

AW newsletter

Summer 2020

SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR IFR-CERTIFIED AW119

Hot on the heels of achieving Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) certification in 2019, the AW119 is now set to enter the US civil market with the sale of one of the single-engine helicopters to a US Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operator.

The AW119 established a new standard in the rotorcraft industry when it became the first single-engine helicopter in decades to fully meet current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) IFR requirements.

The contract with EMS operator Life Link III marks the first sale of the FAA-certified IFR-capable AW119 to the civil market. This is a further sign of our growing share in the North American EMS market, which now totals 113 across a fleet of AW119s, AW109s, AW169s and AW139s.

The IFR-capable AW119 is an ideal IFR entry point for public service or commercial operators looking for the highest levels of safety and performance while retaining the economics of single-engine operations. The aircraft's redundant flight systems and advanced avionics by Genesys Aerosystems allow pilots to operate the aircraft safely even in challenging weather conditions.

The class-leading AW119 delivers outstanding situational awareness, mission effectiveness and safety. More than 350 have been sold to over 130 customers in 40 countries, where they perform a wide range of missions including EMS, utility, firefighting, law enforcement, passenger transport, training and government/military duties.

Life Link III operates eight helicopter bases across the Midwest, with a ninth scheduled to open later in 2020. The company's helicopter and airplane services provide on-scene emergency response and inter-facility transport for patients requiring critical care. Life Link III signed a contract for one helicopter with delivery in 3Q2021, adding to an existing fleet of ten AW119Kx helicopters.



AW109 TREKKER TAKES OFF IN FRENCH EMS MARKET

Another milestone for our flexible and reliable AW109 Trekker came in mid-June with the announcement that it has been selected by an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) operator in France.

The contract, the result of a competitive tender process, marks the first time the light twin-engine helicopter will operate in the EMS sector in the country. The helicopter will provide its services from Rouen Hospital in Normandy and will be operated by SAF Hélicoptères, part of Groupe SAF which operates 65 helicopters and supplies services covering the whole helicopter ecosystem.

The Trekker will have a customised EMS interior and delivery is expected by the end of 2020 following its completion at our final assembly line in Vergiate, Italy.

The success of the AW109 Trekker follows that of our AW109 Power and Grand for EMS missions in France, and also further expands the number of commercial customers there using our helicopters – including the AW109 series, AW169 and AW139 – for a wide range of roles.

The AW109 Trekker's spacious interior offers medical crew whole-body access to patients, along with room for essential medical equipment, allowing life-saving treatment to continue in the air. Its superior productivity, excellent flying qualities and manoeuvrability, and robustness and high inherent safety make the aircraft a firm favourite with operators in a variety of missions in addition to EMS, including VIP/corporate transport, security services and utility roles.



ITALIAN ARMY KICKS OFF LUH PROGRAMME WITH NEW AW169

AW169

The first step in a new programme that will allow the Italian Army to meet evolving operational needs and ensure more efficient fleet management took place in July with the delivery of the first of two AW169 basic training twin-engine helicopters.

The next-generation training helicopters, the second of which will also be delivered this year, will allow the Italian Army to train crews in preparation for transition to the new advanced multirole Light Utility Helicopter (LUH), developed specifically for them from the AW169 dual-use baseline.

The LUH Programme is based on a single new-generation platform and aims to progressively replace a range of ageing types in different classes. The overarching programme will deliver unique logistics, operational, technical, certification and training commonalities and training across the growing AW169 fleet of government operators in Italy. These synergies will help provide exceptional mission effectiveness in joint homeland security and emergency response.

Over 220 AW169s have been sold to customers worldwide, including public service, military and law enforcement operators, for missions such as utility, surveillance, special operations, maritime patrol, land reconnaissance, training, search and rescue, and firefighting.



'SMART DELIVERY' KEEPS CUSTOMERS CLOSE EVEN AT A DISTANCE

We take pride in our innovative and customer-centric approach, something that has been exemplified by our Division's response to the global health crisis; just one example of this has been our helicopter virtual acceptance procedure.

