AW169 SKIDDED CAPABILITIES TO GROW FURTHER WITH 5,100 KG INCREASED GROSS WEIGHT AND 11-SEATER CONFIGURATION

News / Manufacturer

AW169 light intermediate twin engine helicopter' operational capabilities and range of options will grow further with the launch of a 5,100 kg IGW kit and an 11-seater configuration fully compliant with the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers Report 690. Both will be made available for the aircraft version with skid landing gear.

The 5,100 kg kit for the AW169 skid version, originally conceived to meet government and defence requirements for missions like troop transport and combat operations, will also respond to evolving civil and public service market needs leveraging multiple operational and performance benefits. Key factors to this capability expansion are the inherent growth potential of the type not requiring modifications in the design of critical components, and the performance increase packages, delivering greater engine and transmission power as well as improved aerodynamics in all conditions and for all applications. Compared with the standard 4,800 kg Maximum Take-off Weight, the extra 300 kg available with the 5,100 kg IGW kit allows the embarkation of three more

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passengers or the addition of fuel for approximately one hour of operations. Existing operators of the type's version with skids will be able to retrofit the 5,100 kg IGW kit to enhance their aircraft's capabilities.

As an additional option, the 11-seater configuration, fully compliant with the IOGP Report 690, will introduce a new modular fuel tank system and two additional Type IV emergency exits in the cabin, increasing the total number from four to six. The 11 seats configuration will be available for the skid-fitted version in combination with the 5,100 kg IGW kit. This solution will allow the type to satisfy even more demanding offshore transport requirements in terms of payload, range, and compliance with IOGP latest standards.

This configuration will allow a radius of action of up to 75 nm with 11 passengers, therefore offering capabilities typically achievable with types with a MTOW exceeding 5.5 tons (intermediate class) at a light intermediate class cost of operations as well as granting latest safety standards compared with legacy helicopters. It will also deliver greater sustainability versus ageing types in the relevant weight category thanks to a more efficient powerplant, advanced navigation, modern support and maintenance approach, among other solutions. The Certification of the IGW increase is expected in 2024 while the 11-seater configuration with new modular fuel tank is planned for certification in 2026.

These latest operational capabilities will add to the EASA certifications of the skid undercarriage and unique IFR, single pilot, Advanced Search and Rescue Modes, both achieved in late 2022. With the skid configuration certification, the AW169 became the only modern CS29-certified aircraft able to offer all undercarriage solutions, further demonstrating the versatility by design of the type. The AW169 is also the only helicopter in its weight category that features Advanced SAR Modes. The performance increase packages previously developed had already enhanced engine performance and capabilities, transmission ratings and available payload through engine software updates and aircraft aerodynamics modifications, making the type the helicopter with the best power-to-weight ratio in its class.

The introduction of the AW169 has expanded Leonardo presence in the emergency medical service market and added more operators for law enforcement, disaster relief, and fire-fighting duties. It further reinforces the company's leadership in the multi-engine VIP market providing operators with one more option fitting between the popular AW109 series and the bestselling AW139 models. It also adds one more solution for shorter-range operations supporting the energy sector and allows Leonardo to play a growing role in the new wind farm support field. Moreover, its dual-use design has responded to a range of government, homeland security and defence requirements for missions like surveillance, troop transport, combat operations, disaster relief and emergency response, fire-fighting, training, mountain rescue, and medevac.

Over 320 AW169s are on order today, with around 170 units delivered from the Vergiate final assembly line to operators in over 30 countries. The global fleet has logged in excess of 170,000 flight hours in all kind of operations and conditions. The fleet leader has exceeded 3,700 flight hours in EMS operations in Sweden.

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