



THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE JOINT LIGHT HELICOPTER IS BROUGHT FORWARD

News / Manufacturer



The launch of the Joint Light Helicopter programme has been brought forward to 2021! The announcement was made by The French Minister of the Armed Forces, Florence Parly. Airbus Helicopters' H160 was selected for the HIL programme back in 2017 and it was initially scheduled for launch in 2022 by the current military budget law. Launching the programme earlier will enable delivery of the first H160Ms to the French Armed Forces to be advanced to 2026.

During a visit to the Airbus Helicopters headquarters, the Minister also revealed the full-scale mockup of the H160M that will be presented on the Ministry of the Armed Forces stand at the next Paris Air Show. The helicopter was also given its official name and will be designated as “Guépard” (“Cheetah”) by the French Armed Forces.

The H160 was designed to be a modular helicopter, enabling its military version, with a single platform, to perform missions ranging from commando infiltration to air intercept, fire support, and anti-ship warfare in order to meet the needs of the army, the navy and the air force through the HIL programme.



“We are proud that the HIL is considered a strategic programme. I would like to thank the Ministry, the French Defence Procurement Agency DGA and the armed forces for their trust and for the close collaboration which helped create the conditions for the programme to be brought forward within the framework of the current military budget law. This will make it possible to speed up the replacement of the older generation of aircraft, while optimising the support and availability of the French State’s helicopter fleet,” said Bruno Even, CEO of Airbus Helicopters. “Our teams are committed to delivering an aircraft in 2026 that meets the needs of the French armed forces in terms of availability, performance and capability, thus enabling it to rapidly become the new benchmark on the world’s medium-lift military helicopter market.”

Built around a platform that will enter service next year, the HIL programme will benefit from many of the advantages inherent in the civil H160, particularly in terms of support, with simplified maintenance and lower operating costs than the previous generation of helicopters in this category.

1 platform

To replace 5 legacy types in the French Army, French Navy & French Air Force

2 new

Fuel efficient
Arrano engines

Innovative

Cockpit
systems

Blue Edge Blades

Lower sound levels

Modular & Versatile

169 helicopters

80 for the Army,
49 for the Navy,
and 40 for the Air Force

Support & Services

- > Reduced maintenance costs
- > Simplified maintenance
- > Digital environment

FIRST DELIVERIES IN 2026

HÉLICOPTÈRE INTERARMÉES LÉGER* – H160M FOR FRANCE

*Joint Light Helicopter

AIRBUS

27 MAY 2019

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