SOLD OUT EXHIBITOR SPACE HIGHLIGHTS A SUCCESSFUL ROTORTECH 2016

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Around 350 delegates attended the Australian Helicopter Industry Association's Rotortech 2016 conference and exposition at the Novotel Twin Waters Resort on Queensland's Sunshine Coast over May 27-29, despite the global downturn in the helicopter industry.

More than 40 exhibitors displayed their wares at the three-day event which also attracted large numbers of general public who took the chance to get up close with a range of helicopter types.

"We have been delighted by the amount of interest that has been shown by the industry, and the public, that have come to be a part of this year's event," said AHIA president Peter Crook. "It is clear the industry wants to participate at Rotortech and we are seeking their feedback on what they liked and what they didn't so we can make Rotortech 2018 even better."

The AHIA says it has already received more than 50 expressions of interest from exhibitors who want to book display booths at Rotortech 2018.

"Having turned away around 30 exhibitors from this year's event due to limited space, we will be expanding the trade hall to accommodate even more exhibitors in 2018," said Crook.

Highlights from Rotortech 2016 included the display of Australia's first Eagle Copters 407HP, VH-

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EPU, a converted Bell 407 fitted with a Honeywell HTS-900D-2 turbine engine.

Coffs Harbour Airport-based Eagle Copters Australasia took delivery of the 407HP in early May after it was converted in Canada. It was displayed alongside Eagle Copter's Eagle Single, a converted single-engine Bell 212.

Eagle Copters' Eagle Single and 407HP. (Paul Sadler)

A major deal announced at the show was Professional Helicopters Services signing a letter of intent to purchase three Bell 505 Jet Ranger X helicopters with local Bell distributor Hawker Pacific. PHS will be the first helicopter training school in the region to operate the new type.

"We are delighted that Professional Helicopter Services has chosen the Bell 505," said Bell Helicopter's managing director of Asia Pacific Sameer Rehman. "This signing reaffirms the ongoing demand for the Bell 505 with more than 380 letters of intent around the globe, and more than 130 of those in the Asia Pacific region alone."

Outside the trade hall, the line up of 16 helicopters from three manufacturers included an example each of Airbus Helicopter's H130, H120 and H135 families as well as six H125 Squirrel series helicopters, including MotoGP world champion Mick Doohan's matte black-painted VH-MDQ and the pristine N609MK from motor yacht *SuRi*.

McDermott Aviation brought one of its new AS365 N3 Dauphins featuring an aeromedical configured cabin, which was parked alongside its belly tank-equipped Bell 214B, VH-SUH.

And while Bankstown Airport's Heliflite had an example each of a R44 and R66 on display, bad weather along the eastern seaboard prevented a Leonardo Helicopters AW169 from making its first appearance at Rotortech.

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McDermott Aviation brought one of its new AS365 N3 Dauphins. (Paul Sadler)

Mick Doohan’s matte black-painted Squirrel VH-MDQ. (Paul Sadler)

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