



Kopter Press Book 2019

Gualter Helicopteros appointed Brazilian SH09 distributor

August 15, 2019



Kopter Group is now actively promoting its [SH09 single engine helicopter](#) to the Brazilian market, having appointed Gualter Helicopteros as its representative and distributor in country.

The partnership between the two companies was signed on 13 August at the LABACE exhibition taking place in São Paulo, during which a full-scale mock-up of [Kopter's SH09](#) has been displayed.

Brazil has in excess of 1,800 helicopters in operation, including a large number of single engine models, and [Kopter](#) has identified that its SH09 could help fulfil requirements for a modern, performing and cost-effective platform to replace ageing fleets.

'With more than 30 year[s] experience in the helicopter business and having introduced several helicopter models in the Brazilian market, Gualter Helicopteros is the right partner to ensure the success of the SH09 in Brazil,' Christian Gras, Kopter's executive vice president for customers, said.

'The team has an impressive track record, having sold over 600 new and used helicopters on the Brazilian and South American markets.'

The SH09 is fitted to a seven-seat transport configuration (five passengers and two pilots) developed and installed by [Metro Aviation](#). The mock-up being displayed also features the [Garmin G3000H](#), an avionics suite for which Kopter is the launching customer.

The G3000H will be integrated in the SH09 from first deliveries, and will reduce pilot workload, increase situational awareness, and boost the aircraft's operational safety margins.

The SH09 is generating a strong response on the worldwide market, Kopter says, having received orders for 70 units in total so far, plus another 100 tentatively committed to under letters of intent.

Kopter Group enters Brazilian market

August 13, 2019

Kopter Group is starting the active promotion of its SH09, the next generation single engine helicopter, in Brazil, with the appointment of Gualter Helicopteros as sales representative and distributor.



From left to right: José Antonio Pires Barbosa (Gualter Helicopteros), Christian Gras (Kopter Group), and Gualter Pizzi (Gualter Helicopteros) celebrate the new cooperation between the two companies. Kopter Photo

The partnership between the two companies was signed on the first day of the LABACE 2019 exhibition, which is taking place in Sao Paulo from Aug. 13 to 15.

Christian Gras, Kopter's executive vice president of customers, declared on this occasion: "With more than 30 years [of] experience in the helicopter business and having introduced several helicopter models in the Brazilian market,

Gualter Helicopteros is the right partner to ensure the success of the SH09 in Brazil. The team has an impressive track record, having sold over 600 new and used helicopters on the Brazilian and South American markets."

Brazil, which has a solid aeronautical tradition and is the world's third largest aircraft industry, counts today more than 1,800 helicopters in operation, including a large part of single engine models. It represents a unique opportunity for Kopter's SH09 as the helicopter

perfectly meets the market expectations for a modern, performing and cost-effective platform to replace an aging fleet.

For the first time, Kopter is showcasing the full-scale mock-up of its SH09 in Brazil. The SH09 will be fitted with a seven-seat transport configuration (five passengers and two pilots) developed and installed by Metro Aviation. The mock-up will also feature the Garmin G3000H, a state-of-the-art avionics suite for which Kopter is the launching customer.

The G3000H will be integrated in the SH09 since the very first delivery. It will significantly reduce pilot workload, increase situational awareness and boost the aircraft's operational safety margins.

The multi-role SH09 helicopter is a highly adaptive and versatile platform to transport passengers with the highest levels of safety, comfort and visibility. Its large cabin offers the volume and flexibility typically seen on light-twin helicopters. It allows multiple interior layouts that provide ample legroom as well as flexibility for added luggage loaded through the rear clamshell doors. The helicopter's low vibration levels with its five-blade main rotor, as well as the silent noise signature of the shrouded tail rotor, create the ultimate flying experience.

The SH09 is generating a strong response on the worldwide market, having today a total number of orders amounting to 70 units, to which another 100 LOIs are to be added. Kopter looks forward to welcoming Brazilian operators to its list of customers.

Gualter Helicopters To Distribute Kopter SH09 in Brazil

August 13, 2019
Richard Pericini



Kopter unveiled a mockup of the SH09 at Heli-Expo 2019, and the model will be the centerpiece of Gualter's display at LABACE, along with a few other preowned models.

Helicopter secondary market expert Gualter Helicopters, which for years has displayed preowned rotary-wing aircraft at its LABACE static display area, is taking a new direction this year as Brazilian distributor for Swiss rotorcraft startup Kopter. The mockup of the SH09 that was displayed at the Heli-Expo show will be the centerpiece of Gualter's display, although "one or two preowned aircraft" will fill out the display, according to company founder Gualter Pizzi.

Pizzi said that Kopter is looking at locations for a factory in Brazil. He considers the product an excellent fit for the Brazilian market, as the carbon-fiber construction allows for a larger cabin, carrying a pilot and eight passengers. The large rear door makes carrying an aeromedical stretcher much easier.

The aeromedical market is one for which the SH09 is particularly well suited. "The noise level is lower, there's no hitting your head, there's a flat floor, and 6.5 cubic meters of interior space," Pizzi said. The SH09 has duplicated mechanical, electrical, and hydraulic systems for reliability but has a projected low operating cost with its single 1,020-shp Honeywell HTS900 turbine engine and its on-condition maintenance schedule.

A helicopter with a single conventional engine and a cabin size that requires the medic to crouch beside the patient may work for a short evacuation, but not for a 45-minute trip. The state of São Paulo is the size of France but only has two-thirds the population, and hospitals capable of handling the most serious traumas are rarer, which means aeromedical trips are longer. The purchase and operating costs of twin-turbine helicopters are steep for limited public health and police budgets. If the Kopter SH09 can provide adequate space at an acceptable price, it may well find a ready market in Brazil.

Pizzi is seeing a better preowned market in 2019, having sold eight units, and he is projecting sales for the year of 24-25 units, compared to 2018's 18 sales, "The second half is always better," he explained.

Fabricante de helicópteros Kopter confirma participação na Labace 2019

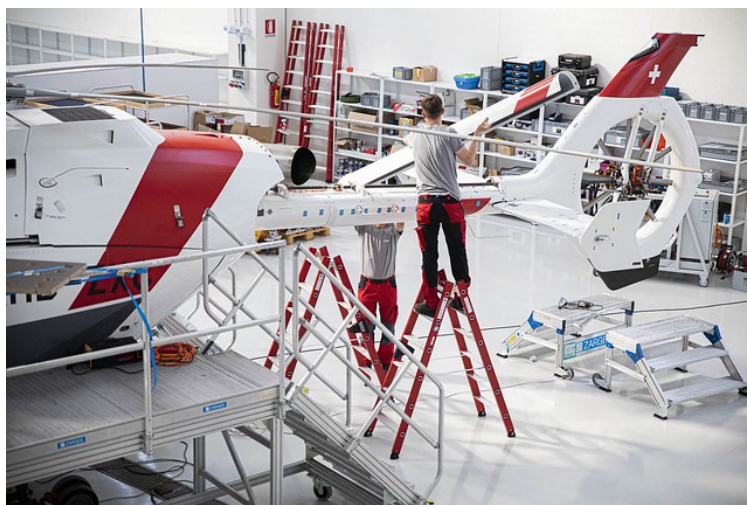
August 5, 2019



A Kopter, grupo suíço responsável pelo desenvolvimento e produção de uma nova geração de helicópteros, participará da Labace pela primeira vez agora em agosto. A empresa, que acaba de chegar ao Brasil, anunciará oficialmente o projeto de construção de uma fábrica no país, assim como já fez nos Estados Unidos no início deste ano. Na feira de aviação em São Paulo, entre os dias 13 e 15 de agosto, no

Aeroporto de Congonhas, a Kopter também vai apresentar mock-up em tamanho real e configurado do helicóptero multimissão SH09, modelo que começa a comercializar aqui.

“Escolhemos a Labace para fazer a apresentação oficial da Kopter no país porque é o evento mais importante da América Latina”, disse Christian Gras, vice-presidente executivo da Kopter, que estará em São Paulo para a feira. Com um volume de cabine comparável aos helicópteros bi turbinas médios – até 8 passageiros, redundância de sistemas, inigualável performance em velocidade – 140 nós (260 km/h), alcance – 800 km, e capacidade de carga externa – 1.500 Kg com o menor nível de vibrações e ruído, o SH 09 apresenta o menor custo operacional entre todos os helicópteros monoturbina de sua categoria atendendo aos mais altos níveis de segurança nunca antes exigidos. É o verdadeiro helicóptero multimissão de última geração.



O parceiro escolhido pela Kopter para trazer a marca para o mercado brasileiro, a Gualter Helicópteros, é uma empresa especializada na venda de aeronaves com foco na aviação executiva no Brasil. Atualmente, possui o maior cadastro de aeronaves à venda, em especial helicópteros. Conta com uma equipe com mais de 30 anos de expertise no mercado, responsável pela comercialização de mais de 600 aeronaves.

KOPTER VAI MONTAR HELICÓPTEROS NO BRASIL

August 2, 2019

A Kopter, grupo suíço de helicópteros, vai instalar fábrica no Brasil. O anúncio será feito durante a Labace 2019. A feira de aviação será realizada, de 13 a 15 de agosto, no Aeroporto de Congonhas. A Kopter vai apresentar mock-up em tamanho real e configurado do helicóptero multimissão SH09. O modelo que começa a ser comercializado aqui.



Comparável aos helicópteros bi turbinas médios, o SH 09 apresenta o menor custo operacional. Considerando-se helicópteros monoturbina. Leva té 8 passageiros, tem redundância de sistemas e atinge 140 nós (260 km/h). A capacidade de carga externa é de 1,500 Kg.

QUEM É A KOPTER

A Kopter, desde 2007, desenvolve e produz uma nova geração de helicópteros. Conta com 4 unidades na Suíça e o departamento de engenharia na Alemanha certificado pela EASA. Reúne mais de 340 profissionais oriundos da Europa e Estados Unidos. Além da unidade em território americano a empresa pretende se instalar na Ásia e no Brasil. <http://www.koptergroup.com>

Paradise Helicopters Visits Kopter's Flight Test Base In Pozzallo

August 2, 2019

Company Has Signed An LOI For Four SH09 Aircraft

Calvin Dorn, CEO & Owner of Paradise Helicopters, recently visited Kopter in Pozzallo, Italy, and shared comments on the SH09.



Kopter Group announced the signature of a Memorandum of Agreement with Paradise Helicopters for the purchase of four single-engine SH09 in February 2018, at Heli-Expo.

Calvin Dorn (*pictured*) saw SH09 prototype #3 (P3) performing flight tests in Pozzallo and met the Kopter crew on site to get an update on the program.

"As we look for a single-engine aircraft that will perform all the missions we do, seeing this aircraft flying and in a stable hover and having the characteristics they were aiming for, this is the answer. This is a fantastic opportunity to see this machine in action (as they) put it through its paces," Dorn said.

Paradise Helicopters is one of the most trusted and recognized tour operator in Hawaii thanks to its 20+ years of experience. The company looks forward to welcoming the next generation SH09 helicopter in its fleet in the years to come.

(Source: Kopter Group media release. Image from Kopter Group YouTube video)



Paradise Helicopters visits Kopter's SH09 flight test base in Pozzallo

August 1, 2019



Kopter Group announced the signature of a Memorandum of Agreement with Paradise Helicopters for the purchase of four single-engine SH09 at Heli-Expo in 2018.

Paradise Helicopters is one of the most trusted and recognized tour operators in Hawaii thanks to its 20+ years of experience.

Calvin Dorn saw SH09 prototype #3 (P3) performing flight tests in Pozzallo and met the Kopter crew on site to get an update on the program.

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Paradise Helicopters visits Kopter's SH09 flight test base in Pozzallo

July 31, 2019



Calvin Dorn, CEO & Owner of Paradise Helicopters, recently visited Kopter in Pozzallo, Italy, and shared comments on the SH09 helicopter.

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Paradise Helicopters looks forward to welcoming the next generation SH09 helicopter in its fleet in the years to come.

El helicóptero SH09 estará disponible en agosto en el mercado latinoamericano

July 31, 2019

Belo Horizonte

Kopter AG, el grupo suizo responsable del desarrollo y producción de una nueva generación de helicópteros, llega a Brasil para comercializar, desde agosto, el helicóptero multimisión **SH09**.



Inicialmente, el objetivo es ingresar al mercado sudamericano en disputa y ayudar a renovar la flota brasileña actual, pero el grupo Kopter tiene un proyecto más amplio que consiste en construir una fábrica en el país para producir helicópteros localmente.

El mercado de la Defensa brasileña actualmente exige helicópteros modernos de instrucción de turbina única para dotar a la **Aviación Naval** y la **Aviación del Ejército**, y el **SH09** encaja perfectamente con los requisitos existentes, además del puertas concha en la parte posterior del fuselaje.

En marzo pasado, **SH09** fue la sensación en **HeliExpo** en Atlanta tras el anuncio de Kopter AG de una fábrica estadounidense en el estado de Louisiana (antigua instalación de **Bell Helicopters** en el Aeropuerto Regional de Lafayette).

"Los planes de Kopter para Brasil son a mediano y largo plazo, involucrando distribución, mantenimiento, apoyo logístico, ensamblaje y estructuras de fabricación", dijo el vicepresidente ejecutivo de Kopter, **Christian Gras**.



Kopter tiene como objetivo ir más allá de la comercialización al ofrecer una transferencia de tecnología efectiva, equipos comisionados y diseños de accesorios para la industria local y la creación de empleos de alto nivel en el país, según el vicepresidente.