This new procedure, "smart delivery", was initiated in Italy before being rolled out across all our geographies. It represents a third option for customers, in addition to existing processes, leveraging on digital technologies and resulting in a more streamlined and rapid process, every aspect of which can be managed remotely.

In our existing helicopter acceptance procedures handover takes place in-person to a customer or their representative, while with smart delivery the customer follows the process remotely as it takes place at our facility. By making use of digital tools and live videos, the customer can be part of every phase of the acceptance, from ground inspection and flight tests to painting and the completion of the interiors, even the final checks. This is also true for documentation review and equipment checks.

We always put the customer at the heart of all we do and smart delivery is no exception, offering several benefits including fast-tracked processes and reduced travel costs. Further implementation of this new procedure is currently underway at our production facilities in Poland, the United States and the United Kingdom.

[Click here to see an interview on smart deliveries with Fabio Castiglioni, our SVP of Program Management Platforms.](#)



SH09 RETURNS TO THE SKIES FOR TEST FLIGHTS

More forward progress in the development of our single-engine SH09 helicopter was announced in June, with the commencement of test flights in Italy.

The tests took place from mid-June in Pozzallo, Sicily, and are part of an ongoing assessment of the benefits of a new main rotor configuration. The modified main rotor head and next-generation rotor blades have been under assessment since January, and will optimise the helicopter's dynamic behaviour, further reducing pilot workload through all phases of flight.

In addition to the current test flights, using the third SH09 prototype (designated P3), further advancements in development and trials are planned for 2020; the Garmin avionics suite G3000H; a new tail rotor hub design (presently undergoing bench-testing in Ennetmoos, Switzerland); a new aerodynamics package for the tail plane, vertical fin and upper cowlings (which has already been validated through wind tunnel testing and CFD analysis); as well as the final main rotor configuration with the latest blades and revised flight controls.

Flight tests had been on hold since early March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Good use was made of the

grounded period, thanks to close collaboration with partners and suppliers, despite the restrictions in place, allowing the continuation of the SH09's industrialisation and development processes. Engineering teams progressed with design activities for the upcoming P3 upgrades and for the configuration definition of the next prototype (Pre-Series 4, or PS4), while the operations and procurement teams continued to ensure the delivery of parts for both aircraft.

The single-engine, turbine-powered SH09 will benefit from increased modularity, modern electronic systems, and a larger cargo hold and cabin, addressing the evolving needs of the market and delivering greater capabilities at a competitive cost. It will meet the latest safety standards and feature fast cruise speeds and excellent "hot and high" capabilities, combined with a low noise signature thanks to an innovative dynamic assembly and shrouded tail-rotor.

The integration process with Leonardo continues, and Kopter has already begun to benefit from complementary skills, resources and tools at every level, providing considerable support to the SH09 programme development and production of parts.



US NAVY PILOTS COMMENCE TRAINING AT OUR PHILADELPHIA SITE

This summer US Navy instructor pilots commenced training on the TH-119 aircraft (designated TH-73 by the Navy) at our facilities in Philadelphia – a real milestone for a programme that will ultimately see the aircraft become the Navy’s new training helicopter.

The first instructor pilots arrived on 15th June and were followed by two further batches, all of whom are usually based at NAS Whiting Field, northwest Florida.

The instructor pilots came to first learn the basics of the aircraft directly from our training staff; once they are fluent on the aircraft and its systems they will begin teaching student aviators following the commencement of aircraft delivery.

The training consisted of coursework, familiarising them with the aircraft itself, virtual training through a simulator and, finally, training flights in the actual TH-73A configuration with our pilots, many of whom are former US Naval aviators themselves.

The instructor pilots reported that they were very excited by their new aircraft and its capabilities; these represent a major step forward from the current training aircraft, which are over 40 years old. Strong communication has meant feedback is received from the instructor pilots in real-time, allowing further tailoring of the programme in line with the Navy’s suggestions.

