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Eurocopter delivers its second EC225 helicopter to the AIRTELIS affiliate of France's RTE public utility company

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Eurocopter, the world's leading helicopter manufacturer in civil and parapublic markets, has delivered the second EC225 to AIRTELIS – a wholly-owned subsidiary of France's RTE public utility company.

Created in 2011, AIRTELIS performs heliborne operations for customers in France and abroad, benefitting from the competence of RTE to carry out such missions. With this second EC225, which joins the initial helicopter delivered last year, AIRTELIS will be able to further expand its operations.

RTE is specialized in heliborne surveillance, maintenance and construction work on high- and very high-voltage power lines. To date, the company has logged a combined total of more than 250,000 flight hours – an equivalent of nearly 30 years of uninterrupted helicopter flight.

In addition to these power line missions, the EC225 also is capable of carrying external loads, including a water bucket for firefighting duties. For such operations, Eurocopter has certified the helicopter with a removable tank, installed in the cargo compartment, with a water capacity of 4,000 liters.

Eurocopter's 11-ton-class EC225 can lift loads of up to 4.5 tons for a wide variety of services, such as maintenance and construction work on overhead electrical power lines and airlift support at major infrastructure projects.

As with AIRTELIS' initial EC225, its second helicopter will be equipped with an innovative new system enabling the pilot to control a sling used to deploy electrical cables during flight. This system – the first of its kind – was developed by Eurocopter especially for the needs of AIRTELIS, and is integrated in the helicopter's cabin. It enables the helicopter to carry loads that have contact with land or water, with their orientation maintained steady beneath the aircraft within a pre-specified cone-shaped deployment zone. The system will guarantee the highest safety levels for Class-C sling operations.

“With this unique advantage, RTE and its AIRTELIS subsidiary can count on technical and operational excellence from Europe for its EC225s,” explained Philippe Dupuis, the Deputy Director General of RTE, and President of AIRTELIS. “This helicopter type is perfectly suited to bringing innovation to construction sites.”

Dominique Maudet, Eurocopter's Executive Vice President for Commercial, Global Business and Services, added that the latest EC225 delivery underscores the confidence and loyalty of RTE and AIRTELIS in the helicopter manufacturer's products.

“Its specialized system, unlike any other in the world – which was designed and developed by Eurocopter in close cooperation with RTE – once again underscores Eurocopter’s total commitment to further enhancing flight safety in the most extreme conditions,” Maudet added. “Moreover, as a result of the excellence and know-how from this partnership, Eurocopter has been approached by international operators for solutions in the construction and maintenance of electrical power networks.”

The EC225 is recognized for its high levels of safety, speed and range, as well as an unmatched payload lift capability. Utilized worldwide in applications ranging from search & rescue (SAR) for civil and military operators to offshore transportation in support of the oil and gas sector, the EC225 is the latest member of Eurocopter’s Super Puma/Cougar helicopter family – which has logged more than four million flight hours around the globe.

About Eurocopter

Established in 1992, the Franco-German-Spanish Eurocopter Group is a division of EADS, a world leader in aerospace and defense-related services. The Eurocopter Group employs approximately 20,000 people. In 2011, Eurocopter confirmed its position as the world’s number one helicopter manufacturer with a turnover of 5.4 billion Euros, orders for 457 new helicopters and a 43 percent market share in the civil and parapublic sectors. Overall, the Group’s helicopters account for 33 percent of the worldwide civil and parapublic fleet. Eurocopter’s strong international presence is ensured by its subsidiaries and participations in 21 countries. Eurocopter’s worldwide network of service centers, training facilities, distributors and certified agents supports some 2,900 customers. There are currently more than 11,300 Eurocopter helicopters in service in 149 countries. Eurocopter offers the most comprehensive civil and military helicopter range in the world and is fully committed to safety as the most important aspect of its business.

About RTE

RTE is a public utility company that operates France’s electrical power grid, tasked with operating, maintaining and developing the high and very high-voltage power network. RTE guarantees proper operations and safety for the country’s power grid. RTE transports electrical power from electricity providers in France and Europe to consumers, whether it be distributors (ERDF and local distribution companies) or industrial customers linked directly to the grid. The network overseen by RTE is the largest in Europe, with 100,000km of lines between 63,000 and 400,000 volts and 46 cross-border lines. RTE generated revenues of 4.229 billion euros in 2011 and currently employs 8,400 people.

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