Con un volumen de cabina comparable al de los helicópteros de doble turbina mediana: hasta ocho pasajeros, redundancia del sistema, rendimiento de velocidad óptimo: 140 nudos (260 km / h), alcance: 800 km y capacidad de carga externa: 1.500 kg con el nivel más bajo de vibración y ruido. El **SH09** también tiene el costo operativo más bajo de todos los helicópteros de turbina única en su clase, cumpliendo con los niveles más altos de seguridad.

El socio elegido por Kopter para llevar la marca al mercado brasileño, **Gualter Helicopters**, es una empresa especializada en la venta de aviones enfocados en la aviación comercial en Brasil.



Actualmente, la compañía tiene el mayor registro de aviones a la venta en el mercado brasileño, especialmente helicópteros.

Cuenta con un equipo con más de 30 años de experiencia, responsable de la comercialización de 600 aviones.

La suiza Kopter llega a Brasil para comercializar a partir de agosto el helicóptero multipropósito SH09

July 31, 2019



El objetivo inicial es abrir el mercado y ofertar sus aeronaves en la renovación de la flota brasileña actual, aunque Kopter tiene un proyecto más amplio que implica la construcción del modelo en Brasil, después de instalar una unidad de fabricación en los Estados Unidos, en el estado de Louisiana (en la antigua instalación de Bell Helicopters en el Aeropuerto Regional de Lafayette).

El SH09 se ofrece con varias configuraciones de diseño diferentes. La opción estándar proporciona dos asientos de piloto hacia adelante y cuatro asientos de pasajero en popa, todos ajustables adelante / atrás y arriba / abajo. Una puerta trasera plegable, similar a la de los Airbus H35 fue concebida para versiones sanitarias, además de dos puertas corredizas laterales. Sus misiones pueden ser militares, policiales, ambientales y civiles. Con un volumen de cabina comparable al de los helicópteros medianos de doble turbina: hasta 8 pasajeros, redundancia del sistema, rendimiento de alta velocidad: 140 nudos (260 km / h), alcance: 800 km y capacidad de carga externa: 1,500 kg con El nivel más bajo de vibración y ruido, el SH09 también ha reducido los costos operativos. En febrero de 2018, la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Aérea, también conocida como EASA, emitió un certificado de calidad de diseño para la compañía suiza Kopter Group, anteriormente conocida Marengo, hoy controlada por el millonario ruso Alexander Mamut.

Tras obtener un certificado DOA (aprobación de organización de diseño) se consolida el nuevo helicóptero- cuyo prototipo voló en 2014- en el mercado mundial, situado en el nicho de helicópteros de hasta 2,5 toneladas. **(Javier Bonilla, corresponsal del Grupo Edefa en Brasil)**

Foto: Helicóptero Kopter SH09

Metro to purchase five SH09

July 24, 2019



Metro Aviation and Kopter have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that formally records Metro's intent to purchase five SH09 helicopters, following Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification

Metro explained that it chose the SH09 helicopter due to its 'twin-engine cabin volume for a single-engine price tag and low operating costs'. "It made sense for us to move forward with the MOA expressing our intent to purchase at this time," said Metro Aviation President Mike Stanberry.

Both Metro and Kopter worked on the design of aircraft's interior and collaboratively showcased the new designs at several helicopter exhibitions in North America.

"We have become more familiar with the SH09 concept and we've worked in conjunction with Kopter to develop interiors for EMS, airborne law enforcement and tour operations, which Metro has rolled out to the industry in the last two years," Stanberry commented.

This new contract brings the total number of orders for the SH09 to 70 units, to which another 100 letters of intent are to be added.

Metro to purchase SH09 helicopters

July 24, 2019



Metro Aviation will purchase five [SH09](#) helicopters from Kopter following the aircraft's FAA certification.

The two companies have signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the aircraft.

The cooperation between Metro Aviation and Kopter started in 2018, when the companies worked on the design and completion of several SH09 interiors for EMS, airborne law enforcement and tour operations, which Metro has since rolled out to industry.

Andreas Löwenstein, CEO of Kopter Group, said: 'I am tremendously pleased to bring our cooperation with Metro Aviation to this new level and I am equally very proud that our helicopter is now slated to be included in the future fleet of an operator such as Metro Aviation who is recognised globally for their high level of expertise and service.'

Kopter: nuovo ordine per SH09, elicottero di fabbricazione svizzera

July 24, 2019

CHRISTIAN BEUTLER



Il primo prototipo di elicottero risale al 2014, quando Kopter si chiamava ancora Marengo Swisshelicopter.

Dagli Usa arriva un altro ordine per il Kopter SH09, un elicottero leggero di fabbricazione svizzera le cui consegne dovrebbero cominciare nei prossimi anni: Metro Aviation, società americana specializzata nei trasporti sanitari, intende acquistare cinque apparecchi.

Il nuovo contratto porta a 70 il numero totale degli ordinativi, a cui si aggiungono altre 100 lettere d'intenti, ha indicato ieri il costruttore Kopter (ex Marengo Swisshelicopter), che ha uffici a Wetzikon (ZH) nonché attività aerea a Mollis (GL). "Un SH09 costa circa 3,3 milioni di dollari" (3,24 milioni di franchi), spiega all'agenzia di stampa finanziaria Awp un rappresentante dell'azienda. "Il prezzo dipende comunque dall'equipaggiamento richiesto dal cliente", aggiunge.

"Il mercato americano rappresenta il principale sbocco per Kopter, poiché non vi sono limitazioni per gli elicotteri monomotori, che invece esistono in Europa per certe operazioni". L'impresa elvetica è presente negli Stati Uniti dal 2018 attraverso la sua filiale Kopter North America.

Metro Aviation will fünf Kopter SH09 bestellen

July 24, 2019

Der Hubschrauberhersteller Kopter hat durch eine neue Vereinbarung mit dem US-Unternehmen Metro Aviation die Zahl der Aufträge für den SH09-Helikopter auf 70 erhöht.



Der US-Flugrettungsdienst Metro Aviation hat bei Kopter eine Grundsatzvereinbarung für den Kauf von fünf SH09-Hubschraubern unterzeichnet. © Kopter

Der US-Rettungshubschrauber-Betreiber Metro Aviation hat mit dem Schweizer Helikopterhersteller Kopter eine Grundsatzvereinbarung über den Kauf von fünf Hubschraubern des Typs SH09 getroffen. Das Unternehmen will das Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) nach der Erteilung der Musterzulassung durch die US-Luftfahrtbehörde FAA in Festbestellungen umwandeln.

„Metro Aviation hat die SH09 evaluiert und aufgrund ihrer Kabinengröße, die der eines zweimotorigen Helikopters entspricht, und ihres Preisschildes und den niedrigen Betriebskosten, die denen eines einmotorigen Hubschraubers entsprechen, ausgewählt. Die SH09 bietet die höchste Geschwindigkeit, Reichweite und Nutzlast in ihrer Klasse sowie weitere wünschenswerte Eigenschaften und Vorteile“, teilte Kopter mit. Das Unternehmen wird die für den nordamerikanischen Markt bestimmten Exemplare [in einem kürzlich eröffneten Werk in Lafayette im US-Bundesstaat Louisiana endmontieren](#).

Stimmiges Preis-Leistungsverhältnis

„Wir haben uns mit dem SH09-Konzept vertraut gemacht und haben in Zusammenarbeit mit Kopter Interieurs für EMS, Airborne Law Enforcement und Sightseeing-Flüge entwickelt, die Metro in den letzten zwei Jahren in der Branche eingeführt hat“, sagte Mike Stanberry, der Präsident von Metro Aviation.

„Diese Kabinenkonzepte wurden von der Branche sehr gut angenommen. Die Kombination einer Kabine einer Zweimot mit dem Anschaffungspreis und den Betriebskosten eines einmotorigen Helikopters sowie die außergewöhnliche Leistung machen die SH09 zu einer sehr attraktiven Option. Für uns war es sinnvoll, mit dem MoA voranzukommen und unsere Kaufabsicht zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt zum Ausdruck zu bringen.“

Metro Aviation wurde 1982 als Charter-, Schul- und Wartungsunternehmen in Shreveport in Louisiana gegründet. Neben Emergency Medical Services (EMS) mit Hubschrauber bietet das Unternehmen auch andere Arten von Helikoptermissionen wie Flüge für die Polizei oder Vermessungs- und Kontrollflüge an. Das Unternehmen betreibt 140 Hubschrauber.

Metro Aviation entwickelt und baut auch Inneneinrichtungen für Hubschrauber und hat im Laufe der Jahre über 30 ergänzende Musterzulassungen (STC) für verschiedene Einbauten bekommen.

Kopter SH09 flight-testing accelerates

July 23, 2019
Thierry Dubois

Since the SH09's third prototype (P3) has been flying in Sicily, Kopter has been swiftly gathering test data and the company is about to make final aerodynamic choices.



Kopter is aiming for the SH09 to reach an altitude of 16,000 feet and a velocity to never exceed (VNE) of 151 knots at sea level. Kopter Photo

“We have just begun flight-test block 4 – the first one took place in Mollis, Switzerland, from November 2018 to February 2019 and flight-test blocks 2 and 3 here this year in Pozzallo, Italy,” said chief technical officer and head of flight operations Michele Riccobono. The first three blocks were dedicated to flight envelope expansion of the light single.

In block 4, “we are starting to refine the aerodynamic configuration of the fuselage, empennage and horizontal stabilizer,” Riccobono explained. The flight-test block is scheduled to end late this month or early in August. The configuration will be selected by then. “The main goal of these aerodynamic refinements is to optimize the aircraft directional stability and the performance,” said Riccobono.

After block 4 is complete, the main [gearbox will be replaced](#). The design is essentially unchanged. Aeromet, the new supplier, is expected to provide Kopter with a component that will bring back the whole design load envelope. The previous upper housing suffered from quality issues that restricted it.

The conforming gearbox will enable flight-test engineers and pilots to fly the full SH09 design envelope. It will be fully explored in terms of maximum take-off weight (MTOW), longitudinal center of gravity (CG) and maneuvers such as tight turns, said Riccobono. Kopter is aiming for the SH09 to reach an altitude of 16,000 feet and a velocity to never exceed (VNE) of 151 knots at sea level.

The definition of PS4, the first “pre-series” aircraft, will thus be completed by the end of September. Some long-lead items have been ordered already. PS5, which will be identical to PS4, will “follow shortly and be dedicated to the expansion of the envelope to cold climate and hot-and-high altitude airfield operations,” said Riccobono. This aircraft is planned to be operated in Alaska and Colorado.

Despite indications last June that the SH09’s certification may slip to 2021, the company’s target remains to reach this milestone within the end of 2020. The test site in Pozzallo is meeting expectations and the number of weekly flights – an average 9.6 – during a flight-test block is twice the initial target.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) will award the certification. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is expected to validate it soon after, Riccobono said. “To expedite the FAA validation we are going to involve them very early to accommodate, in the certification testing plan, any specific request that may originate from the differences existing between CS27 and FAR27.”

Delivery of the first production aircraft, the sixth SH09 to be built, is scheduled for December 2020. The first two customers to receive an SH09 are scheduled to be Air Zermatt and Helitrans, but who will take the first production aircraft has yet to be decided.

Meanwhile, the search for one or two additional shareholders is progressing, according to a Kopter spokesperson. In June, it was hoped for August and it is now foreseen in September or October.

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Samstag, 13. Juli 2019

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Lehrabschluss als Türöffner für Karriere

Beilage Nach erfolgreichem Abschluss der Lehrzeit können sich die jungen Berufsleute neue Ziele setzen und ihre berufliche Karriere in Angriff nehmen. Die überreichten Atteste, Diplome und Fähigkeitszeugnisse sind eine gute Basis, um die Ziele zu erreichen. Was jedoch alle wissen: Zeugnisse allein reichen nicht, um im Job erfolgreich zu sein – angesagt ist lebenslanges Lernen. In der Lehrabschlussbeilage 2019, die heute veröffentlicht wird, schauen Lehrabschliesser auf ihre Ausbildungszeit zurück und berichten über ihre Zukunftspläne. In welcher Form die Digitalisierung Einzug bei der Prüfungsorganisation einzug hält, berichtet die Chefexpertin des Berufs Fachleute Gesundheit (FaGe). (red) **Beilage**

So tickt der Kopter

Der Chef des Molliser Helibauers erklärt, warum es bis zur Serienreife länger geht.

Fridolin Rast

Der Molliser Helibauer Kopter will auch in den USA eine Produktion aufbauen und allein dort jährlich über 100 Helikopter bauen. Und er will diesen ab Mollis und Lafayette in Louisiana in 100 Länder verkaufen, wie Andreas Löwenstein im Interview mit der «Südostschweiz am Wochenende» sagt.

Doch dahin ist noch ein gutes Stück Weg. Für die 100 Flugstunden, welche der Prototyp P3 inzwischen erreicht hat, hat man jeden Moment gezählt, in dem ein Antriebssystem am Laufen ist.

So erklärt Löwenstein, was die heute rund 300 Angestellten von Kopter in Mollis tun, und warum die aktuellen Flugerprobungen nicht in der Schweiz stattfinden, sondern auf Sizilien. Er skizziert, was es noch braucht, bis der übernächste (Vorserien-)Kopter PS5 seine Tests in der Winterkälte von Alaska fliegen und der PS4 sich in der Zertifizierung durch die Europäische Luftfahrtbehörde Easa bewähren kann.

