



KOPTER TO ESTABLISH NEW SH09 HELICOPTER PRODUCTION FACILITY IN LAFAYETTE

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One of impressive results of Heli-Expo for Kopter Group is the announcement of the establishment of a new SH09 helicopter production facility in Lafayette, Louisiana. Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards and Kopter Group's CEO Andreas Löwenstein jointly announced that.

Kopter will lease a 84,700 sq. ft. facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission, which owns the state-of-the-art helicopter assembly buildings. This future production and support center comes in addition to the already existing and soon to be expanded Kopter sites in Switzerland, and will serve customers throughout the Americas. It is planned that it will ultimately source from U.S. suppliers parts representing more than 50 percent of the SH09's value.

The State of Louisiana initially funded construction of the \$25.3 million Lafayette facility on a 14.7-acre airport site. Kopter plans to make an important additional capital investment in new equipment and building extensions. Kopter will begin hiring of personnel later this year and prepare operations by mid-2020. Deliveries of locally assembled helicopters will start in 2021. Kopter intends to create at least 120 new direct jobs by 2025 in Lafayette, while production should ramp up to an anticipated volume of around 100 SH09 per year.

“We are delighted that Kopter chose Louisiana and Lafayette for the assembly of a dynamic new aerospace product,” Gov. Edwards said. “The SH09 helicopter will be highly competitive in the marketplace and provide outstanding performance, great passenger and cargo capacity, and superior engineering and design. Kopter could have chosen any location in North America to assemble this new helicopter. Louisiana's outstanding workforce and facility assets, and our competitive business climate, make Lafayette the clear choice for Kopter's future in the Americas.”

“Kopter Group chose the Lafayette site for several reasons,” Löwenstein said. “First, because of Louisiana, which is a rapidly growing and attractive region and already hosting several key helicopter operators and many industrial players. Second, for the easy access to a qualified workforce and a high-quality educational environment. And third, for the facility itself, which meets the highest standards and allows almost instant operations. Its location on the airport provides an ideal production environment, with quick and easy logistics and commercial access.”

In the framework of a thorough site selection process, Kopter Group conducted formal discussions with Louisiana Economic Development (LED) for several months. To secure the project, the State of Louisiana offered the company a competitive incentive package.

Kopter joins now a growing list of companies active in the helicopter sector in Louisiana, including offshore operators Bristow Group, Era Helicopters, PHI Inc. and RLC; and the medical air transport leader Metro Aviation.

This major step for Kopter's development in the US follows the formation in July 2018 of a fully owned US subsidiary, Kopter North America LLC. Christian Gras is the CEO of this subsidiary – in addition to his responsibilities as Executive Vice-President for Kopter Group - and Larry Roberts the President Sales, Marketing & Customer support.

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