Instructor pilot training will continue over the next few months as we ramp up production on the aircraft, which was selected by the US Navy in January as its next training helicopter. The Navy has ordered 32 helicopters, with the total procurement expected to reach 130.





The certification of the AW189K variant of our successful AW189 super-medium helicopter brings to market a new further option for efficient high-endurance, long-range and large-capacity operations at reduced operating costs in comparison to larger, heavier types

The AW189K, powered by modern Safran Helicopter Engines' Aneto-1K 2,500 shp class turboshafts, received its type certification from the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in June. This latest achievement is a further demonstration of the AW189 platform's unparalleled mission versatility in its class. It is already the most successful super-medium helicopter by every standard: sales, deliveries and flight hours.

The AW189K delivers exceptional performance, particularly in hot and high conditions, and can meet operator requirements across a wide range of geographies. Its outstanding performance is particularly well-suited to missions including offshore, Search and Rescue (SAR), parapublic and fire-fighting, and VIP transport.

Orders for more than 100 AW189s have already been placed, with around 70 in service across the globe. The worldwide AW189 fleet has already logged over 87,000 flight hours and is carrying out missions including long-range SAR, long-range offshore transport, VIP transport, Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC), disaster relief and fire-fighting.



ENHANCED SUPPORT SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

We have taken a further step to maximise helicopter fleet effectiveness and safety of operations for our customers in South Africa with the acquisition of a new service centre in Pretoria.

The Precision Aviation Services (Pty) Ltd. site at Wonderboom Airport had already operated as an Authorised Service Centre for our helicopters in the country for the last 25 years and was the first to be rated “Excellent” in the continent.

The acquisition is in line with our Industrial Plan’s focus on greater customer proximity and stronger customer support services. It is also testament to our lasting commitment to our customers in the region, where we support a fleet of over 120 helicopters, largely in the Sub-Saharan civil market.

The Wonderboom facility includes office space, maintenance hangars, a bonded warehouse, workshops and other services, and provides maintenance, product support, and engineering services. It also reinforces spares availability in the region for a range of models including the AW119, AW109 series and AWFAMILY (AW139, AW169 and AW189), with the possibility of future expansion to further models.

We have more than 100 helicopter service and maintenance centres worldwide and plan to establish at least one Excellent-rated centre in every strategic market.



SUCCESSFUL HANDOVER OF UPGRADED LYNX TO BRAZILIAN NAVY

Close cooperation and collaboration, built on a foundation of mutual trust and a long-lasting relationship with the customer, allowed teams in Brazil and the UK to safely complete the helicopter acceptance process for the latest upgraded Super Lynx to the Brazilian Navy in May.

The factory acceptance process in the UK had already been completed for the third upgraded Super Lynx Mk21B helicopter, which had subsequently been shipped to Brazil and recommissioned by our in-country Field Service Representative (FSR) team. The usual acceptance process in-country for the helicopter was interrupted by the COVID-19 crisis before it could fully conclude.

The final test flights, to be performed by our own aircrew, were prevented by the rapidly escalating global travel restrictions necessitated by the pandemic in early March. Unfortunately, this left some minor issues that were present post-recommissioning unresolved. These required verification through final checks only possible in flight.

At this point there was no possibility of getting UK aircrew back out to Brazil to complete the test flights. However, since the Brazilian Navy had not yet taken full ownership of the aircraft they were unable to fly it on their charge to conclude the tests. Thankfully a one-off solution for this deadlock was found; an agreement was reached with our insurers that would allow the Brazilian aircrew to captain the aircraft and complete a very specific set of standard test flights.

The team in the UK worked with the Brazilian aircrew to carry out pre- and post-flight briefings, and the test flights proved sufficient to isolate and resolve any issues. This

then allowed the customer to sign the acceptance form and formally conclude the acceptance process.