Neues Geld gesucht

Andreas Löwenstein erklärt auch, wie der Kopter tickt, beziehungsweise wa-

rum er etwa so tickt wie eine Schweizer Uhr. Denn die Firma sei heute auch eine Schweizer Firma, obwohl sie mit Geld des russischen Milliardärs Alexander Mamut finanziert wird. Löwenstein möchte die «weit mehr als 300 Millionen Franken» aus dessen (Schweizer) Familienstiftung aber aufstocken und sucht deshalb einen weiteren Investoren. Was Löwenstein aber noch nicht verrät: Woher die potenziellen Investoren kommen, die dieses zusätzliche Geld in die Firma bringen und die Abhängigkeit von Mamut reduzieren sollen. **Seiten 2 und 3**

Sieg in vier Sätzen gegen Rafael Nadal

Roger Federer steht am Sonntag zum zwölften Mal im Final von Wimbledon. **Sport**



Bild: Keystone

Armee verschrottet die Hälfte ihrer Munition

Entsorgung Für 147 Millionen Franken will das Verteidigungsdepartement neue Munition kaufen. So steht es im Rüstungsprogramm 2019, über das der Nationalrat in der Sommersession diskutiert hat. Was bei der Debatte kaum einem Sicherheitspolitiker bewusst war: Die Armee wird in den nächsten 15 Jahren die Hälfte ihrer Munitionsbestände ungebraucht verschrotten. Der Grund: Sie sind veraltet. Laut Staatsrechnung beträgt der aktuelle Wert des Munitionsbestandes 3,4 Milliarden Franken, womit das Volumen der entsorgten Geschosse bis zu 1,7 Milliarden betragen könnte. (lhn) **Seite 27**

20 Jahre Ponyhof in Ziegelbrücke



Bei einem Spaziergang über die Rainbow-Ranch erzählt Pferdenärrin Miriam Lehn über die Anfänge ihres Ponyhofs und Zukunftspläne. **Seite 4** Bild: Sasi Subramaniam

Swisscom ist nach der Panne unter Beschuss

Datenverlust Panne bei der Swisscom: Der Telekomkonzern hat Fotos, Videos und Dokumente von mehreren hundert Kunden des Speicherdienstes MyCloud gelöscht – unwiderruflich. Während die Swisscom den Vorfall «ausserordentlich» bedauert, üben Politiker Kritik. «Für die Betroffenen ist der Vorfall eine Katastrophe», sagt SP-Nationalrat Matthias Aebischer. Swisscom müsse nun die Verantwortung gegenüber den Kunden wahrnehmen, findet FDP-Nationalrat Thierry Burkart. Der Vorfall zeige aber auch, dass Daten nie zu 100 Prozent sicher seien. (mka) **Seite 25**

Krach beim orangen Riesen

Migros-Zentrale reicht Strafanzeige gegen die Genossenschaft Neuenburg-Freiburg ein. **Wirtschaft**

Funktioniert das wirklich?

Die Nutri-Score-Ampel soll zeigen, wie gesund Lebensmittel sind. Wir haben sie eine Woche lang getestet.

Bund «Wochenende»

Wetter heute

Kanton Glarus



13° / 20°
Seite 11

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Christian Tetzlaff

Fr, 26. Juli 2019, 20 Uhr,
Kirche St. JakobMODIGLIANI QUARTETT
ADAM LALOUM KLAVIERSa, 27. Juli 2019, 11.30 Uhr,
Atelier Bolt

FORM & KLANG

Sa, 27. Juli 2019, 20 Uhr,
Kirche St. JakobMAURICE STEGER
BLOCKFLÖTE & LEITUNG
LA CETRA
BAROCKORCHESTER BASELSo, 28. Juli 2019, 11.30 Uhr,
Madrisa, Bühne am ÖpfelseeIAN SMITH TROMPETE & LEITUNG
& VIRTUAL JAZZ REALITYSo, 28. Juli 2019, 20 Uhr,
Kirche St. JakobSTEVEN ISSERLIS VIOLONCELLO
CONNIE SHIH KLAVIERDo, 1. August 2019, 17 Uhr,
Atelier Bolt

JANOSKA ENSEMBLE

Fr, 2. August 2019, 11.30 Uhr,
Atelier BoltI BAROCCHISTI
DIEGO FASOLIS CEMBALO & LEITUNGFr, 2. August 2019, 16.30 Uhr,
Kirche St. Jakob

BENJAMIN RIGHETTI ORGEL

Fr, 2. August 2019, 20 Uhr,
Arena KlostersKIT ARMSTRONG KLAVIER
DIE DEUTSCHE KAMMER-
PHILHARMONIE BREMENSa, 3. August 2019, 15 Uhr,
Kirche St. Jakob

CHRISTIAN TETZLAFF VIOLINE

Sa, 3. August 2019, 20 Uhr,
Kirche St. Jakob

SIR ANDRÁS SCHIFF KLAVIER

So, 4. August 2019, 11.30 Uhr,
Atelier BoltAZAHAR ENSEMBLE
JUDITH JÁUREGUI KLAVIERSo, 4. August 2019, 18 Uhr,
Arena KlostersCHRISTIAN TETZLAFF VIOLINE
DIE DEUTSCHE KAMMER-
PHILHARMONIE BREMENTickets unter
www.klosters-music.ch

Region

Kopter soll ab Sizilien
in die USA fliegen

Vor fast genau zweieinhalb Jahren hat Andreas Löwenstein als neuer Chef der damaligen Marenco Swisshelicopter AG begonnen. Heute heisst sie Kopter Group AG, hat mit über 300 Leuten gut doppelt so viel Personal wie Anfang 2017, einen Standort in den USA – aber immer noch nichts (aus)geliefert.

Interview: Marco Häusler

«Das ist ein Schweizer Taschenmesser, das fliegt.» So beschrieb Andreas Löwenstein das Helikoptermodell SH09, als er das Ruder der damaligen Marenco Swisshelicopter AG als neuer Chief Executive Officer übernahm. Unter dem heutigen Namen Kopter Group AG will die Molliser Firma einen grossen Teil des Weltmarktes für leichte, einmotorige Mehrzweckhubschrauber erobern. Doch um mit der Serienproduktion beginnen zu können, braucht es die Typenzertifizierung der Europäischen Agentur für Flugsicherheit (Easa). Dafür testet Kopter derzeit den dritten Prototypen (P3) auf dem Heliport Pozzallo an der südlichen Küste der italienischen Insel Sizilien (Ausgabe vom 20. Juni). Die Daten, die mit P3 gesammelt werden, sollen in die Entwicklung der zwei Vorserienmodelle (Pre-Series) PS4 und PS5 einfließen, um mit diesen schliesslich die Zertifizierungsflüge durchzuführen. So der Plan.

Herr Löwenstein, wie ist der aktuelle Entwicklungsstand?

Andreas Löwenstein: Wir kommen voran. Vielleicht nicht so schnell, wie wir ursprünglich wollten. Aber das ist bei praktisch allen Luftfahrtgeräten so. Das sind hoch komplizierte Systeme, und wie sie wirklich funktionieren, zeigt sich erst, wenn man sie fliegt.

Auf einer Skala von null bis zehn, wobei zehn die Auslieferung der ersten Modelle bedeutet:

Wo stehen Sie?
Achteinhalb.

Und wann findet diese erste Auslieferung statt?

Das Ziel ist für die gesamte Organisation – und da arbeiten alle daran –, in der zweiten Hälfte des nächsten Jahres die Zertifizierung der Easa zu bekommen. Danach wird ausgeliefert.

Also, ungefähr Mitte 2020 die Zertifizierung...

...ich sage immer «in der zweiten Jahreshälfte». Denn wir sind nicht allein. Wir sind abhängig von einer Behörde, und die muss alles sehen und prüfen. Wenn wir alleine zertifizieren könnten, ginge es schneller. Das wäre der Sicherheit aber nicht zuträglich. Ich gebe Ihnen ein Beispiel: Um eine Fluggenehmigung für P3 zu bekommen, mussten wir 70 000 Seiten Papier abliefern. Und diese Dokumente werden bei der Easa gelesen, geprüft, nachgerechnet. Das ist nicht einfach «Blabla». Um diese wichtige und notwendige Arbeit zu leisten und die entsprechenden Dokumente zu verfassen, haben wir 250 Ingenieure. Das dauert Monate.

Mit P3 fliegen Sie zurzeit auf Sizilien. Ist diese Testreihe schon abgeschlossen?

Nein, wir werden sämtliche Flüge bis zur und einschliesslich der Zertifizierung in Sizilien machen. Das sind Hunderte Testflüge. Sie müssen über 5000 Testpunkte erfliegen und im Zertifizierungsprozess noch einmal nach-

weisen. Das in der Schweiz zu machen, hat aus zwei Gründen wenig Sinn. Das Erste ist die Lärmbelastung, das Zweite die Topografie. Alle Daten – und das sind Hunderte, die gesammelt werden – werden per Telemetrie in Echtzeit übermittelt. Sie können aber nichts empfangen, wenn Felswände und Berge im Weg stehen.

Wie viele Flugstunden wurden denn bisher mit P3 gesammelt?

Über 100. «Flugstunden» sind für uns alle, in denen die Antriebssysteme der Maschine benutzt werden. Dazu zählen auch jene «Flugstunden», in denen die Maschine auf dem Boden festgezurrte Flüge simuliert. Wichtig ist für uns, dass wir heute auf 12 000 bis 13 000 Fuss Höhe fliegen, das sind 3600 bis 4000 Meter, und das bei sehr warmen Wetterbedingungen. Denn die Flugperformance der Maschine hängt davon ab, wie viel Luft sie unter die Flügel bekommt. Und das wiederum hängt auch von der Temperatur ab.

Die Wärme wurde als einer der Gründe genannt, warum auf Sizilien getestet wird, ein weiterer ist die salzhaltige Atmosphäre. Warum ist das wichtig?

Einer der Feinde der Maschine ist Korrosion. Mit dem Umfeld auf Sizilien kann die Widerstandsfähigkeit dagegen gleich mitgetestet werden.

In der Schweiz gehört Air Zermatt zu Ihren Erstkunden. Im Wallis herrschen aber andere Bedingungen. Wenn Sie für weitere Tests nicht mehr in die Schweiz zurückkehren: Wie testen Sie dafür?

Wir werden dafür in viel extremere Bereiche gehen. Die Maschine – oder besser: Das werden dann andere Maschinen sein – wird in Alaska bei minus 45 Grad fliegen. Eine Maschine wird dort einen Winter verbringen müssen. Und die gleiche Maschine muss in Colorado in den USA fliegen – in grosser Höhe bei starker Hitze.

Jetzt sprechen Sie aber schon von PS4 und PS5, oder?

Das ist PS5, der macht die Tests unter extremen Bedingungen. PS4 wird die Zertifizierungsmaschine sein, die für

«Wir werden die Maschine in über 100 Ländern verkaufen.»

Andreas Löwenstein
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
der Kopter Group AG

die Serienproduktion repräsentativ ist. P3 ist ihr Vorläufer.

Womit wir wieder auf Sizilien wären. Warum der Heliport Pozzallo? Weil Chefingenieur Michele Riccobono Italiener ist und lange bei Leonardo Helicopters war? Es hätte ja auch Frankreich, Spanien oder allenfalls Portugal sein können.

Nein, mit Herrn Riccobono hat das nicht viel zu tun. Wir hatten dafür vier Standorte zur Auswahl. Für Pozzallo entschieden wir uns unter anderem, weil wir dort Tag und Nacht und sogar am Wochenende fliegen können – und Direktflüge ab Zürich haben.

Parallel zur Zertifizierung der Easa in Europa wird jene der US-Luftfahrtbehörde (FAA) vorangetrieben. Wie muss man sich das vorstellen?

Behörden trauen sich untereinander. Die Easa ist die Luftfahrtbehörde, die weltweit die höchsten Anforderungen an die Sicherheit stellt ...

... die «schwierigste» ...

... es ist mit Sicherheit die anspruchsvollste. Was aber eine gute Sache ist, weil es umgekehrt für den Hersteller den grössten Schutz bietet. Dafür gibt es ja auch viele Beispiele. Mir ist es lieber, dass mir jemand auf die Finger schaut und von Zeit zu Zeit auch auf die Finger klopft, wenn etwas nicht so richtig sitzt.

Doch es wäre auch möglich, sich die FAA-Zertifizierung zuerst zu sichern.

Richtig, aber mir ist es lieber, zuerst die höhere Hürde zu springen und erst dann die etwas tiefere. Wir werden die Maschine in über 100 Ländern auf den Markt bringen. Es wäre ein Drama, wenn man überall neu zertifizieren müsste. Deshalb machen wir die Referenz-Zertifizierung bei der Easa, die dann die Bibel ist für alle anderen, und die «validieren» diese Zertifizierung dann nur noch. Das ist auch in den USA so. Dort wird die Easa-Zertifizierung weitgehend anerkannt. Manchmal werden zusätzliche, vielleicht einige weitergehende Studien oder Tests verlangt, oder Test unter anderen Bedingungen. Wir treffen uns jetzt schon regelmässig mit Leuten von der Easa und der FAA. Es ist ausgemacht, dass wir – wenn alles gut läuft – beide Zertifizierungen im praktisch gleichen Zeitfenster erreichen – wie das Pilatus mit dem PC24 gemacht hat.

Wie gross ist dieses Zeitfenster?

