

Airbus Helicopters delivers China's first fully-equipped air ambulance

Its twin-engine EC135 will become the reference helicopter for Chinese airborne emergency medical services operations

Donauwörth, Germany, 9 October 2014 – A new era in Chinese air ambulance operations began today with Airbus Helicopters' delivery of a twin-engine EC135 as the first rotorcraft outfitted for dedicated helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) missions in the country.

During a ceremony at Airbus Helicopters' Donauwörth, Germany engineering and production site where the aircraft was assembled, the milestone EC135 was provided to the 999 Emergency Rescue Center (999 Center), which is a Beijing Red Cross Foundation subsidiary.

"In addition to benefitting from the EC135's excellence as an EMS helicopter, we also appreciate the added value of Airbus Helicopters' experience and relationships with HEMS operators," stated Mr. Ma Runhai, Executive Vice President of Beijing Red Cross Society of China. "It enables us to help achieve the national strategic goal of comprehensively deepening the reforms and propelling the modernization of the governance system and capacities. It will also help Beijing Red Cross Society of China to achieve the goal of becoming a leader in China and a first-class organization in the world."

The helicopter delivered today is the EC135 P2e version of Airbus Helicopters' lightweight twin-engine rotorcraft family, and is fully equipped with medical systems from Bucher – the same provider for many established European HEMS operators.

"The EC135 is a benchmark for HEMS operators worldwide, as it has been designed with the expertise of doctors for medical transportation and services," explained Wolfgang Schoder, CEO of Airbus Helicopters Germany. "It is the perfect platform to kick-start China's efforts in ramping up its airborne emergency medical services."

A delegation of doctors from the 999 Center currently is undergoing familiarization courses in Augsburg on the Bucher-supplied equipment, which follows a one-week introduction to HEMS in the ADAC HEMS Academy near Cologne. In parallel, Airbus Helicopters is providing rotorcraft training, organizing a cooperation outreach, and establishing relationships and workshops for the Chinese with leading European air rescue operators to ensure a smooth and successful initiation of the country's new HEMS operations.

"The relaxation of China's low-altitude airspace augurs well for the development of HEMS which is very much needed in a country of such geographical and population size," said Norbert Ducrot, President of Airbus Helicopters China. "999 Center's initiative to launch this public service is highly commendable and will be well-appreciated by the people of China."

In addition to the initial EC135 P2e received today by the 999 Center, a second helicopter will be delivered in the first quarter 2015, and a letter of intent for two EC145 T2 rotorcraft also has been signed by this public institution.

Airbus Helicopters is a leading rotorcraft provider, holding over 60 percent market share worldwide in the HEMS segment – with the EC135 being one of the sector’s reference helicopters alongside the company’s larger EC145. Approximately 25 percent of all medical emergency operations around the globe are performed with the EC135. A total of more than 1,100 EC135s have been delivered worldwide, and over 500 of these rotorcrafts are in HEMS configurations.

The EC135 has a wide, unobstructed cabin with excellent performance, range and payload capacity – and is recognized for its low-noise operations. The helicopter’s oversized sliding side doors and rear clamshell doors enable rapid loading/unloading of patients – with additional safety during ground operations ensured by its Fenestron® shrouded tail rotor.

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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