

FIRST NH90 PROTOTYPE ROLLS OUT

Aix-en-Provence, 29 September 1995.

Three years after the signature of the NH90 Design & Development Contract, NHIndustries presented today, as scheduled, the first prototype of a fully assembled NH90 helicopter.

The event took place on 29 September 95 at 11.00 a.m., in the presence of the Customer NAHEMA and top defence officials of France, Italy, Germany and The Netherlands, at the Eurocopter France factory, Marignane, where final assembly was carried out.

Assembly of the first NH90 prototype (PT1) was completed with the main modules, groups and components received from the plants of the four European companies sharing the development work for NHIndustries: Agusta, Eurocopter Deutschland, Eurocopter France and Fokker.

Installation of the vehicle subsystems and their preliminary functional tests (already performed) was supported by on-site working teams of the four Partner Companies in accordance with their respective system design responsibilities and gave excellent results.

During the NH90 Development phase, a total of 5 prototypes, plus the Ground Test Vehicle (Iron Bird) will be employed to demonstrate design compliance and to validate overall system performance. Qualification is moreover supported by a number of laboratory and ground tests, simulators and integration facilities.

Eurocopter France is to assemble and test the first three prototypes representing the "common helicopter"; Eurocopter Deutschland the No. 4 prototype representing the Tactical Transport version; Agusta (Italy) the Iron Bird and the No. 5 prototype representing the naval version.

No.1 Prototype will begin the planned ground tests and calibrations next Monday. The first flight will be made by the end of this year as scheduled.

This important achievement shows:

- the ability of four European nations to harmonise a common technical-operational definition of the helicopter for their defence needs, which represents a big step forward towards true rationalisation, standardisation and interoperability among European Armed Forces.
- the result of the effort made by the nations and industries involved to reinforce European aeronautical cooperation with the aim of sharing costs, workload and technology to produce a competitive high performance Weapon System.

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