Das könnte theoretisch am gleichen Tag sein, es können auch 14 Tage oder drei Monate dazwischen liegen. Aber es ist in jedem Fall kein ganz neuer Prozess. Darum haben wir in den USA auch die Gelegenheit benutzt, im Bundesstaat Louisiana bereits eine Produktionsstätte zu kaufen ...

... am Flughafen Lafayette; darauf wollte ich Sie sowieso ansprechen: Nach meinem Wissen soll der





Ein Helikopter im Büro: Der erste – inzwischen exmatrikulierte – Prototyp der Molliser Kopter Group AG schmückt heute als «Museumsstück» den Sitz in der Zürcher Gemeinde Wetzikon. Bilder: Sasi Subramaniam

Betrieb dort bereits Mitte 2020 beginnen.

Ja, aber nur mit dem Betriebsaufbau, noch nicht mit Auslieferungen als solche. Das dauert noch etwas länger.

Damit soll 2021 begonnen werden.

Ja. Wir werden dort die ersten Personen ab Mitte nächstes Jahr einstellen, sie aber noch in Mollis ausbilden, wo sie am Aufbau der dortigen Produktionslinie teilnehmen, um das in Lafayette gewissermassen zu duplizieren.

Bis 2025 sollen dort rund 120 Arbeitsplätze für die Produktion von 100 Helikoptern pro Jahr entstehen

... das ist heute in gewisser Weise schon der Fall. Wir haben eine amerikanische Turbine, Elektronik oder Mechanikteile, die aus den USA kommen. Was Sie aus unserer Medienmitteilung zitieren, muss man in einem anderen Zusammenhang sehen: Wenn Sie in den USA Behörden wie der Polizei, Feuerwehr, Grenzkontrolleuren und so weiter Hubschrauber liefern wollen, müssen Sie dem «Buy American Act» entsprechen. Eine Behörde darf in den USA nichts kaufen, wenn dort nicht über 50 Prozent der Wertschöpfung liegen.

Für die lokale Wertschöpfung sollen zu einem grossen Teil US-Lieferanten berücksichtigt werden...

... das ist heute in gewisser Weise schon der Fall. Wir haben eine amerikanische Turbine, Elektronik oder Mechanikteile, die aus den USA kommen. Was Sie aus unserer Medienmitteilung zitieren, muss man in einem anderen Zusammenhang sehen: Wenn Sie in den USA Behörden wie der Polizei, Feuerwehr, Grenzkontrolleuren und so weiter Hubschrauber liefern wollen, müssen Sie dem «Buy American Act» entsprechen. Eine Behörde darf in den USA nichts kaufen, wenn dort nicht über 50 Prozent der Wertschöpfung liegen.

Aber mit «Swissmade» ist es somit vorbei.

Dann sind wir vielleicht nicht mehr ganz «Swissmade», aber «Swiss designed» gilt immer noch. Und Fakt ist, dass es in der Schweiz relativ wenig spezialisierte Hersteller von Luftfahrtkomponenten gibt. Firmen wie Sauter Bachmann sind eine löbliche Ausnahme.

Aber «Swissness» wurde bisher doch immer so betont – sogar bei der Wahl des neuen Namens; «Kopter» mit K statt «Copter» in Englisch.

Ja, und «Swissness» ist uns auch wichtig. Das heisst aber nicht, dass alles aus der Schweiz kommen kann. Es heisst, dass Schweizer «Genie» am Werk ist, dass wir hier wesentlich Systeme mit Personen produzieren, die zuverlässig sind. Es bedeutet Präzision. Und in den USA machen wir ja nur die Endmontage für den dortigen Markt. Unser Produktionsmodell hat sich nicht verändert: Wir werden in Mollis – wenn wir diese Fabrik dort bauen können – die sicherheitsrelevanten Teile der Maschine fertigen; also alle sich drehenden Systeme wie Hauptgetriebe und Rotoren. Das passt auch gut zum Schweizer Image. Unsere «Uhren» drehen schneller und ticken lauter. Wir werden in Mollis auch ganze Maschinen fertigen; alle, die nach Europa oder in den Rest der Welt ausserhalb den USA und Asien gehen werden, was bedeutet, dass wir ausser in Lafayette auch noch andere Endfertigungslinien haben werden. Und in diese liefern wir Kits, Bausätze für die Endmontage, aus Mollis.

Und wie stellt man sich in den USA zu einer Firma, die von einem Russen finanziert wird?

Was wäre daran problematisch? Aber lassen Sie mich das ein für alle Mal klarstellen: Ich weiss, dass Sie meinen, sie werde von Russen finanziert. Aber das ist eigentlich nicht richtig ...

... Alexander Mamut.

Ich erkläre Ihnen das genau: Alexander Mamut hat vor gut zehn Jahren einen Teil seines Vermögens in einen Familien-Trust gelegt. Dieser Trust ist schon lange nicht mehr russisch. Er ist in der Schweiz und Grossbritannien. Und ein Trust hat eine eigene und unabhängige Rechtsperson. Diese ist von ihm losgelöst. Das heisst, er ist weder Manager noch der Nutzungsberechtigte.

Klar, aber das Geld kommt letztlich ja von ihm.

Das Geld ist einmal von ihm gekommen. Aber er entscheidet heute nicht über unser Tagesgeschäft. Und das kann auch wichtig sein für bestimmte Investoren und Kunden. Wir können heute, so wie wir aufgestellt sind, davon ausgehen, dass zum Beispiel amerikanische Sanktionen uns nicht betreffen sollten.

Obschon Herr Mamut zumindest als regierungsnah galt ...

... vielleicht vor langen Jahren. Aus meiner Sicht sind wir heute in einer völlig neutralen Situation.

Weil in der Schweiz einfach alles über die Lynwood AG läuft, die den Trust verwaltet ...

... und die Lynwood Schweiz AG, unsere Aktionärin, nicht Herr Mamut in Person ist. Und Frau Marina Grönberg (Marina Grönberg ist Verwaltungsratspräsidentin der Lynwood Schweiz AG, Mitglied des Verwaltungsrates der Kopter Group AG und ursprünglich Russin, die Redaktion) ist Schweizer Bürgerin ...

... wenn auch noch nicht lange ...

... ob nun lange oder nicht, sie ist Schweizer Bürgerin. Aber das hat keine Relevanz. Für mich ist wichtig, dass wir ein gutes Einverständnis und Arbeitsverhältnis mit unserem Aktionär haben, und das ist der Fall. Darüber kann ich mich nicht beschweren. Wir werden konstant seit zehn Jahren von einem treuen Aktionär finanziert.

«Ich hatte acht chinesische Investoren, die vor der Tür standen.»

Trotzdem hatten Sie sich nach neuen Geldgebern umgeschaut.

Aus ganz anderen Gründen. Ich gehe davon aus, dass es besser ist, mehr als einen Fuss zu haben, um zu stehen. Wir haben bisher sehr viel Geld ausgegeben. Sie schrieben von einem Betrag von ...

... 270 Millionen Dollar.

Ich weiss nicht, woher Sie das haben ...

... aus der Fachpresse.

Dieser Betrag ist falsch. Er ist mit Sicherheit weit höher, weil wir ja nicht nur den Hubschrauber entwickeln, sondern auch gleichzeitig die Firma aufbauen – mit all ihren Produktions- und Teststandorten, ihrem weltweiten Vertriebs- und Wartungssystem.

Wenn Sie «viel höher» sagen; wie hoch denn?

Weit mehr als 300 Millionen. Aber ich kann von unserem Aktionär schliesslich nicht erwarten, dass er uns für immer und ewig ernährt. Wir werden relativ schnell nach den ersten Auslieferungen auf eigenen Füssen stehen können. Aber bis dahin sollten wir die Last verteilen können.

Doch zurzeit muss «Ihr Aktionär» doch einfach weiter investieren, weil der «Point of no Return» verpasst wurde. Er muss bis zur Zertifizierung finanzieren, weil ansonsten alles in den Sand gesetzt wird.

Das würde vielleicht ein investierender Familienvater so sehen. Investoren argumentieren anders. Es gibt in dem Sinn keinen «Point of no Return». In der Finanzwelt heisst es eher «don't throw good money after bad money» (schmeiss schlechtem Geld kein gutes nach, die Redaktion). Bis heute finanziert unser Investor treu, und ich habe auch keinen Zweifel daran, dass er es weiterhin machen wird. Aber es ist wünschenswert, einen zweiten Investor zu haben. Und das geht im Augenblick in die richtige Richtung.

In welche? Denn neue Investoren zu finden, ist bisher ja nicht gelungen.

Das kommt aber gut voran. Ich weiss aus Erfahrung, wie lange ein solcher Prozess dauern kann. Sie müssen zuerst eine «Story» konstruieren, die verkaufbar ist, der Firma eine gute Solidität geben, einen Businessplan bauen, eine entsprechende Dokumentation zusammenstellen, die für Investoren verständlich und attraktiv ist; dazu müssen Sie die Firma zum Teil umbauen, was wir gemacht haben. Sie müssen die Firma so strukturieren, dass sie für Dritte finanzierbar wird. Dieser Prozess dauert im besten Fall acht Monate, im Normalfall eineinhalb Jahre und im schlechteren Fall mehr als zwei Jahre. Wir sind jetzt seit knapp eineinhalb Jahren daran und auf der letzten Geraden mit verschiedenen Investoren.

Nach der Zertifizierung stehen diese vermutlich ja sogar Schlange. Aber im Moment ist ihnen das Risiko doch einfach zu hoch.

Investoren investieren nicht nur in Ist-Situationen, sondern auch in eine Perspektive. In Europa sind solche Investoren aber schwieriger zu finden. Das können Sie ruhig so schreiben: Wenn wir in Europa so weitermachen, wird der Kontinent industriell bald nicht mehr existieren.

Ihre allfälligen Investoren werden also keine Europäer sein?

Nein, die werden kaum aus Europa kommen.

Aus China?

Sie werden verstehen, dass ich Ihnen das jetzt nicht sagen kann. Aber die Chinesen waren massiv interessiert. Ich hatte acht verschiedene chinesische Investoren, die bei der einen oder der anderen Gelegenheit vor der Tür standen. Es sind höchstwahrscheinlich also keine europäischen Investoren. Und es gibt ja noch andere Teile der Welt, nicht wahr? Ich sage es Ihnen, wenn wir so weit sind.

July 2019

ON THE JOB

Door: Erik Brouwer



In de luchtvaart borduurt men graag voort op bestaande ontwerpen. Volledig nieuwe modellen zijn zeldzaam, zeker in de helikopterindustrie. Uitzondering is het Zwitserse Kopter, dat met de eenmotorige SH09 een zogenaamd cleansheet design in de markt wil zetten. Michiel Dekkers is testvlieger op de SH09 en vertelt.

Uitvalsbasis van Dekkers is Mollis in Zwitserland, maar als we hem spreken zit hij op het zon-overgoten Sicilië. Hij legt uit dat de omstandigheden daar perfect zijn voor zijn werk: "Tijdens het testvliegen ligt de focus



van de crew in de cockpit, dus daarom zijn een leeg luchtruim en mooi weer wel zo prettig! De omstandigheden zijn hier ideaal."

Professioneel testvliegen is geen kwestie van gewoon proberen, daar gaat een zware opleiding aan vooraf. Veel professionele testvliegers wereldwijd zijn alumni van de Britse Empire Test Pilot School (ETPS) in Boscombe Down in het Verenigd Koninkrijk. Zo ook Dekkers. Namens de Koninklijke Luchtmacht volgde hij deze opleiding om als testvlieger te kunnen acteren op de Chinook-helikopter. "Voorafgaand aan mijn luchtvaartloopbaan heb ik werktuigbouwkunde gestudeerd. Technisch onderzoek en ontwikkeling hadden dus mijn interesse en het testvliegen paste daar mooi bij."

WEER NAAR SCHOOL

In Boscombe Down doorliep Dekkers de opleiding samen met cursisten uit allerlei windstreken en organisaties. De cursus begon met een opris-cursus wiskunde, natuurkunde en aerodynamica op universitair niveau. Daarna werden de vliegtuig- en helikopterpiloten gescheiden: "Bij de vliegtuigen ligt de nadruk al snel op de praktijk. Maar omdat een helikopter eigenlijk helemaal niet wil vliegen, komt daar nog wat meer theorie bij kijken!"

Gedurende de opleiding vloog Dekkers op meer dan twintig verschillen-

MICHIEL DEKKERS

Vliegt: Kopter SH09
Geboren: 23-07-1972
Opleiding: Empire Test Pilot School

de helikoptertypen. Tijdens die vluchten leerde hij testtechnieken: "Je leert methoden om allerlei eigenschappen of omstandigheden te testen op de meest veilige manier maar ook op een efficiënte manier. Je leert binnen een half uurtje te ontdekken of er iets niet klopt, en wát er dan niet klopt. De uitkomst daarvan moet je natuurlijk rapporteren op een manier dat de ontwerpers er iets mee kunnen, dus dat leerde ik ook. Vuistregel is dat je voor elk uur vliegen tien á vijftien uur met het rapporteren bezig bent!" Dekkers moest vliegen op toestellen waar hij nog nooit eerder op gevlogen had. "Op de toestellen van de school kreeg je maximaal twee vluchtjes met een instructeur, en daarna moest je solo testvluchten doen. In het werkveld krijg je immers ook niet altijd alle tijd en moet je toch veilig je werk kunnen doen."

