AIRBUS HELICOPTERS DELIVERS UPGRADED NIGHT VISION TO NPAS' UK POLICE HELICOPTERS

News / Manufacturer

Airbus Helicopters has delivered the first of seven upgraded National Police Air Service (NPAS) H135 helicopters, under a £1.5 million contract signed in December 2017 to equip and standardise the UK police helicopter fleet's Night Vision (NVIS) capability. Under the new configuration, all seven NPAS' H135 helicopters will be capable of NVIS operations down to ground level, enhancing their night time surveillance capabilities at all heights and in all environments.

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The first upgraded aircraft, G-POLF, was first delivered to UK police in 2002 and, with more than 15,000 flight hours, is a global H135 fleet leader. The standardised upgrade, common to all seven helicopters, will deliver the latest NVIS capability and bring these aircraft in line with NPAS' current NVIS-capable H135 fleet, allowing NPAS to benefit from commonality across the entire fleet.

Oliver Dismore, NPAS T/Accountable Manager, said, "Airbus Helicopters' UK design team is recognised as a European leader in the design and integration of night vision capabilities across the company's range of helicopters, while the company's 30 year heritage supporting the development of UK police aviation and their collaborative approach has meant the impact on fleet availability and operations has been minimised."

Colin James, UK Managing Director of Airbus Helicopters, highlighted, "Whether designing innovative rotary-wing solutions for UK and overseas customers or supporting UK helicopter fleet availability, our aircraft are the best fit for policing and emergency services missions and our UK team, working 24/7 from sites across the UK, ensures these can be relied on to deliver day in, day out."

The upgrade includes stripping and re-equipping the majority of cockpit instrumentation across all seven helicopters, including flight and mission equipment and new FENN700+ night vision goggles, to precisely the same standard. NPAS will now operate an enhanced night vision capability across its H135 fleet while standardisation ensures ease of use for pilots and crew.

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