This highly collaborative approach required our team in Yeovil, the company customer support representatives resident in-country and the Brazilian Navy Squadron aircrew to work together across geographies to achieve the safe and successful delivery of the aircraft.

Key to the close customer relationship on which this solution depended was the resident onsite Brazilian Navy team (the 'GFRLynx Team'), which has been in Yeovil since 2015. Consisting of a total of nine naval personnel from the HA-1 Lynx Squadron, it is headed by a Naval Captain, supported by a mix of commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

The GFRLynx Team acts as the primary interface between the Division and the customer for the contract. Its responsibilities range from technical and programmatic reviews, monitoring the progress of aircraft modification and approval of emergent work, to aircraft factory acceptance test prior to shipping to Brazil. The GFRLynx team changes its personnel every two years, with the third group presently halfway through its deployment.

The first two upgraded Super Lynx aircraft delivered in January 2019 have now formally taken over flying duties from the existing Lynx Mk21A, with one operating from the home squadron in Sao Pedro da Aldeia and one embarked in the Mediterranean on UN duties. The remaining five aircraft are being progressively delivered, with the programme slated for completion by the end of 2022.





Despite the significant challenges presented by recent months, progress continues apace on the Norwegian All Weather Search and Rescue Helicopter (NAWSARH) Programme, ahead of the planned “go live” of operations in-country in September.

Aircraft production is moving forward, with Aircraft #11 to #14 in production flow at our Yeovil, UK, site. Both Aircraft #11 and #12 are scheduled for delivery before the end of 2020 and three further aircraft (#04, #08 and #10) were delivered to Norway in May and June, bringing the total there to eight.

Meanwhile in Norway operations also continued with a record high of over 133 hours flown in June, against a planned 120 flight hours, with a total of 540 test evaluation and training flight hours in 2020. This is all the more impressive given the circumstances faced by our support team; shipments were forced to take ever more convoluted passage to maintain supply and avoid stock shortages. The ingenuity of our material services organisation overcame the obstacles and succeeded in maintaining a seamless service.

Further testament to the great dedication of our colleagues comes from those members of the team who travelled to Norway, despite testing and quarantine issues, to allow modifications to be conducted. Our people deployed from both Italy and the UK, and by 24th July four aircraft were completed, lined up and ready for duty, with the full flight simulator going through final integration and testing.

Formal approval from the Norwegian authorities has also been received for our maintenance organisation in Kjeller, which will allow us to complete the helicopter acceptance process and RAD activities on three of the aircraft there, an essential requirement to permit go-live later this year.

On the avionics side, delivery of documents to the Directorate of Air Armaments and Airworthiness (DAAA), the Italian military airworthiness body responsible for certification of software, for Suite 7 continues. This will ultimately allow us to progress to the next stage of the programme and permit training for the second base go-live early in 2021.

The continuity of service our people have delivered has resulted in an almost invisible impact from the pandemic. This allowed the air force to put the aircraft through its paces, deploying in the first week of June to Svalbard in the far north as part of their evaluation activities with great success. SAR operations commenced from the Sola base in September, putting the latest generation of AW101 to the test over an unforgiving Norwegian winter.

The NAWSARH Programme will ultimately see 16 AW101 helicopters delivered to the customer, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice, and also includes a “turnkey” support solution, comprising spares and technical support and training services. Designed with sophisticated avionics and mission systems, coupled with long range and endurance, the AW101 is the most advanced, versatile and capable multi-role helicopter available today.

ITALIAN CSAR PROGRAMME NEARS CONCLUSION

This summer saw the delivery of the final aircraft of 12 AW101s in Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) configuration for the Italian Air Force and the successful conclusion of customer acceptance.

CSAR-12 was transported from our UK site in Yeovil to our Italian site in Cascina Costa on 25th June and customer acceptance concluded on 31st July, with the aircraft going into service in August. This 12th aircraft completes the AW101 (known as HH-101) CSAR fleet in Italy. These helicopters are already performing operations (most notably during the recent response to the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic) and as of June had completed approximately 3,800 flight hours.