TESTVIEGER BIJ DEFENSIE

Hoewel de helikopters bij Defensie allemaal ooit getest en gecertificeerd zijn, heeft de luchtmacht toch ook eigen testvliegers nodig. Bij Defensie werken testvliegers om modificaties aan de toestellen te testen, legt Dekkers uit. Nieuwe boordwapens, radio's en avionica moeten eerst worden getest en hun gedrag omschreven voordat de modificatie operationeel kan worden ingezet.

Ook het vliegen met nieuwe soorten belading onder of in de helikopter kan om een testvlieger vragen. Bekeken wordt dan hoe het toestel zich gedraagt met die nieuwe soort belading, hoe de lading zelf zich houdt in bepaalde omstandigheden en of er misschien nieuwe beperkingen van toepassing zijn. Dekkers vat samen: "Uiteindelijk moet je als testvlieger antwoord geven op de vraag of de mensen in het veld er veilig mee aan de slag kunnen."

KOPTER SH09

In 2013 verliet Dekkers de Koninklijke Luchtmacht om in de burgerlucht

vaart aan het werk te gaan. In 2017 kon hij bij het Zwitserse Kopter aan de slag als testvlieger op de nieuw te certificeren SH09 helikopter. Een nog relatief onbekend model, dat extra introductie verdient. Dekkers vat samen: "Qua inzetbaarheid en formaat is het toestel vergelijkbaar met een Airbus 135, maar dan eenmotorig. Daarmee is ze bijzonder in deze klasse. Met name bedrijven die nu de al wat oudere Bell Jetranger opereren, zijn geïnteresseerd."

Inmiddels zijn er drie prototypen van het toestel. Elk prototype heeft een eigen doel, vertelt Dekkers: "Met het derde prototype zijn we nu bezig met 'flight envelope expansion'. Dat betekent dat we elke vlucht een stapje verder gaan dan daarvoor. Hoger, sneller, zwaarder enzovoort." De stapjes zijn klein, want alles moet geanalyseerd en gerapporteerd worden. Dekkers combineert zijn gevoel en ervaring met de verwachtingen van de ontwerpers en valideert tijdens de vlucht hun voorspellingen.

CERTIFICATIE

Als deze fase achter de rug is, is het vierde prototype aan de beurt. Dat toestel moet gebruikt gaan worden voor de daadwerkelijke certificatie bij EASA en moet dus exact hetzelfde zijn als een normaal toestel dat straks van de productielijn zal rollen. Dat is nog een flinke klus, schetst Dekkers: "Eerst moeten we met een enorme stapel papier naar EASA om te bewijzen dat we aan alle eisen voldoen. En dan moet een gedeelte van de testvluchten daar opnieuw gebeuren, maar dan met een testvlieger van EASA aan boord."

De bedoeling is dat deze enorme klus in 2020 een typecertificaat oplevert. Dat is ook een van de aspecten die Dekkers waardeert in zijn werk: "Ik ben dagelijks met zoveel mooie dingen tegelijk bezig: met vliegen natuurlijk, maar ook met techniek en design. Op zichzelf al leuk en je helpt daarmee ook nog iets moois op te bouwen. Dat geeft mij heel veel voldoening!" 🚁



Helicóptero suíço voa para Sicília para completar voos de ensaio

June 24, 2019

Terceiro protótipo do SH09 da Kopter aproveita clima quente e úmido do sul da Itália para validar dados

Santiago Oliver



Segundo protótipo do SH09 em voo na Suíça

A suíça Kopter transferiu para Pozzallo, na região da Sicília, a equipe de 20 engenheiros de teste de voo, pilotos e mecânicos do terceiro protótipo (P3) do SH09. O objetivo é estruturar na cidade italiana uma base adicional de ensaios de voo.

De acordo com o fabricante, Pozzallo fornece as condições operacionais perfeitas para conduzir a campanha de teste de voo intensivo SH09 necessária para a certificação. A cidade oferece poucas restrições e condições climáticas favoráveis durante todo o ano, dando a oportunidade de experimentar um clima exigente com elevadas temperaturas, alta umidade, ventos fortes e uma atmosfera salgada.

Desde a sua chegada e durante um período de dois meses, a tripulação do teste de voo realizou 34 voos com o terceiro protótipo, permitindo

que a aeronave alcançasse cerca de 100 horas de teste de voo. O principal resultado foi abertura do envelope de voo do SH09 até 10.000 pés (3.000 m) de altitude, até uma velocidade de 135 nós. Durante todos os voos, o terceiro protótipo teve o desempenho esperado e gerou um grande volume de dados que estão sendo usados para finalizar o projeto da produção em série do modelo.



A próxima fase da campanha de testes de voo, incluirá a implementação de alguns refinamentos aerodinâmicos, que devem melhorar as qualidades de manuseio do P3, e o retrofit da caixa de engrenagens principal. A expectativa é que as alterações permitam voar mais alto e mais rápido. A próxima etapa permitirá aos engenheiros coletarem os dados restantes necessários para finalizar a configuração das aeronaves de pré-série (PS4 e PS5), o que contribuirá para os voos de certificação no próximo ano.

Segundo a Kopter, a previsão é certificar o SH09 na EASA em 2020, com as primeiras entregas correndo em seguida.

Die Aerodynamik des Kopter-Helis soll noch besser werden

Beider Kopter Group AG zeigt man sich zufrieden mit dem Verlauf der Tests, die mit dem 3. Prototyp des Helikopters SH09 auf Sizilien laufen. Reif für die Serienproduktion wird dieses Jahr aber nicht mehr.

Juni 20, 2019



Potzblitz: In Pozzallo auf Sizilien macht die Entwicklung des Helikopters SH09 der Molliser Kopter Group AG laut Mitteilung Fortschritte.

Es klang schon Anfang Oktober 2018 eher etwas utopisch, als Kopter-Kommunikations-Chefin Cecile Vion-Lanctuit auf Anfrage erklärte: «An unserem zeitlichen Zertifizierungsziel 2019 halten wir fest.» Diese Typenzertifizierung der Europäischen Agentur für Flugsicherheit (Easa) braucht es, um die Serienproduktion starten zu können.

Vor gut acht Monaten wurde der 3. Prototyp (P3) des Helikoptermodells SH09 aber erst mit Bodentests auf seinen Erstflug vorbereitet. Und das «Zertifizierungsziel 2019» lautete eigentlich – nach schon damals mehreren Verspätungen – sogar «im ersten Halbjahr 2019». Es läuft Ende Monat ab. «2020 bleibt das Ziel für die Easa-Zertifizierung», heisst es jetzt in der jüngsten Medienmitteilung. In dieser wird vor allem über die Testkampagne berichtet, die am 11. März mit P3 auf der italienischen Insel Sizilien am südlichen Zipfel im Küstenstädtchen Pozzallo begonnen hat. Mit «sehr begrenzten Einschränkungen» zum

Flugverkehr und «durchwegs günstigen Wetterbedingungen» habe das 20-köpfige Team aus Flugtestingenieuren, Piloten und Mechanikern «perfekte Voraussetzungen für die Durchführung des SH09-Intensivfluges» vorgefunden.

PS4 und PS5 sollen 2020 folgen

Noch nicht ganz perfekt scheint die Aerodynamik des P3 zu sein. Aber: «In der nächsten Phase der Flugtestkampagne wird P3 nach einigen aerodynamischen Verbesserungen höher, schneller und weiter steigen. Diese Korrekturen sollen mit einer Nachrüstung des Hauptgetriebegehäuses die Flugeigenschaften optimieren.

Danach sollen die «verbleibenden Daten gesammelt werden, die für die Fertigstellung der Konfiguration der Vorserienflugzeuge 4 und 5 erforderlich sind». Die beiden «Pre-Series»-Typen PS4 und PS5 sollen dann «im nächsten Jahr zu den Zertifizierungsflügen beitragen».



Anfang Februar 2018: Geschäftsführer Andreas Löwenstein gibt die Namensänderung von «Marengo Swisshelicopter» in «Kopter» bekannt.

Das Projekt wird immer teurer

Bei der Entwicklung eines von Grund auf neuen Flugzeugs oder Helikopters sind Verzögerungen normal. Aber sie kosten viel Geld.

Wieviel und ob der russische Milliardär Alexander Mamut als bisheriger Investor immer noch bereit sei, mehr und mehr in das Projekt zu stecken, blieb gestern auf Anfrage unbeantwortet. Die Kommunikations-Chefin weilte an der internationalen Luft- und Raumfahrt ausstellung Paris Air Show, und der Chief Executive Officer (CEO) der Kopter Group, Andreas Löwenstein, war für die «Südostschweiz/Glarner Nachrichten» ebenfalls nicht erreichbar.

Laut Schätzungen aus Fachkreisen hat die bisherige Entwicklung des SH09 seit 2007 jedoch gegen 270 Millionen Franken verschlungen. Und im Streit um Schneeräumungsarbeiten auf

dem Molliser Flugplatz wurde Anfang Januar zudem bekannt, dass nur ein Tag Verspätung Kopter jeweils rund 300 000 Franken koste.

Weiter wuchs der Personalbestand auf mittlerweile rund 300 Mitarbeitende an, die insgesamt in den Unternehmens- und Konstruktionsbüros in Wetzikon und den Produktions- und Montagewerken in Mollis und Näfels tätig sind. Und Anfang März gab das Unternehmen bekannt, dass es am Flughafen Lafayette in Louisiana eine Produktionsstätte übernommen habe. Der Betrieb soll dort Mitte 2020 aufgenommen werden, um 2021 die ersten in den USA montierten SH09 auszuliefern und die Fertigung bis 2025 mit 120 Mitarbeitenden auf eine Jahresproduktion von rund 100 Helikoptern hochzuschrauben.

«Besser als die Konkurrenz»

Auch die Frage, ob an den Plänen und Terminen in den USA festgehalten werde, bleibt zumindest vorerst unbeantwortet. Immerhin macht laut Mitteilung die Entwicklung des SH09 Fortschritte. «Während aller Flüge lief P3 wie erwartet und erzeugte eine grosse Menge wertvoller Daten, die zur Fertigstellung des Designs der Serienproduktion verwendet wurden.» Das Management und das Team von Kopter setze alles daran, «die SH09 mit einem Höchstmass an Sicherheit, Leistung, Flugeigenschaften und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit auszustatten». Der einmotorige, turbinengetriebene Helikopter übertreffe seine Konkurrenten «durch eine verbesserte Modularität, moderne elektronische Systeme sowie eine grössere Kabine und einen grösseren Laderaum» – und das bei niedrigen Betriebskosten und einer Reichweite von über 800 Kilometern.

Kopter's SH09 Third Prototype (P3) Flies Higher And Faster In Sicily

June 20, 2019

P3 Completed 34 Flights In Sicily, Reaching An Overall 100 Flight Test Hours

In March 2019, Kopter transferred its third prototype (P3) aircraft and a team of 20 flight test engineers, pilots and mechanics to Sicily to set up an additional flight test base in Pozzallo.



Pozzallo provides the perfect operational conditions to conduct the SH09 intensive flight test campaign needed for certification. It offers very limited restrictions and favorable weather conditions throughout the year, while giving the opportunity to test the helicopter in a demanding climate with hot temperatures, high humidity, strong winds and a salty atmosphere.

Since its arrival and over a period of two months, the flight test crew has performed 34 flights with P3, allowing the aircraft to reach around 100 flight test hours. In this timeframe, the first major inspection has been carried out successfully.

The major outcome is the opening of the SH09 flight envelope up to 10,000 feet of altitude speeds up to 135 knots. During all flights, P3 performed as expected and generated a large volume of valuable data that are being used to finalize the design of the serial production SH09.

The next phase of the flight test campaign, after implementing some aerodynamic refinements further improving P3 handling qualities and the retrofit of the main gear box housing, will see P3 going higher, faster and further. It will allow gathering the remaining data needed to finalize the configuration of Pre-Series aircraft (PS4 & PS5), which will contribute to the certification flights next year.

Kopter continues to target 2020 for EASA certification. Kopter management and team are fully committed to deliver the SH09 with the highest levels of safety, performance, flight qualities and competitiveness.

Latest testing expands the envelope for the SH09

June 18, 2019



Sicily provides a windy and salty challenge for the SH09.

Two months flying in the hot and humid climate of Sicily has enabled Kopter's third prototype helicopter to push the boundaries. Two further development SH09s will contribute towards certification flights next year.

Kopter's SH09 helicopter flight envelope has expanded up to 10,000 feet altitude and up to a speed of 135 kts following recent test flying. In March Kopter transferred its third prototype (P3) together with a team composed of 20 flight test engineers, pilots and mechanics to Sicily to set up an additional flight test base in Pozzallo.

Pozzallo provides the ideal operational conditions to conduct the intensive flight test campaign needed to achieve the SH09's certification. It offers very limited restrictions and favourable weather conditions throughout the year, while giving the opportunity to experience a demanding climate with hot temperatures, high humidity, strong winds and a salty atmosphere. Since its arrival and over a period of two months, the flight test crew performed 34 flights with P3, allowing the aircraft to reach around 100 flight test hours. In this timeframe, the first major inspection has been carried out successfully. During all flights, Kopter reports that P3 performed as expected and generated a large volume of valuable data that is being used to finalise the design of the serial production SH09. The next phase of the flight test campaign, after the implementation of some aerodynamic refinements to further improve P3's handling qualities and the retrofit of the main gear box housing, will see P3 going higher, faster and further. It will allow the gathering of the remaining data needed to finalise the configuration of pre-series aircraft PS4 and PS5, which will contribute to the certification flights in 2020.

