

NH90 2nd PROTOTYPE IN FLIGHT

Aix-en-Provence, 20 March 1997

Maiden flight of the second prototype of the NH90 (PT2) took place successfully on 19 March 1997: the NH90 Programme, which represents a landmark programme for Europe's aircraft industry, has taken another important step forward.

The trial started at 6.15 p.m., and for the next 30 minutes, the NH90 PT2 was flown by:

- the experimental test pilot Philippe BOUTRY,
- the flight test engineer Denis TRIVIER,
- the flight engineer Jean-Claude RABANY.

The PT2, under the Eurocopter France responsibility, was completed with modules and components received from Agusta, Eurocopter Deutschland and Fokker.

It will be dedicated to the development of the fly by wire control system.

The electrical system of the PT2 is representative of the final configuration. An Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) and a Remote Accessory Gear Box are installed, thus allowing an autonomous starting of the engines.

This first flight performed in the mechanical mode allowed the check of the global functioning of the systems, the overall helicopter handling and the telemetry tuning.

NHIndustries prime contractor for the quadrinational NH90 helicopter Programme (launched by France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands), is pleased to say that the crew and the engineers, present at the flight trial, confirmed their overall satisfaction for the NH90 in flight behaviour.

This important step and the flight test results allow the stabilisation of the vehicle design and the consolidation of the achievements in all the NH90 development areas:

The first NH90 prototype PT1, after having opened the whole flight envelope, is continuing the planned experimental trials overtaking the 100 flight hours.

Besides others, trials have been made up to 20.000 feet altitude, at speeds up to 190 kts, at extremes centre of gravity, at a max gross weight of 10.000 kg, 12 deg slope landings and rolling landings at speeds exceeding 50 knots.

We remind that industry flight test crew, together with military pilots and test engineers of the Four Nations, were impressed by the NH90 excellent performance, handling qualities and its general behaviour.

The Ground Test Vehicle (GTV) achieved a total of 300 running test hours, contributing in putting the clearances for the flight trials of PT1 and PT2.

Selection of almost all equipment has been completed and approved by the Customers.

At the same time, important steps forward have been done in the construction of the third prototype (PT3), with assembly about to start, modules of PT4 and PT5 in manufacturing and the collateral activities for the mission systems development and qualification.

For the naval version, we should underline the evaluation of the Tactical Control System using the NH90 NHF Simulator, the cabin lay-out optimisation, the progress in the Helo/Ship interface detailed definition, in the main and tail rotor blades folding system and in the completion of NFH Mission Integration Rig.

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