



AIRBUS DELIVERS THE 7,000TH ECUREUIL HELICOPTER

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Airbus Helicopters has delivered its 7,000th helicopter from the Ecureuil family. The light single-engine H125, which was assembled in Marignane, France, was handed over to Blugeon Hélicoptères, a French company specialised in sling work at high altitudes. This new H125 will join Blugeon's existing fleet of five H125 helicopters located at three different bases in the French Alps and a fourth one in the Pyrenees. Each of them flies an average of 600 hours per year performing passenger transport, power line surveillance, filmmaking, preventive avalanche maintenance, mountain rescue, and large-scale hoisting.

Christian Blugeon, CEO and founder of Blugeon Hélicoptères, commented: "Blugeon is proud to take delivery of this new H125, the sixth one in our fleet. I'm especially proud of this shared milestone as this particular helicopter is the 7,000th Ecureuil manufactured by Airbus. I have been flying the H125 for more than 20 years, and have accumulated a lot of experience with this helicopter with which we have already flown almost 45,000 hours. It is a key element for our development strategy."

Axel Aloccio, Head of the Light Helicopters programme at Airbus Helicopters, said: "Since the first Ecureuil took to the skies in 1974, this family of aircraft forever changed the light helicopter market and the way aerial work is performed. Designed to be a simple, practical, and competitive aircraft, the secret of its success lies in its excellent performance and its incredible ability to adapt to operators' needs. It is precisely thanks to the confidence of operators like Blugeon that we are celebrating the milestone of the 7,000th delivery today."

The Ecureuil is currently operated by 2,014 customers in 124 countries representing all regions of the world. The Ecureuil family consists of the H125, the H130 in the civil market, produced primarily for aerial work, passenger transport and business flights, as well as for public services and emergency medical services (EMS). In the military market, the H125M is particularly popular for armed reconnaissance or light attack, as well as a training platform. Both civil and military versions have already exceeded 37 million flight hours.

The Ecureuil also has several altitude records to its credit. The most notable of these was reached on 14 May, 2005, when Didier Delsalle touched down on the summit of Mount Everest behind the controls of a serial H125 — the only helicopter to have ever accomplished this amazing feat.

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