Le Kopter SH09 tient ses promesses

June 17, 2019

Au cours des deux derniers mois, le prototype N° 3 (P3) de l'hélicoptère léger suisse SH09 a totalisé une centaine d'heures d'essais en vol, en Sicile.



Loin de ses montagnes suisses, Kopter poursuit ses essais en vol avec le prototype P3 de son hélicoptère léger SH09. © Kopter

Ne cherchez pas Kopter au salon du Bourget. Le constructeur suisse est occupé en Sicile où depuis mars 2019, une équipe d'une vingtaine d'ingénieurs, de techniciens et de mécaniciens enchaîne les vols d'essais dans le cadre du programme de certification du SH09 avec le troisième prototype. « *La région de Pozzallo (Sicile) présente des restrictions limitées et des conditions météorologiques favorables tout au long de l'année, tout en offrant l'opportunité des réalisés les essais nécessaires par hautes températures, degré élevé d'humidité, fort vent et environnement salin* », précise l'hélicoptériste.

Depuis deux mois, le P3 a effectué 34 vols et une centaine d'heures de vol. Dans l'intervalle une grande visite de maintenance a été réalisée avec succès. L'enveloppe de vol du SH09 a été ouverte jusqu'à une altitude de 10.000 ft et une vitesse de 135 kts. « *Au cours de ces vols, le P3 s'est comporté comme attendu et a généré un important volume de données qui permettent de finaliser le modèle de série* ».

La prochaine phase de la campagne d'essais, après retouches aérodynamiques et installation de la nouvelle boîte principale de transmission, doit permettre de révéler de nouvelles performances du P3. Tous les retours obtenus avec le P3 seront intégrés aux deux appareils de présérie N°4 et 5 (PS4 et PS5) qui vont rejoindre le programme des vols de certification. 2020 demeure l'objectif pour la certification.

Nederlandse testpiloot Kopter SH09

June 15, 2019



POZALL0 – De Nederlandse testpiloot Michiel Dekkers speelt een belangrijke rol binnen het testprogramma van de Zwitserse helikopterproducent Kopter.

Dekkers is samen met twintig piloten, ingenieurs en technici in Italië druk in de weer met testvluchten met het derde prototype van de nieuwe eenmotorige Kopter SH09. Met het toestel zijn in de achterliggende twee maanden inmiddels 34 vluchten uitgevoerd en is sinds de eerste vlucht op 22 november 2018 meer dan honderd uur gevlogen. Daarbij werden zowel de snelheid als de vlieghoogte geleidelijk opgevoerd naar 135 kts (250 km/h) en 10.000 ft (3.048 m).

In SH09 ‘prototype number 3’ (P3) zijn verschillende verbeteringen doorgevoerd op basis van de ervaringen met P1 en P2. De tijdens de testvluchten verkregen gegevens met P3 worden waar mogelijk en nodige door vertaald naar het vierde prototype ‘Pre-Series number 4’ (PS4) die in 2019 moet vliegen.

De SH09 heeft een 1.000 pk sterke Honeywell HTS900-2 turboshaft met een tweekanaals-FADEC. Deze aandrijfbron maakt een snelheid mogelijk van 260 km/h bij een vliegbereik van meer dan 800 km. De SH09 krijgt een maximaal startgewicht van 2.650 kg waarbij aan een sling tot 1.500 kg kan worden vervoerd. De marktintroductie is in 2020 voorzien.

[Het eerste prototype van de toen nog Marengo Swiss Helicopters Skye Sh09 vloog op 2 oktober 2014 voor het eerst.](#) Sindsdien zijn met regelmatig orders geplaatst voor de helikopter.

In de juli 2019 editie van Piloot en Vliegtuig is een uitgebreid interview met de Nederlandse testpiloot opgenomen.

Kopter macht Fortschritte bei der SH09-Flugerprobung

June 14, 2019



Kopter hat bislang drei Prototypen der SH09 gebaut. © Kopter

Kopter hat den Flugbereich seines Hubschraubers SH09 nun bis auf 10.000 Fuß und bis auf 135 Knoten geöffnet. Die Flugerprobung auf Sizilien verläuft nach Plan und liefert wertvolle Daten, die in die Produktion der Vorserien-Hubschrauber einfließen. Die EASA-Zulassung des neuen Helikoptermusters soll 2020 erfolgen.

Der Schweizer Hubschrauberhersteller Kopter strebt nach wie vor an, seinen Helikopter vom Typ SH09 im nächsten Jahr zuzulassen. Die Flugerprobung mit dem dritten Prototyp (HB-ZXC) auf Sizilien laufe gut, teilte das Unternehmen nun mit. Ein Test-Team von 20 Kopter-Mitarbeitern hat für mehrere Monate seine Zelte auf einem Gelände neben dem Hafen der südsizilianischen Stadt Pozzallo aufgeschlagen.

Sizilien ist ideal für die Flugerprobung

„Dieser Standort ist bemerkenswert gut geeignet. Er bietet uns eine große Flexibilität, sehr gutes Wetter mit hohen Temperaturen und einer salzhaltigen Luft. Hier haben wir die Gelegenheit, wirklich eine Menge Punkte in sehr kurzer Zeit abzuarbeiten“, sagte Michele Riccobono, der Executive Vice President Technology and Flight Operations bei Kopter. Er fliegt als Flugtestingenieur auch regelmäßig als Teil der Testcrew mit dem Prototyp P3 mit.



Der dritte Prototyp des Kopter SH09 absolviert derzeit Flugtests auf Sizilien. © Kopter

Michiel Dekkers, einer der Testpiloten von Kopter, sagte: *„Alle Flüge, die wir bis jetzt in Pozzallo absolviert haben, dienen der Erweiterung des Flugbereichs. Bei jedem Flug sind wir ein wenig höher und ein wenig schneller geflogen und haben uns das Handling des Hubschraubers angeschaut.“*

Riccobono sagte, der Flugbereich sei nun bis in eine Höhe von 10.000 Fuß geöffnet und man habe in dieser Höhe eine Geschwindigkeit von 135 Knoten erfliegen. Insgesamt hat P3 bei 34 Flügen nun fast 100 Flugstunden gesammelt. Man sei häufig zwei Mal am Tag geflogen, sagte Dekkers. Und man habe eine Menge wertvoller Daten während der Flüge gesammelt, die nun bei der endgültigen Detailkonstruktion der Vorserienexemplare PS4 und PS5 einfließen werden.

P3 erhält in einem nächsten Schritt noch einige aerodynamische Verbesserungen, unter anderem wird die Verkleidung des Hauptgetriebes verändert. Dadurch soll das Muster noch schneller und höher fliegen und eine größere Reichweite bekommen.

Volker K. Thomalla

Kopter SH09 Testing Picks Up Pace

June 13, 2019

Tony Osborne

Swiss helicopter developer Kopter Group has picked up the pace for testing for its SH09 single-engine light helicopter.

Since transferring flight testing this March from Switzerland to the more weather-conducive Pozzallo Heliport in Sicily, the company's third prototype, P3, has completed 100 flight hours across 34 flights in two months.

The company says it has opened the flight envelope, taking the aircraft up to 10,000 ft. and speeds of 135 kt. The company has also carried out the first major inspection of the airframe.

Michele Riccobono, the company's executive vice president for technology and flight operations, said despite the good weather, the conditions challenged the aircraft with hot temperatures, high humidity and strong winds. "These are quite common in those operational environments [in] which the SH09's customers operate," Riccobono said.

The company says the data from PS3 will support the finalization of the configuration of the next pre-series standard aircraft, PS4 and PS5. This will support certification flying planned for 2020, when Kopter also hopes to achieve European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification. Riccobono says he expects changes to include some aerodynamic refinements to improve performance and handling and ride qualities.

The Honeywell HTS900-powered helicopter is the first clean-sheet, new single-engine flight helicopter in the 2.5 metric ton-class in about two decades.

Designed to compete with Airbus' H125 Ecureuil/AStar and H130 and Bell's Model 407, the SH09 could also chip away at some of the market share of the light-twin engine types, Airbus' H135 and H145, as well as the Bell 429 and the Leonardo AW109, due to the economics of single-engine operation.

P3 was scheduled to fly in Sicily last year, but quality issues with the main gearbox resulted in a six-month delay, and the aircraft was finally airborne in November.

Kopter's SH09 P3 flies higher and faster in Sicily

June 13, 2019

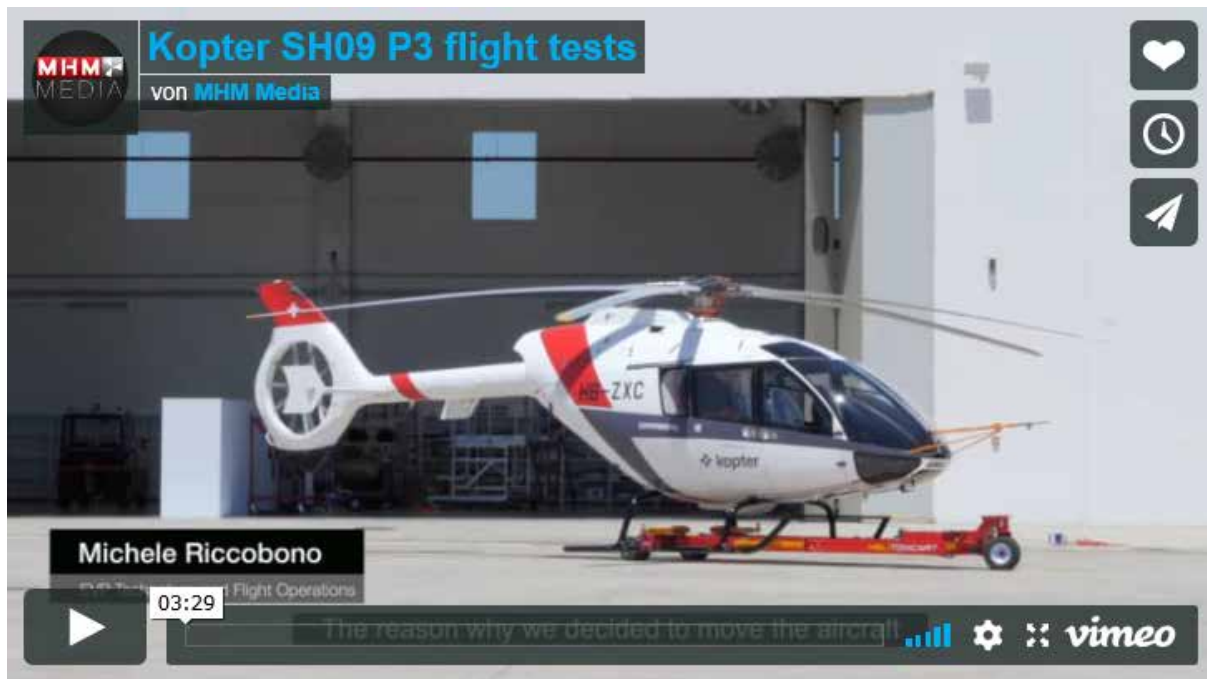
In March 2019, Kopter transferred the third prototype (P3) of the SH09 helicopter together with a team composed of 20 flight test engineers, pilots and mechanics to Sicily to set up an additional flight test base in Pozzallo.



Kopter brought the SH09 P3 to Sicily in March 2019 for flight tests. Kopter Photo Pozzallo provides the perfect operational conditions to conduct the SH09 intensive flight test campaign needed in the frame of certification. It offers very limited restrictions and favorable weather conditions throughout the year, while giving the opportunity to experience a demanding climate with hot temperatures, high humidity, strong winds and a salty atmosphere.

Since its arrival and over a period of two months, the flight test crew performed 34 flights with P3, allowing the aircraft to reach around 100 flight test hours. In this timeframe, the first major inspection has been carried out successfully.

The major outcome is the opening of the SH09 flight envelope up to 10,000 feet altitude and up to a speed of 135 knots. During all flights, P3 performed as expected and generated a large volume of valuable data that are being used to finalize the design of the serial production SH09.



The next phase of the flight test campaign, after implementing some aerodynamic refinements further improving P3 handling qualities and the retrofit of the main gear box housing, will see P3 going higher, faster and further. It will allow gathering the remaining data needed to finalize the configuration of Pre-Series aircrafts n°4 and n°5 (PS4 & PS5), which will contribute to the certification flights next year.

2020 remains the target for European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification. Kopter management and team are fully committed to deliver the SH09 with the highest levels of safety, performance, flight qualities and competitiveness.



Kopter's SH09 Third Prototype (P3) Flies Higher and Faster In Sicily

June 13, 2019



The third prototype of Kopter's SH09 light single-engine helicopter seen at its home base in Switzerland. The company announced yesterday that P3 has been flying in Sicily since March, and the aircraft has now logged over 100 flight test hours. (Kopter photo)

P3 completed 34 flights in Sicily, reaching an overall 100 flight test hours. Flight envelope has been opened beyond 10,000 feet and at an airspeed of 135 knots.

In March 2019, Kopter transferred its third prototype (P3) together with a team composed of 20 flight test engineers, pilots and mechanics to Sicily to set up an additional flight test base in Pozzallo.

Pozzallo provides the perfect operational conditions to conduct the SH09 intensive flight test campaign needed in the frame of certification. It offers very limited restrictions and favorable weather conditions throughout the year, while giving the opportunity to experience a demanding climate with hot temperatures, high humidity, strong winds and a salty atmosphere.

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2020 remains the target for EASA certification. Kopter management and team are fully committed to deliver the SH09 with the highest levels of safety, performance, flight qualities and competitiveness.

