

Eurocopter reinforces its capabilities in the U.S. with the installation of an AS350 assembly line

Marignane, France, September 20, 2013

Beginning in 2014, Eurocopter will install the necessary industrial capabilities to upgrade the American Eurocopter plant in Columbus, Mississippi, to a final assembly and test site for Eurocopter AS350 helicopters, the top-selling civil helicopter in the U.S. market.

The plan was developed with two main objectives in mind: First, as a way to offset the impact of the reduction in local production of UH-72A Lakota helicopters and second, to help provide a boost to sales in the U.S. market, especially with government and law enforcement agencies.

“North America is the largest light helicopter market in the world for Eurocopter, and this new assembly line supports our industrial strategy by manufacturing the preferred AS350 ‘Made in the USA’ in close proximity to our customers,” said Joseph Saporito, Executive Vice President of the Global Supply Chain for Eurocopter. “This decision further supports our investments that have developed reliable and efficient local industrial capabilities in a market with strong expected growth.”

The plan calls for the Columbus plant to become a final AS350 assembly and test site using parts produced by Eurocopter and its suppliers, in addition to the continued production and retrofit of UH-72A Lakotas for the U.S. Army, other federal agencies and foreign military customers.

“I am extremely happy to be able to announce we will be able to maintain and expand the Columbus plant’s operations and retain our skilled and dedicated workers,” said American Eurocopter President and CEO Marc Paganini. “Our teams in Mississippi have done a superb job of producing the Lakota for the Army and we want to put their expertise to work building helicopters for the civil market in the U.S.”

Preparations will begin almost immediately, with the final assembly line scheduled to begin production in the fourth quarter of 2014. Operations are set to expand in 2015 and the plant will produce up to 60 additional helicopters annually by 2016.

The Columbus plant – American Eurocopter’s second location in addition to its headquarters in Grand Prairie, Texas – is currently responsible for both the assembly and testing of the highly successful UH-72A Lakota aircraft, for which more than 280 aircraft have been delivered on budget and on or ahead of schedule. Its teams also handle the partial assembly of the AS350 from kits for certification flight tests before sending the aircraft to completion centers, where they are installed with customer-specified interiors, instrumentation and special equipment.

Eurocopter’s international development allows the Group to better meet its customers’ needs by remaining in close proximity, no matter where they are in the world. Opportunities that allow, in addition to this proximity, an in-sourcing of high-value business in key markets reinforce the Group’s commitment to creating strong local industrial footholds in both emerging as well as established markets.



Representing nearly 40% of Eurocopter's worldwide in-service rotorcraft fleet, some 3,549 AS350s are currently flying around the globe – with nearly one quarter of them in the U.S. alone. American Eurocopter delivered 42 new AS350 helicopters in 2012.

The AS350 outclasses all other single-engine helicopters for performance, versatility, safety and competitive acquisition and maintenance costs. It is the first choice in the U.S. market for law enforcement agencies and helicopter emergency medical service providers.

About Eurocopter www.eurocopter.com

Established in 1992, the Franco-German-Spanish Eurocopter Group is a division of EADS, a world leader in aerospace and defense-related services. The Eurocopter Group employs approximately 22,000 people. In 2012, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world's No. 1 helicopter manufacturer with a turnover of 6.3 billion Euros, orders for 469 new helicopters and a 44 percent market share in the civil and parapublic sectors. Overall, the Group's helicopters account for 33 percent of the worldwide civil and parapublic fleet. Eurocopter's strong international presence is ensured by its subsidiaries and participations in 21 countries. Eurocopter's worldwide network of service centers, training facilities, distributors and certified agents supports more than 2,900 customers. There are currently more than 11,780 Eurocopter helicopters in service in 148 countries. Eurocopter offers the most comprehensive civil and military helicopter range in the world and is fully committed to safety as the most important aspect of its business.

About American Eurocopter www.eurocopterusa.com

American Eurocopter is the U.S. affiliate of Eurocopter, the largest helicopter manufacturer in the world, and a subsidiary of EADS North America Holdings, the North American operations of EADS, a world leader in aerospace, defense and related services. American Eurocopter is a helicopter manufacturer and markets, sells and supports the broadest range of civil and parapublic helicopters offered by any manufacturer. The product line represents the most cost-effective, technologically-advanced helicopters, ranging from light single to heavy twin aircraft, serving all markets and missions. American Eurocopter's headquarters and main facility are in Grand Prairie, Texas with a large manufacturing and production facility in Columbus, Miss.

For more information, please contact:

Eurocopter

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

American Eurocopter

Brenda Reuland
Telephone: +1 (972) 641-3679
Mobile: +1 (214) 616-6597
brenda.reuland@eurocopterusa.com

Bob Cox
Telephone: +1 (972) 641-3525
Mob: +1 (972) 213-2038
bob.cox@eurocopterusa.com

