

Eurocopter's revolutionary X³ helicopter arrives in Washington for final leg of aircraft's U.S. tour

WASHINGTON and MANASSAS, Va. — July 23, 2012

Eurocopter continues its U.S. tour of the X³ high-speed hybrid helicopter today in Manassas, Va. where the aircraft performed a flight demonstration for dignitaries, local elected officials, company employees and the news media. The Washington, D.C., metro area is the final leg of flight demonstrations for civil and military customers across the country.

The tour began when the X³ made its debut at the Grand Prairie, Texas headquarters of Eurocopter's U.S. subsidiary – American Eurocopter – which was attended by employees, elected officials, customers and industry partners. Several commercial customers from various market segments flew the X³ when it demonstrated its unique flight characteristics, which include a cruise speed of 200 knots, high rates of climb and executing high-speed maneuvers that are not routine for conventional rotary-wing aircraft. The X³ has already demonstrated a maximum speed of 232 knots at 80 percent power and a rate of climb of 5,500 feet per minute.

“We are extremely pleased to bring the X³ here to the Washington, D.C. area for the final leg of its highly successful U.S. tour,” said American Eurocopter President and CEO Marc Paganini. “I am confident that the aerospace community and military leaders here will be as impressed as all of the customers who have already experienced this cutting-edge technology.”

Several guest pilots flew aboard the X³ during its previous two stops at Huntsville's Redstone Army Arsenal Airfield on July 9 and 10, and Fort Bragg's Simmons Army Airfield on July 16 and 17. The X³ is scheduled to continue military flight demonstrations at Fort Belvoir's Davison Army Airfield July 24 and 25, where guest pilots will experience the aircraft's maturity and excellent handling characteristics firsthand. The X³ will then conclude its U.S. tour on July 26 at the Pentagon.

Eurocopter's aircraft configuration for the X³ uses a pair of turboshaft engines to power a five-blade main rotor system, along with two propellers installed on short-span fixed wings. This concept is well adapted to missions requiring long transit flights and where speed is important, while retaining vertical lift and hover capabilities – all at a very affordable cost.

The company envisions a wide range of applications for its hybrid technology in future products, including long-distance search and rescue (SAR), Coast Guard missions, border patrol missions, passenger transport and off-shore airlift, along with inter-city shuttle services. It also is well-suited for military missions in special forces operations, troop transport, combat SAR and medical evacuation – benefitting from the combination of higher cruise speeds with excellent vertical takeoff and landing performance.



Eurocopter began X³ flight testing in September 2010 at the Istres Flight Test Center in southern France. Beyond confirming its excellent flight qualities, maneuverability, outstanding acceleration and deceleration capabilities, the hybrid demonstrator has shown exceptional climb and descent rates along with very low vibration levels – all without any need for passive or active anti-vibration systems.

Follow the X³ U.S. tour with daily news and updates
on the company's special events website:

<http://events.eurocopter.com>

and on: <http://press.eurocopter.com>

About Eurocopter

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 20,000 people. In 2011, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world's number one helicopter manufacturer with a turnover of 5.4 billion Euros, orders for 457 new helicopters and a 43 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 some 2,900 customers. There currently are more than 11,300 Eurocopter helicopters in service in 149 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.

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