Helicopter company to begin hiring next year

May 28, 2019

A Swiss helicopter company moving its operations to Lafayette will begin hiring people next year and building helicopters in 2021.

Kopter Group AG officials said Thursday that it will hire 10 people in 2020 as it transitions to Louisiana. The Advocate reports company spokeswoman Cecile Vion-Lanctuit says it will then hire 20 people in 2021, 14 in 2022 and 100 in 2025.

Kopter Group is moving into the 84,700-square-foot (7868.8-square-meter) facility that once housed Bell Helicopter. Workers will build the SH09 models through the Western Hemisphere. The company plans to make a \$4.2 million capital investment in new equipment and building additions at the site. The plan is to produce 100 helicopters a year.

The jobs will have an average annual salary of \$55,000, plus benefits.

Kopter Group to begin hiring next year, plans to start building helicopters at Lafayette facility in 2021

May 24, 2019



LED Secretary Don Pierson, left, Kopter Group AG CEO Andreas Löwenstein and Gov. John Bel Edwards shake hands on plans by Kopter to assemble helicopters in Lafayette while attending the 2019 HAI Heli-Expo in Atlanta Tuesday.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY KOPTER

The Swiss helicopter company that will move its operations to Lafayette will begin hiring people next year and building helicopters in 2021, company officials said Thursday.

Kopter Group AG, which will locate in the 84,700-square-foot facility from the Lafayette Regional Airport that once housed Bell Helicopter, will hire 10 people next year as it transitions its operations to Lafayette, said Cecile Vion-Lanctuit, the company's head of communications and marketing.

It will then hire 10 more in 2021 and another 20 in 2022, she said. The company expects to have 120 by 2025.

Workers will build the SH09 models through the Western Hemisphere. The plan is to produce 100 helicopters a year.

“What I want as CCO for the company is to surpass those numbers,” said Christian Gras, executive vice president and chief customer officer. “Our target is 200, but we are setting up for 100. My expectation is to do much more than that.”

The jobs at the Kopter Production and Product Support Center will have an average annual salary of \$55,000, plus benefits. State officials predict the facility will create another 157 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 275 new jobs in Acadiana.

The company plans to make a \$4.2 million capital investment in new equipment and building additions at the Lafayette site.

Kopter designed the SH09 with large cabin and cargo volumes, next-generation electronic systems, and technical specifications that meet the most demanding missions, state officials said. Kopter is assembling helicopters for the European market in Switzerland, with plans to add a third assembly facility in Asia.

“We are coming with an aircraft which is extremely well-suited for ambulance missions, which is very well suited for reconnaissance missions, and very well-suited for oil and gas missions,” Gras said. “It’s a truly unique aircraft.”

The state funded construction of the \$25.3 million facility on a 14.7-acre airport site, which the company will lease from the Lafayette Airport Commission.

The business will add to the growing helicopter industry in Acadiana after Leonardo Helicopters opened its 21,000-square-foot maintenance facility in Broussard in January. It employs 15 people, and officials with the Italian company hope to double that in five years.

Kopter's helicopter production to start in 2021, hiring will take until 2025

May 23, 2019

Andrew Capps Lafayette Daily Advertiser

The company leasing Lafayette's former Bell Helicopter facility says it plans to start producing helicopters there by 2021 and will hire a full workforce by 2025.

Switzerland-based Kopter Group AG and Gov. John Bel Edwards announced the company's plan to lease the former Bell Helicopter facility in early March with a press release from Louisiana Economic Development saying that hiring would start later this year.

MORE: Lafayette lands helicopter company, 120 jobs



Kopter Manufacturing Facility Dedication
Andre Broussard/Special to The Advertiser

On Thursday, Kopter Head of Communications and Marketing Cecile Vion-Lanctuit and Executive Vice President of Customer Christian Gras said the company was not yet ready to start production and agreed to lease the facility, which the state funded to the tune of \$25 million, before they could use it because it was too good an opportunity to ignore.

“It was too good to wait on,” Vion-Lanctuit said.

Kopter has a ways yet to go before it can start assembling its helicopters in Lafayette, Gras said, including obtaining certification from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency and the Federal Aviation Administration, that will likely push back helicopter production to 2021.



Executive VP Christian Gras speaks at the Kopter Manufacturing Facility Dedication.
Andre Broussard/Special to The Advertiser

The company also plans to make a \$4.2 million capital investment in the facility to make it suitable for producing its five-blade helicopters, which includes adding doors, about 45 feet wide, to the facility to accommodate the aircraft.

Kopter is receiving \$2.5 million in grants from the state as part of its agreement to lease the facility, with \$1.2 million for facility improvements to be paid out by 2020 and \$1.3 million in lease support paid in annual installments through 2024. The facility is being leased to Kopter by the Lafayette Airport Commission.



Kopter Manufacturing Facility Dedication Andre Broussard/Special to The Advertiser

The certifications and improvements have Kopter planning a step-by-step introduction of the 120 new jobs that are expected at the facility. Vion-Lanctuit said the company currently has contractors maintaining the facility and plans to hire 10 people in 2020 and another 10 in 2021 before adding 20 more in 2022 and scaling up to 120 in 2025. The company expects those jobs to pay an average annual salary of about \$55,000. Gras said he expects the company to produce about 100 helicopters per year once the facility is set up and the workforce is fully staffed. LED estimates that the Kopter facility will create an additional 157 indirect jobs in Acadiana.



Louisiana Economic Development Secretary Don Pierson, Kopter CEO Andreas Löwenstein and Gov. John Bel Edwards announced an expansion in Lafayette during a helicopter trade show in Atlanta Tuesday.

Courtesy photo

Gras said Kopter landed at the Lafayette site after exploring options across the South. Lafayette was chosen because of the availability of the helicopter production facility, as well as its proximity to Kopters suppliers, like Metro Aviation in Shreveport.

“This is definitely what we are doing and where we are going,” he said.

Kopter CEO Andreas Löwenstein said in a release at the announcement of the company’s move into Lafayette that the facility will serve as its American center for production and customer support. “The Lafayette facility will become Kopter’s main hub for the U.S. and the Americas,” Löwenstein said. “It will include a large variety of activities, such as production, customization and assembly of our helicopters, as well as customer services. We expect to gradually hire up to 120 local personnel by 2025 to produce around 100 helicopters per year, and support the growing fleet in the region.”

Helicopter company headed to Lafayette says they are ahead of schedule

May 23, 2019



The new helicopter manufacturing company headed to Lafayette says they're ahead of schedule.

Christian Gras, Chief Customer Officer of Kopter Group, says because they took over the facility from Bell Helicopters at the Lafayette Regional Airport, they were able to push forward more quickly on their timeline.

Kopter, which is headquartered in Switzerland, will create 120 new direct jobs by 2025, with an average annual salary of more than \$55,000 plus benefits. The company says they're also making a \$4.2 million capital investment to the assembly building at the airport.

Gras says his aircraft is unique because not only is it a single-engine, which makes it cheaper to make, it's large enough to hold eight people. His goal is to produce around 100 helicopters per year.



Christian Gras, Chief Customer Officer of Kopter Group / KATC



Bell Helicopter

He says you may not see much movement at the airport until next year. Right now they're working on getting certifications. Next, they'll begin modifying the old Bell facility to meet their needs. We'll start seeing aircraft parts come in and assembly happening by 2021.

They encourage anyone looking for employment to keep an eye on their social media sites and website, starting in 2020.

HTS900 engine operators could benefit from hybrid electric investment

April 1, 2019

Honeywell's investment in a hybrid electric version of its HTS900 turboshaft engine could eventually pay off for its conventional helicopter customers, too.



Honeywell's HTS900 engine is installed on the Kopter SH09, which is now in the process of certification. Kopter Photo

That's according to Bryan Wood, senior director of Honeywell's hybrid electric and electric propulsion programs. Wood spoke to Vertical in advance of HAI Heli-Expo 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia, where the company [displayed a prototype HTS900 turbogenerator](#) in early March.

The 1,000-shaft horsepower class HTS900 is an evolution of the LTS101 engine originally developed by Lycoming. It's currently installed on the Eagle 407HP — a re-engined version of the Bell 407 — and the Kopter SH09 helicopter now undergoing certification flight testing in Switzerland.

Denver, Colorado-based XTI Aircraft Company also intends to use the HTS900 in its hybrid electric TriFan 600 vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft. That's the first confirmed

hybrid electric application for the HTS900 turbogenerator, although “there are definitely more [companies] than that that we’re currently working with,” Wood said.

To adapt the engine for hybrid electric applications, Honeywell modified the engine control unit and gearbox and added two compact, 200-kilowatt generators. Now, the company is in the process of pairing the prototype with electric motors, motor controllers, and batteries for a more complete demonstration model.

These are the only modifications that Honeywell has made to the engine to date. However, Wood said the company is also evaluating potential modifications to the core that could alter some engine shutdown requirements.



Honeywell’s hybrid-electric system combines the company’s HTS900 engine with two high-powered generators. Honeywell Photo

Currently, HTS900 operators are required to perform a two-minute engine cool down at idle, followed by a 10-second post-shutdown “purge” that relies on the aircraft battery to power the starter motor. The procedure is a legacy of instances in which carbon build-up on oil jets led to distress of the number 2/3 bearing pack in LTS101 engines. Honeywell has retained the procedure despite intervening design changes to the rear bearing support housing.

When asked about this purge requirement in the context of hybrid electric operations, Wood said, “We’re looking at potential modifications to eliminate that.” Any such changes could “absolutely” flow back to conventional helicopter operators, he said, although he could not speculate on a timeframe for this.

Contemplating entry into the urban air mobility (UAM) space has also forced Honeywell to evaluate its manufacturing capabilities in ways that could eventually yield benefits for all HTS900 operators, he said. UAM proponents forecast an eventual need for tens of thousands of electric or hybrid electric VTOL aircraft to serve as air taxis in crowded cities.

As Wood pointed out, “We’re not used to dealing with manufacturing volumes of that size in the aerospace industry. So we are currently looking at changes in regards to how we source

material, how we manufacture our engines, different design flow changes even to our shop floor, to really figure out how we'll be able to handle the level of volume we're talking about in this space."

While many companies are pursuing fully electric VTOL aircraft for UAM applications, Wood said that Honeywell expects hybrid electric models to dominate for at least the next 15 to 20 years, based on current and projected battery technology and Federal Aviation Administration fuel reserve requirements (currently 20 minutes for helicopters operating under visual flight rules).

"Beyond that, even if you do have significant leaps in battery technology and there's some lax that's shown on behalf of regulatory bodies in regards to mission reserves, you can only most likely complete a 50- to 60-mile round trip without having to recharge," he said. "We've talked to quite a few [aircraft developers] that are interested in doing . . . San Diego to L.A., or Silicon Valley to San Francisco for example, and that will be very difficult to do that with an all-electric vehicle. So I think there will always be a market for hybrid

Kopter Group To Build SH09 Helicopters In Louisiana

March 25, 2019

William Garvey, Jessica A. Salerno, Molly Mc Millin

Switzerland-based newcomer Kopter Group, the manufacturer of the new SH09 single-engine light helicopter, hopes eventually to assemble as many as 100 of them annually at a Lafayette, Louisiana, facility established with Bayou State to produce Bell's Model 505 JetRanger X. The company wants to begin work there starting in 2020, within months of the SH09's planned [European Aviation Safety Agency](#) (EASA) and [FAA](#) certification.



The company — previously known as Marengo Swisshelicopter — already has secured 2.5 years' worth of production for the rotorcraft, with 50% of those orders coming from U.S. customers. In Lafayette, the company will assemble kits delivered from Switzerland and carry out customization for customers in the U.S.,

Canada and potentially Latin America. The site also will be the company's North American support hub. "We chose Lafayette because of its proximity to the operator landscape, the highly skilled workforce and access to other suppliers," Kopter CEO Andreas Lowenstein said at Heli-Expo in Atlanta in March. "We have here a turnkey solution; we need to do some transformation . . . but this is a facility that has been built to assemble and deliver helicopters. . . . That makes us gain a lot of time for industrial setup." Kopter will lease the 84,700-sq.-ft. facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission and benefit from industrial tax exemptions and \$2.5 million of subsidies that will go toward renovation and leasing costs for the site. In return, it must employ 120 workers and generate a \$7 million payroll.

Bell vacated the site last August; Louisiana cut the incentives, saying the manufacturer had failed to create the promised 95 full-time jobs. The company had planned to assemble the Model 505 there but moved that work to its plant in Quebec. Bell subsequently sited Model 525 cabin-subassembly work at Lafayette instead, but delays to that program resulted in just 22 jobs being created. Lowenstein says the 120 jobs will be a "first step." He hopes Kopter's presence in the U.S. will enable it to "access public markets," targeting tenders for agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security and the [Defense Department](#). "With this setup, we will reach levels of American content that will allow us to be an integral part of bigger contracts of that type in the future," he says.

The Lafayette facility represents a major investment for the newcomer, which has yet to deliver an aircraft. Kopter is hoping to finalize additional financial backing, worth up to \$250 million, to also support the certification and ramp-up process. The company has so far been funded by a single backer. But Kopter needs to certify the aircraft first, and despite the first prototype of the SH09 making its first flight in November 2014, it has taken development of the third prototype to truly open the flight envelope. Certification is planned for the second quarter of 2020. Discussions are underway with the FAA for certification in the U.S.