The final delivery is just the beginning for the CSAR programme: The Mission Enhanced (ME) configuration will be operative by early 2021. This will go online one aircraft at a time, for a total of six in the year, following customer planning and a retrofit programme for these first six helicopters.

In addition the following new requirements are currently under evaluation: an additional three helicopters, fleet alignment to the ME configuration, reinforcement of current logistic support and SOGE (EW libraries tool) capability.

The Italian Air Force AW101s are configured for personnel recovery and Special Forces operations support. They are to be operational with the 21st Group of the 9° Stormo Caccia (9th Fighters Wing) based in Grazzanise, Caserta province.



NEW INNOVATION CENTRE PREPARES FOR TAKE-OFF

A purpose-built research, design and innovation facility adjacent to our UK site in Yeovil is nearing completion, when it will provide a regional hub for aerospace and associated industries.

A project led by Somerset County Council and supported by the aerospace industry, including Leonardo Helicopters, as well as wider local partners, the flagship iAero centre will encourage collaboration and growth in the aerospace sector and its associated high-value design and engineering technology supply chains. Construction of the 2,398 metre-square facility is slated for completion by the end of 2020, with the opening scheduled for summer 2021.

The centre will cost an estimated £8.7m to build and has been made possible through a land contribution from Leonardo Helicopters, with funding being provided by the European Regional Development Fund, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Deal and Somerset County Council.

The new centre will deliver against the Heart of the South West's forthcoming Local Industrial Strategy, which aims to increase the area's contribution to the UK economy in part by capitalising on our key opportunity sectors, which include aerospace and advanced engineering. This is due in no small part to the global role Leonardo has played in recent decades as a world leader in the sector.

iAero will bring together partnerships, people and projects under one roof. Cutting-edge ideas and dynamic technologies will form the research, development and innovation that take place; exploring and experimenting, utilising and developing skills.



SUCCESSFUL FIRINGS FOR AW159 WILDCAT 'MARTLET' LMM

Late spring saw major progress in the development of a new capability for our multi-role AW159 Wildcat helicopter: the first successful firings of the Thales 'Martlet' Lightweight Multirole Missile (LMM).

The firings trials took place between 27th April and 21st May and demonstrated the integration of the Martlet onto the AW159 platform. The tests were carried out under the UK Ministry of Defence's Future Anti-Surface Guided Weapon (FASGW) programme and represent a significant milestone for this high-end capability, which affords force protection of surface shipping such as the new Queen Elizabeth carriers and is due to enter service with the Royal Navy later this year.

The trials took place despite the ongoing COVID-19 situation, which required the Leonardo and Thales teams to find new ways of working and operating while under strict distancing measures.

The LMM provides a step-change in capability for the Royal Navy, better enabling it to engage with smaller, fast-moving, asymmetric threats in the maritime environment. It could also allow operators to engage air targets, such as other maritime helicopters or UAVs.

Over 60,000 flight hours have been logged by the global fleet of AW159s, in service with the UK's Royal Navy and British Army, the Republic of Korea Navy and the Philippine Navy for battlefield and maritime multirole operations.



CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE AW159 WILDCAT

The revolutionary new Digital Automatic Flight Control System (DAFCS) for our AW159 Wildcat has endowed the highly advanced helicopter with a flight control system to match its impressive capabilities and the large amount of data available to its crew.

This step-change in the capability of the AW159 was the work of our engineers in the UK and in Italy and took place under a tight timescale to meet the required schedule for the launch customer, the Republic of Korea Navy. The achievement of the Anglo-Italian DAFCS team was recognised by the UK's Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) with a Bronze Medal in 2019.

