

FRANCE BECAME FIRST H160 LAW ENFORCEMENT CUSTOMER

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The French Armament General Directorate (DGA) has signed a contract, on behalf of the Ministry of Interior, for the procurement and maintenance of 10 H160s in a law enforcement configuration for the Gendarmerie Nationale. Linked to the contract for the procurement of 169 H160Ms for the French Ministry of Armed Forces, this order is part of the Stimulus plan to support the national aeronautical industry announced by the French government in 2020.

“The French Ministry of Interior contract is an important milestone for the H160. We now have customers for the offshore transportation, private and business aviation, search and rescue and law enforcement mission segments, showing that the H160 is a truly versatile aircraft,” said Bruno Even, CEO Airbus Helicopters. “Developing this new configuration for the H160 in cooperation with an experienced customer like the Gendarmerie Nationale is key to the success of the programme.”

France is the first country to order the H160 for law enforcement missions. The H160s for the Gendarmerie Nationale will be equipped with a Safran Euroflir 410 electro-optical system, winching, and fast roping capabilities. The air force command centre of the Gendarmerie Nationale and Airbus Helicopters are also working closely together to develop a tailored mission management system.

The French Gendarmerie Nationale already operates a wide fleet of Airbus helicopters from the H125, H135 and H145 families. On top of its improved performances and advanced mission systems, the H160 will bring a new troop transport capability for the French Ministry of Interior's security forces, mainly tactical units, such as the Gendarmerie Nationale's intervention group (GIGN). The first H160s will be delivered before the Olympic Games that will take place in Paris in 2024.

The first of a new generation of helicopter, the EASA-certified H160 benefits from a low cost of operations and optimized flight safety. With its light maintenance plan aligned between engine and aircraft, the H160 optimizes operating costs and offers a new standard in availability. The Gendarmerie's H160s will benefit from a global support contract to be managed by Airbus Helicopters including technical support, spare parts stocks on four Gendarmerie bases, and connected services.

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