

Farnborough International Airshow

Airbus Helicopters marks 40 years as a training partner for British military pilots

U.K. ranks high among other Airbus Helicopters training successes

Farnborough, UK, 15 July 2014 – The important role of Airbus Helicopters in the ab-initio training of British military rotorcraft pilots is being marked by Airbus Helicopters during this week's Farnborough Airshow.

During the past four decades, thousands of British crewmembers have earned their wings, trained on mission scenarios and practiced their flying skills aboard Airbus Helicopters-designed rotorcraft.

This activity traces its origins to the early 1970s, when single-engine Gazelles were first used for helicopter training by the Ministry of Defence with the RAF Central Flying School at RAF Tern Hill in 1973. The Gazelle also played a role at the School of Army Aviation, at Middle Wallop, where it was used to train army pilots for many years.

Since 1997, 38 AS350BB Ecureuils have been used as basic training aircraft by the Defence Helicopter Flying School (DFHS), based at Shawbury, Wales, where they have logged more than 350,000 flight hours to date for the UK armed forces.

This activity contributes to the steady supply of pilots needed to maintain the UK's defence capability, with the DFHS providing output for all three of the country's armed forces: Army, Air Force and Navy.

Worldwide, Airbus Helicopters brings its training expertise at the service of numerous armed forces. In Germany, a fleet of 14 EC135s operate with the German Army's flying training school at Bückeburg, backed by more than 60 Airbus Helicopters maintenance personnel, successfully delivering over 70,000 flight hours with more than 99 percent availability for the school.

Helidax, the French Defense Flying School, utilizes 36 EC120 rotorcraft with fully-digitized cockpits, consistently delivering over 580 hours per year per aircraft, with 54 Airbus Helicopters maintenance personnel ensuring 96 percent availability and low operating costs – providing excellent value to the customer.

Another training application for Airbus Helicopters-built rotorcraft is the Swiss Air Force helicopter school with 20 EC635s, featuring a modern glass cockpit. Completing 5,000 missions per year, the EC635 performs safely and reliably for its average 8,000 hours flown per year.

Further evidence of Airbus Helicopters' training school output can be found at facilities the world over, including the Spanish Air Force Wing 78 Armilla, operating EC120s; the Japanese Navy with 15 EC135s; the Spanish Army flying 6 EC135s; the Indonesian Armed Forces operating 17 EC120s; and the Chinese Armed Forces, commanding 24 EC120/HC120, to name a few.

Airbus Airbus Helicopters UK

Airbus Helicopters UK Limited – Britain’s civil helicopter hub – and its predecessors have been present and highly active in the United Kingdom for 40 years, dominating the civil rotary-wing sector. Its contribution to the aerospace sector of the national economy includes the development of police aviation with a 75 percent market share, a 70 percent share of the air ambulance sector, and well over 50 percent of the offshore oil and gas market.

Airbus Helicopters UK Limited is headquartered in Oxford, with additional bases in Dublin (Ireland), Belfast (Northern Ireland), Hawarden (Wales) and Aberdeen (Scotland) and provides the full range of products and services for the rotary-wing sector, including prime contractor for the RAF Puma Mk2 upgrade and support programmes.

Some 450 Airbus helicopters form the largest part of the UK's helicopter fleet and the backbone of vital national infrastructure, with approximately 100 helicopters serving the UK Ministry of Defence for transport, training and high end operational missions. To date, Airbus Helicopters UK Limited has exported high technology helicopter solutions to 23 nations worldwide. The Airbus group employs more than 1500 people across the British Isles.

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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Press Release



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