The new DAFCS leveraged on our work on automatic flight control systems and was the first DO-178B (Software Considerations in Airborne Systems and Equipment Certification) Level A system to be designed, developed and tested in the UK. The four-axis autopilot system gives unprecedented levels of stability, flightpath control, safety and improved capability – providing “hands off” flight and a “wings level” safety feature, while significantly reducing crew workload, allowing crew to focus more attention on prosecuting the mission in hand.

The DAFCS and future software upgrades will create growth potential for the already remarkable AW159 – enhancing safety and delivering greater capabilities for the multi-role helicopter. Not only does the system provide increased effectiveness, it also crucially offers reduced maintenance and training costs – as well as a path towards Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) teaming.

Further developments in the AW159's capability are also in the pipeline with the Thales Martlet and MBDA Sea Venom missiles. You can read more about the recent successful Martlet trials elsewhere in this issue.

In total 62 AW159 Wildcats have now been delivered to UK forces (34 to the British Army, 28 to the Royal Navy) while export customers are the Republic of Korea Navy with eight AW159s and the Philippines Navy with two.



THE SEA KING: CELEBRATING A REIGN OF OVER 50 YEARS

The 50th anniversary of the maiden flight of one of our first Sea King helicopters was marked with a fly past and return visit by the aircraft to its birthplace: our Yeovil site in the UK.

The helicopter in question was the Sea King XV666, known as 'Damien' and now operated by HeliOps. This was one of more than 340 Sea King helicopters originally delivered to the UK Ministry of Defence and eight further international operators. Even today, 51 years on from the first such helicopter's maiden flight in 1989, a global fleet of more than 70 remains in service with six different operators.

Just as we do today, we offered customers the possibility of highly bespoke platforms, with key capabilities tailored to their needs. The Sea King has carried out missions including search and rescue, troop transportation, anti-submarine warfare, airborne early warning and anti-ship warfare. In some respects it can be regarded as the predecessor to today's highly successful advanced multirole AW101 platform.

Sea King customers around the world continue to receive our comprehensive support to maximise aircraft availability and currency. These services include technical support, technical documentation and training, maintenance working parties for repairs, upgrades and material support (spares, repair and overhaul).

The countries still operating a Sea King fleet today include Norway, with ten Mk43 Sea Kings. The country is currently further expanding its rotary wing fleet to include 16 AW101 all-weather search and rescue helicopters, to be used by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security. You can read more on the latest on this programme elsewhere in this issue.



LEONARDO HELICOPTERS AT LEADING FORUM FOR MARITIME SAR

2020 is proving to be a year in which we establish a new normal, with many real world activities moving to a virtual environment; this included the Maritime Search and Rescue Conference (MSAR) in May.

Helicopters play a key role in SAR operations the world over, and as a major rotorcraft OEM Leonardo was among participants at the virtual conference held 13th to 14th May. This annual leading international forum for maritime professionals, rescue teams and industry partners addresses SAR challenges and requirements, with participants discussing and sharing best practice.

MSAR gave us the chance to showcase our comprehensive current and future range of advanced SAR platforms and capabilities for short, medium and long-range maritime recovery. Our presentation took place on the first day of the event and was given by our own Antonello Forcati and Simon Tye, Business Development Manager for SAR at Bristow.

We began with an introduction from Antonello detailing how our helicopters have proved to be valuable and versatile aircraft during these challenging times, enabling the safe transport of COVID-19 patients, medical staff and equipment, with many being reconfigured with specific bio-containment modules developed in collaboration with the relevant aviation authorities.

Simon was then introduced and spoke on Bristow UK's SAR operations with the AW189, which often face very

demanding SAR environments. He provided an overview of the UK SAR service, operations and achievements, underlining the more than 25,000 SAR missions flown and over 10,000 lives saved. The presentation included a video filmed during a winching lifeboat exercise in the North Sea showing the outstanding hover performance and large cabin size of the AW189.

