

## NH90: Eurocopter celebrates two firsts with Belgium and France

Marignane, France, December 21, 2012

**Eurocopter today achieved a new milestone in its NH90 program with two ceremonies held at its Marignane facility near Marseille in the south of France, during which the manufacturer delivered Belgium's first NH90 Tactical Transport Helicopter (TTH) in the presence of the Belgian Defense Minister Pieter de Crem; along with the French DGA defense procurement agency's first NH90 NATO Frigate Helicopter (NFH), in its naval Step B version, to be used by the French Navy.**

The first NH90 TTH helicopter delivered to Belgium is part of an order placed by the Ministry of Defense for a total of eight NH90s: four in the TTH variant, and four NFHs. The TTHs will be used by the Belgian armed forces for air transport missions, peacekeeping operations, disaster relief work, and humanitarian missions. The four NFHs scheduled for later delivery will replace Belgium's aging Sea Kings in performing search and rescue (SAR) missions, and also will carry out maritime support tasks for the country's M-class frigates.

"It is an honor for Eurocopter to hand over the first NH90 to Belgium today in the presence of the country's Defense Minister Pieter de Crem," said Dominique Maudet, the Eurocopter Group's Executive Officer for France, and Vice President - Global Business and Services. "This latest-generation aircraft will provide Belgium – a member state of NATO – with modern resources tailored to the diversity of its missions. In addition to this delivery, which has a symbolic importance, the Belgian armed forces can count on Eurocopter's support when it comes to putting their NH90 fleet into service."

Based on the latest model of the French TTH, this first aircraft was delivered to Belgium in its final operational configuration (FOC), ensuring interoperability between the Belgian armed forces and their French counterparts.

The NH90's FOC version is equipped with field-tested avionics that enable the helicopter to carry out missions both day and night, regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. It also benefits from a high-performance self-protection system, an interoperable military communication system for international operations, and the necessary equipment for ship-based deployment.

Eurocopter also delivered the French DGA's first NH90 NATO Frigate Helicopter (NFH) in its new Step B version, to be used by the French Navy. This aircraft will join the fleet of seven NFHs already delivered to the French Navy in the first standard configuration.

"This new naval variant of the NH90 represents a significant and eagerly-awaited step for the French Navy," added Maudet. "It provides the French Army with an aircraft equipped with new functions that better respond to operational requirements, particularly in anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare."



The NH90 NFH boasts a state-of-the-art weapons system that combines – as part of a high-performance platform – a package of ultra-modern electronic, acoustic and optronic sensors as well as weapons loads adapted to anti-ship and anti-submarine missions. The helicopter also performs SAR, amphibious, maritime surveillance and anti-piracy missions.

The six NH90 final assembly lines currently operational in France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Australia, and Spain are under the supervision of NHIndustries, a consortium jointly owned by Eurocopter, AgustaWestland and Fokker Aerostructures, which respectively hold 62.5 percent, 32 percent and 5.5 percent stakes.

To date, 133 NH90s have been delivered to 14 countries, and together they have logged more than 31,000 flight hours.

### **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 are currently 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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