



AGUSTAWESTLAND CONSIDERS FULL ICE PROTECTION FOR AW169

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AgustaWestland expects deliveries of its new **AW169** to be into double figures by the end of 2015 even as it works to add further capabilities to the 4.6t rotorcraft, including potentially **full ice protection**.

Since gaining European Aviation Safety Agency certification in July, the airframer has delivered one AW169 to an undisclosed customer, with a second emergency medical services-roled example to be handed over next month.

Next steps this year include validation of a rescue hoist along with expansion of the flight envelope, to be followed in 2016 by dedicated offshore approach procedures and the introduction of a level D full flight simulator.

Certification of its Limited Ice Protection System is provisionally targeted for early next year, assuming this winter's tests go to plan, says the company. In addition, it will consider the future integration of the more comprehensive Full Ice Protection System.

"If we have a launch customer we will start this initiative," it says.

Initially the Pratt & Whitney Canada PW207-powered helicopters are being assembled at its site in Vergiate, Italy, although once US Federal Aviation Administration is secured in 2016, a second production line in Philadelphia in the USA will come on stream in the middle of next year, it says.

AgustaWestland had a production AW169, eventually destined for the Dubai Air Wing, on display at Helitech, alongside a mock-up of the type in EMS configuration.

Work is also under way to begin assembly of heavier AW189s for oil company Rosneft at its Russian joint venture HeliVert, which already manufactures AW139s for the local market.

"It is not much different from the AW139, but we have to get Russian production certification and get people trained and have all the jigs available so it takes bit more time," it says. Production is scheduled to begin in 2016, it adds.

Rosneft has so far ordered 10 examples of the 8.3t AW189 for its RN-Aircraft subsidiary, but has indicated that its commitment may eventually rise to as many as 160 helicopters. As part of its deal for the new rotorcraft it took a 30% stake in Helivert, formerly a joint venture between AgustaWestland and Russian Helicopters.

That investment shows "trust" in the product and a willingness to develop in-country support to sustain its fleet, says AgustaWestland.

Although now flown by a number of operators, Danish firm Bel Air Aviation has become the first to pass the 2,000h milestone with its pair of AW189s, with one attaining 1,200h and the other 1,000h.

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