AIRBUS DELIVERS FIRST NH90 DESIGNED FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS TO FRANCE

News / Manufacturer

Airbus Helicopters officially delivered the first NH90 Standard 2 to the French Armament General Directorate. This new variant of the NH90 TTH was designed specifically for special operations. France has ordered a total of 18 NH90 Standard 2 helicopters that will be delivered by mid 2029. They will be operated by the French Army Aviation's special forces squadron in Pau. In December 2025, Spain joined the programme ordering 31 NH90s in a similar standard.

Matthieu Louvot, CEO of Airbus Helicopters commented: "We are honoured to deliver this NH90 Standard 2 to the French armed forces. This new standard builds upon the proven capabilities of the NH90 TTH with new breakthrough features designed specifically for special forces. More than ever, special forces operators will be able to execute their difficult missions in the toughest environments," he added. "We are very pleased that Spain has also joined the development of the features that will enhance the crew's situational awareness. It shows that this new standard of the NH90 is on its way to becoming the benchmark for special forces across the world."

The Standard 2 configuration includes the integration of the Safran Euroflir 410 D electro-optical

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system, a new digital map generator, installation for a third crew member and new enlarged rear sliding windows able to accommodate self-protection guns. It also includes provisions for a swift integration of the Direct Aperture System, which is under development, providing better visibility in poor flight conditions (snow, dust, fog), day and night. Additional upgrades will also include the use of a fully digital Thales TopOwl helmet, capable of simultaneously displaying DAS and EOS images on the visor.

The NH90 Standard 2 programme was ordered in 2020 by the NATO Helicopter Management Agency (NAHEMA) to NHIndustries and its partner companies (Airbus Helicopters, Leonardo and Fokker).

NHIndustries is the largest rotorcraft joint venture and it is responsible for the design, manufacturing and support of the NH90 helicopter, one of the leaders in the latest generation of military helicopters. The company takes the best from the European rotorcraft and defence industry, being owned by Airbus Helicopters (62.5%), Leonardo (32%) and GKN Fokker (5.5%). Each company has a long aerospace pedigree and brings the top of its skills and expertise to the end product.

02 AUGUST 2026

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https://50skyshades.com/news/manufacturer/airbus-delivers-first-nh90-designed-for-special-operations-to-france

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