Antonello concluded by presenting recent updates and leading features of the latest certified avionics phases, plans for development and future SAR scenarios where we envisage increasing use of unmanned air systems and networked communications, and how we are already working to embody these advanced capabilities onto the AW189 to consolidate its supremacy in the modern SAR helicopters class.

The fifth edition of MSAR was held virtually using the V-Fairs virtual conference tool; a total of 36 presentations were delivered during its two days with invited delegates and their guests totalling almost 250. Attendees included coast guards, border guards and air/naval forces from different countries, such as the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Norway's Joint Rescue Coordination Centre and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX).

As well as Leonardo, other exhibitors included Airbus, FLIR, Airborne Technologies, ST Airborne Systems, Smith Myers, SAAB, Collin Aerospace, Swiss Drones and others involved in marine industries.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING WITH THE HEMS COMMUNITY

Global challenges require global solutions, and this was evidenced by a webinar bringing together Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) experts from around the world, including a representative from Leonardo Helicopters, HEMS specialist Sam Schaab, to discuss the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the HEMS community.

The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) webinar held on 12th May addressed “COVID-19 - Helicopter transport - challenges & experience” and was attended by representatives from the armed forces, national coastguards, offshore transport operators and manufacturers. The webinar was the first to provide a common forum for key stakeholders to come together and share experience, issues and emerging best practice as they address new ways of operating to provide HEMS services under unprecedented conditions.

Sam Schaab gave the second presentation, providing detailed insight into how we have assisted civil and military helicopter operators to adapt their aircraft to be used for medical evacuation. This included exploration of the various biocontainment devices, decontamination systems and cabin isolation technologies and solutions available. He particularly underlined the importance of a large cabin to accommodate the biocontainment unit, medical team and their specialised equipment, and a means to recirculate and sanitise the air, as well as providing sufficient room to perform decontamination procedures.

Sam also looked at the challenges and opportunities our Division had faced in supporting the global response, as well as giving examples from around the world of how our operators had played their parts in supporting COVID-19 operations. He ended by underlining our enduring commitment to the sector: “Leonardo is committed to work with customers and operators and is now looking at developing fully certified installations that would form part of medical equipment for EMS helicopters operated by civil and multirole government agencies.”

Other speakers at the event came from the UK’s Royal Air Force, Airbus Helicopters, Bristow Helicopter Search and Rescue, CHC Helicopters Ireland, the Icelandic Coastguard, and the Royal Navy. Topics spanned the challenges of coast guard operations to new sanitisation and cleaning practices.



AMS AND THE AW119 WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEMS IN S AFRICA

Since its inception 54 years ago, South Africa's Red Cross Air Mercy Service Trust (AMS) has grown into a comprehensive aero-medical service, one that is today synonymous with our own AW119 "Koala" helicopter.

The current AMS helicopter fleet comprises eight AW119s (both Ke and Kx models), which have become indispensable in the provision of specialised medical, mountain and sea rescue services. Supported by the cutting-edge capability of the AW119, AMS has transformed its Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (EMS) capabilities.

J.R. Redelinghuys, AMS Flight Operations Manager, said: "The AW119 is a stable machine for rescue operations. The machine is great for operating in difficult terrain such as mountainous areas and the separate cockpit makes this an ideal machine when operating night vision goggles (NVGs)."

Thanks to a spacious and readily reconfigurable interior, together with best-in-class performance and capabilities, the AW119 is ideally suited to this life-saving service, fully equipped by the AMS with an Advanced Life Support (ALS) medical intensive care type interior.

The AMS supports the operational effectiveness of the AW119 with continuous skills development and training. It has established both a training and development unit and a mobile medical simulator. The latter offers a cost-effective training platform for medical personnel and provides an up-to-date learning experience that simulates the interior of the AW119 cabin.

The AMS is a non-profit aero-medical rescue organisation based in Western Cape (Cape Town and Oudtshoorn) and KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) which works in partnership with the various Provincial Departments of Health in South Africa to provide rescue, air ambulance and rural health outreach services.



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