in Brazil, representing an inventory of some 300 helicopters.

"Technology has made huge leaps since the first AS350 entered service, with the use of digital avionics and computers providing better safety and performance, along with a lower workload for pilots," said Helibras President Eduardo Marson. "The application of our modernization package to the AS350 will significantly improve this helicopter's versatility for the Brazilian Army Aviation Command, and we are offering these enhancements for other Ecureuil operators in Brazil as well."

The AS350's new avionics will be developed by Helibras in Brazil with Sagem (Safran Group) and Aeroeletrônica, based on a cooperation agreement established in November. The displays will be supplied by Sagem Avionics Inc., while Aeroeletrônica will be responsible for providing the computer and assembling the avionics system.

### **About Helibras**

Helibras is the only Brazilian manufacturer of helicopters. The company is subsidiary of Eurocopter Group, the largest global supplier of aerospace industry, controlled by EADS. With more than 50% in the Brazilian fleet of turbine helicopters, Helibras has been operating in Brazil since 1978, having sites in Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasília. Its Itajubá factory in Minas Gerais employs more than 400 professionals and has capacity to produce 36 aircraft per year to meet requirements of the civil, governmental and military sectors. Since its foundation, Helibras has delivered more than 500 helicopters in Brazil, 70 percent of which are



the Ecureuil model. In 2009, the company had a turnover of R\$357 million. For more information: [www.helibras.com.br](http://www.helibras.com.br).

### **About Eurocopter**

Established in 1992, the Franco-German-Spanish Eurocopter Group is a Division of EADS, a world leader in aerospace, defense and related services. The Eurocopter Group employs approx. 15,600 people. In 2009, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world's No. 1 helicopter manufacturer in the civil and parapublic market, with a turnover of 4.6 billion Euros, orders for 344 new helicopters, and a 52 percent market share in the civil and parapublic sectors. Overall, the Group's products account for 30 percent of the total world helicopter fleet. Its strong worldwide presence is ensured by its 25 subsidiaries and participations on five continents, along with a dense network of distributors, certified agents and maintenance centers. More than 10,500 Eurocopter helicopters are currently in service with over 2,800 customers in more than 140 countries. Eurocopter offers the largest civil and military helicopter range in the world. More information is available at: [www.eurocopter.com](http://www.eurocopter.com).

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