

Eurocopter reinforces its commitment to strengthen the Republic of Korea's aerospace industry, and highlights the Surion and its naval derivative

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At the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition 2011, Eurocopter will be showcasing a 1/10 scale model of the Surion at the EADS stand (Hall D, stand no. D12). Surion is a program that has reinforced Eurocopter's commitment to the Republic of Korea, with various entities set up to further its potential, and even a naval derivative to be developed to meet the Navy's needs.

Eurocopter has been supporting Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI), who is the producer of the Surion, as a primary partner in the Korea Utility Helicopter (KUH) program. To ensure its full support, Eurocopter has set up a full-fledged subsidiary, KHDS, to provide technical assistance for the program since 2006.

In January 2011, Eurocopter and KAI then set up a joint venture, KAI-EC, for the marketing and sales of the Surion for the export market, projecting a sales volume of about 250-300 units worldwide in the next 10 years.

"South Korea has been our customer for over 30 years, and it has always been one of our key markets in Asia," stated Eurocopter President & CEO Lutz Bertling. "We have also enjoyed a very fruitful partnership with KAI over the years, as can be seen in the success of the Surion program whose development phase has been outstandingly on time. Together with KAI, we will help to fuel the growth of the country's aerospace industry by developing indigenous products that will have great export value."

Surion is Korea's first military transport helicopter to be produced by KAI, and the South Korean government officially appointed Eurocopter as its primary partner in December 2005.

Surion is an 8.7 metric ton helicopter which can carry 2 pilots and 16 troops (or 2 pilots plus 2 crew and 9 troops). 245 units of the Surion will be manufactured from 2011, to replace the Republic of Korea (RoK) Army's ageing fleet of utility and transport helicopters.

The 6-year KUH development phase ran from 2006 to 2011 and it has successfully completed the initial flight test on March 2010, with the first Surion scheduled to be delivered in the third quarter of 2012. Eurocopter's role is to provide technical assistance and to supply the gear boxes, rotor masts, transmission and autopilot subassemblies for the helicopter.

KNH is the Surion naval derivative proposed for the RoK Navy. It is being developed by KAI in partnership with Eurocopter and Elbit, using their extensive specialist experience, as the ideal aircraft for the RoK Navy and other modern naval or maritime forces. KNH offers the best, high capability, naval warfare performance available today against the most sophisticated submarine and surface threats in a package which is fully compatible with light frigates and other escorts.



KNH is versatile, flexible and can be re-configured very rapidly for new roles while embarked. Its state-of-the-art avionics are future-proofed to permit the aircraft to adapt to new roles, tasks or threats. The standard equipment fit and spacious cabin that easily carries full boarding teams, make it an ideal aircraft that meets the needs of Maritime Security worldwide.

In addition to the Surion, two other military helicopter models will also be showcased at the exhibition – AS565 Panther and Tiger. Together, the three models represent very important current and future programs that Eurocopter is looking to participate in, as South Korea steps up its development of the aerospace industry and defense capability.

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 approximately 17,500 people. In 2010, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world's number one helicopter manufacturer in the civil and parapublic market with a turnover of 4.8 billion Euros, orders for 346 new helicopters and a 49 percent market share in the civil and parapublic sectors. Overall, the Group's helicopters account for 33 percent of the total worldwide civil and parapublic fleet. Eurocopter's strong worldwide presence is ensured by its 30 subsidiaries and participations on five continents, along with a dense network of distributors, certified agents and maintenance centers. There are currently 11,360 Eurocopter helicopters in service and some 2,900 customers in 149 countries. Eurocopter offers the largest civil and military helicopter range in the world.

For more information, please contact:

Stéphane Chéry
Tel: + 33 (0)4 42 85 60 51
Mob: + 33 (0)6 23 93 71 23
stephane.chery@eurocopter.com

Julie Guérin
Tel: + 33 (0)4 42 85 59 64
Mob: + 33 (0)6 22 00 34 73
julie.guerin@eurocopter.com

Melanie Wolf
Tel: + 49 (0) 906 71 57 39
Mob: + 49 (0) 151 17 12 63 18
melanie.wolf@eurocopter.com

Pascale Fleury
Tel: + 33 (0)4 42 85 62 38
Mob: + 33 (0)6 32 54 05 02
pascale.fleury@eurocopter.com

Gloria Illas
Tel: + 33 (0)4 42 85 58 89
Mob: +33 (0) 6 31 47 08 99
gloria.illas@eurocopter.com

Priscilla Yip
Tel: +65 6592 7217
Mob: +65 9660 7040
Priscilla.yip@eurocoptersea.com.sg

Website: www.eurocopter.com