Kleiner Hubschrauber-Hersteller will hoch hinaus

March 24, 2019

In einem Schweizer Dorf baut Kopter einen neuen Hubschrauber, der Fracht und Passagiere transportieren kann. 2020 wird zum entscheidenden Jahr für die kleine Firma.

[Silvan Oberli](#)



Kopter

Kopter SH09 im Flug: Kommendes Jahr bekommt der erste Kunde sein erstes Exemplar.

Die Geschichte begann vor zwölf Jahren im kleinen Schweizer Kanton Glarus. Marengo Swisshelicopters aus der 3000-Seelen-Gemeinde Mollis machte sich 2007 auf, einen neuen leichten Mehrzweckhubschrauber zu entwickeln. Er sollte sich trotz kompakter Größe vielseitig einsetzen lassen. Flexible Bestuhlung für den Personentransport, großzügige Ladetüren für Fracht sowie die Einsatzmöglichkeit als Rettungshubschrauber standen im Pflichtenheft.

Nachdem ein erstes Modell des Hubschraubers vorgestellt wurde, absolvierte der Prototyp Sky E SH09 mit dem Kennzeichen HB-ZXA am 2. Oktober 2014 einen ersten kurzen Testflug. Das Gezeigte kam gut an. Bereits im März 2015 konnte die Firma über 60 Absichtserklärungen für ihr neues Produkt vorweisen. Doch den großen Durchbruch muss die inzwischen in Kopter umbenannte Marengo erst noch schaffen.

Starke Konkurrenz

Zwar wird das Projekt vom russischen Oligarchen Alexander Leonidovich Mamut finanziert. Trotzdem hat Kopter mit potenter Konkurrenz zu kämpfen. Firmen wie Airbus Helicopters

und Leonardo machen Umsätze im Milliardenbereich, verfügen über Zehntausende Mitarbeiter und bieten ihren Kunden eine umfassende Modellpalette an. Kopter dagegen ist ein winziger Mitspieler auf dem Markt. Die Belegschaft soll kurzfristig auf 360 Mitarbeiter steigen – viel für Mollis, aber wenig aus globaler Perspektive. Nun steht der Lackmустest für Kopter an. 2020 erwartetet das Unternehmen die Zertifizierung und bald danach die Auslieferung der ersten Hubschrauber. Aktuell schreibt das Unternehmen noch rote Zahlen.

Air Zermatt als Schweizer Erstkunde

Mit der Schweizer Air Zermatt gewann Kopter bereits sehr früh ein Rettungsunternehmen als wichtigen Kunden. Er hat sich mit Piloten, Ärzten und Technikern aktiv in die Entwicklung eingebracht. Kopter konnte so bei der Gestaltung und Einrichtung auf die jahrzehntelange Erfahrung von Air Zermatt zurückgreifen. Air Zermatt seinerseits hatte so die Möglichkeit ihren neuen Rettungshubschraubers stark auf die persönlichen Bedürfnisse anzupassen. Philipp Perren, Verwaltungsrat des Rettungs- und Charterunternehmens bestätigte gegenüber dem öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunk SRF, dass man von Anfang an vom Konzept überzeugt gewesen war. Die Kabine des Kopter SH09 ist etwas größer als die vergleichbarer Modelle. Außerdem ist der Helikopter sehr leise, und Lärm sei in Zermatt immer ein großes Thema, wie Perren zitiert wird.

Erfolgreiche Testflüge der Prototypen

Der 22. November 2018 markierte einen weiteren Meilenstein. In Mollis absolvierte der dritte Prototyp seinen Erstflug. Im Rahmen dieses 40-minütigen Testfluges wurden verschiedene Manöver geflogen, um Flugqualität zu überprüfen, Flugdaten aufzuzeichnen und generell die Anforderungen an das Fluggerät zu testen. Kopter-Chefpilot Richard Trueman sprach in einer Mitteilung von «exzellenten Handling-Eigenschaften» und davon, dass die Entwicklung des SH09 «rasche Fortschritte macht.» Auch der Chef von Kopter, Andreas Löwenstein, war «sehr stolz auf das eigene Team» und den allgemeinen Projektverlauf.

Mittlerweile hat der dritte Prototyp P3 über 50 Stunden in der Luft vorzuweisen. Basierend auf den Testresultaten entwickelt das Team gerade das erste Vor-Serienmodell (Pre-Series 4 oder kurz PS4). Wenn alles nach Plan läuft, wird schon sehr bald auf dem PS4 die Typenzertifizierung durchgeführt. Positiv ist auch, dass das maximale Startgewicht (maximum take-off weight, kurz MTOW) auf 2850 Kilogramm (3000 Kilogramm inklusive externen Lasten) erhöht werden konnte.

Expansion nach Übersee

An der diesjährigen Heli-Expo in Atlanta hat Kopter bekanntgegeben, eine knapp 8.000 Quadratmeter große Produktionsstätte in den USA aufzubauen. Am Lafayette Regional Airport in Louisiana wurden Räumlichkeiten übernommen. Sie wurden noch bis letztes Jahr von Bell Helicopters für die Produktion von Jet Ranger X Hubschrauber genutzt. Der Gouverneur von Louisiana, John Bel Edwards, freut sich, dass Kopter Louisiana und Lafayette für die Montage gewählt hat. Kopter hat bis jetzt 25 feste Bestellungen von Kunden in den USA und erwartet, dass die Vereinigten Staaten rund die Hälfte des erwarteten Umsatzes ausmachen werden. Nach Aussagen von Firmenchef Löwenstein sollen mit der Fabrik bis 2025 mindestens 120 neue Jobs geschaffen werden. Das erwartete Produktionsvolumen liegt bei etwa 100 SH09-Hubschraubern pro Jahr. Unterstützt wird Kopter durch ein Programm von Louisiana Economic Development, das 2,5 Millionen Dollar für Renovierung und Miete der Räumlichkeiten bereitstellt.

NEUER TURBINEN-HUBSCHRAUBER

Viel Kohle macht den Heli leicht

March 19, 2019



Kopter hat sich mit seinem neuen Turbinen-Hubschrauber SH09 viel vorgenommen. Die Maschine soll als Passagierversion, für Außenlasteinsätze, zur Überwachung oder bei Rettungsflügen eingesetzt werden können.

Es war und ist ein steiniger Weg. Denn der junge schweizerische Helikopterhersteller Kopter, früher bekannt unter dem Namen Marengo Swisshelikopter, hat sich mit seinem neuen Turbinen-Hubschrauber SH09 viel vorgenommen. Die Maschine soll als Passagierversion, für Außenlasteinsätze, zur Überwachung oder bei Rettungsflügen eingesetzt werden können. Einen völlig neuen Hubschrauber zu konstruieren, zuzulassen und zu vermarkten ist allerdings ein anspruchsvolles und kostenintensives Unterfangen. Fachleute gehen dafür von einem dreistelligen Millionenbetrag in Euro aus. Denn die Wettbewerber sind teilweise schon mehrere Jahrzehnte mit ihren Produkten auf dem Markt und haben einen entsprechenden Vorsprung bei Kundenservice und -bindung, der Ersatzteilversorgung und dem Pilotentraining.

Wenn man das ambitionierte Vorhaben des 2007 gegründeten Helikopterproduzenten etwa auf den Automobilbau übertragen würde, wäre es wohl so, als ob ein Newcomer mit seinem neuen Fahrzeug gleich gegen Audi A4, BMW 3er und Mercedes C-Klasse antreten würde.

Dennoch sind die Verantwortlichen am Produktionsstandort im schweizerischen Mollis überzeugt, dass ihr neuer Heli ein Erfolg wird. Immerhin gibt es bereits mehr als 60 Vorbestellungen und zahlreiche Kaufabsichtserklärungen für die Maschine. Sie wird von einem Piloten geflogen und befördert bis zu sieben Passagiere. Der neue Hubschrauber sei laut Kopter moderner, leistungsfähiger und preiswerter im Betrieb als die Konkurrenzprodukte, die bereits vor mehreren Jahrzehnten konstruiert wurden. Zu diesen zählen der deutsch-französische Airbus Helicopter H130T2, die amerikanische Bell 407 und die italienische AW119Kx von Leonardo. Alle gehören in die sogenannte 2,5-Tonnen-Klasse von Ein-Turbinen-Helikoptern.

Dass es Kopter wirklich ernst meint, zeigt auch die Neueröffnung eines Werks. In den Vereinigten Staaten, dem Hauptabsatzmarkt für einmotorige Hubschrauber, wurde am Lafayette Airport im Bundesstaat Louisiana am 11. März eine Produktionsstätte eingeweiht. Hier werden künftig alle Helikopter für den nord- und südamerikanischen Markt endmontiert.

Kopter strebt mit dem neuen Heli keine Revolution im Hubschrauberbau, sondern eher eine Optimierung verschiedenster Eigenschaften an. So besteht der Hauptunterschied zu den Konkurrenten im verwendeten Material. Der SH09 wird zu großen Teilen aus Karbonfaser gefertigt. Die ist leichter als Aluminium, dazu hochfest, allerdings auch nicht so einfach zu verarbeiten wie Metall. Der SH09 soll weniger wiegen als die Wettbewerber und bessere Sichtverhältnisse für Pilot und Passagiere bieten.

Die aerodynamische Kabine sei die größte in dieser Klasse und entspreche der eines Zwei-Turbinen-Helikopters, betont Cheftestpilot Richard Trueman. Durch Verwendung einer modernen 1020 PS starken HTS900-Turbine von Honeywell sei der Helikopter nicht nur besonders leistungsfähig etwa bei Hochgebirgseinsätzen und hohen Temperaturen, auch der Kerosinverbrauch sei günstig. Zudem ist die Maschine durch einen Fünfblattrotor und den gekapselten Heckrotor relativ leise. Bis zu 260 km/h schnell und 800 Kilometer weit fliegt der SH09, zudem kann er bis 1500 Kilo Außenlast transportieren. Drei Prototypen sind bereits in der Luft, ein viertes seriennahes Exemplar hebt noch in diesem Jahr ab.

An Bord ist ein Glascockpit. Es besteht aus zwei Displays, die Fluglage, Geschwindigkeit, Höhe, Rotordrehzahl, Position und weitere Infos anzeigen. Das hochmoderne System vom Typ Garmin G3000H wird über Touchscreen bedient und bei Kopter erstmals in einem Hubschrauber eingesetzt. Sonst ist es in Businessjets eingebaut. Bis zu einem möglichen Produktionsanlauf dauert es aber wohl noch mehrere Monate: Der SH09 hat bisher keine Luftfahrtzulassung durch die europäische Agentur für Flugsicherheit Easa. Erst im Anschluss daran können die ersten Helikopter ausgeliefert werden. Bis Ende 2019 könnte die Zulassung klappen, gibt sich das Unternehmen optimistisch.

JÜRGEN SCHELLING

Kopter Group inaugurates Lafayette facility

March 14, 2019



Kopter Group has officially taken over a new site at Lafayette Regional Airport for production and support of its [SH09](#) helicopters, the company announced on 11 March.

The Lafayette facility will become Kopter's prime location for the US and the Americas and will include a wide range of activities, including production, customisation and assembly of its helicopters, as well as customer services. The company expects to produce around 100 helicopters every year.

Kopter will source SH09 helicopter parts from US suppliers including Honeywell (turboshaft engine), Garmin (avionics) and Kaman (composite parts).

by The Shephard News Team

Kopter se instala en Lousiana aspirando a grandes contratos gubernamentales

Marzo 13, 2019



Ginebra, SUI.- El fabricante suizo Kopter, ha seleccionado a Lafayette, Louisiana, como la ubicación de su centro de producción y servicio en EE. UU. El CEO de la compañía, Andreas Löwenstein y el gobernador de Louisiana John Bel Edwards (D) lo anunciaron conjuntamente el martes por la mañana en Heli-Expo 2019. Kopter finalizará el diseño de su [helicóptero SH09](#) de gran cabina y un solo motor, antes de la certificación anticipada prevista para el segundo trimestre de 2020.

La compañía espera que más del 50 por ciento de su mercado en la próxima década vendrá de Norteamérica, con 25 pedidos de SH-09S ya registrados procedentes de los clientes de Estados Unidos. En línea con sus declaraciones de tener instalaciones de producción ubicadas cerca de sus centros de demanda. Se prevé una instalación similar para Asia.

Kopter arrendará una instalación 7900 metros cuadrados a la Comisión del aeropuerto de Lafayette, ocupada una vez por Bell como planta de ensamblaje previsto para su helicóptero ligero 505. Bell decidió construir el 505 en su planta de Mirabel, en Canadá, permitiendo a Kopter asentarse en Luisiana.

El estado, financió inicialmente la construcción de la instalación con 25,3 millones de dólares, que dispone ya de casi 60.000 metros cuadrados en el aeropuerto regional de Lafayette/Paul Fournet Field. Según Don Pierson, Secretario de desarrollo económico de Luisiana, afirma que la reasignación del espacio era necesaria, el litigio contra el ocupante anterior todavía está aún en curso.



“Tenemos aquí una solución llave en mano”, dijo Löwenstein. “Es una instalación que se ha construido para ensamblar y entregar helicópteros. “

La compañía espera comenzar el equipamiento y el despliegue del personal de la instalación a finales de este año, con un objetivo de iniciar la producción allí en 2020. Se espera que el primer SH-09 montado en Estados Unidos se entregue en 2021. Edwards señaló que la empresa creará 120 empleos en este centro con una nómina de 7 millones de dólares. Se espera que aumente la producción a 100 aeronaves al año desde esta sede en 2025.

“Estamos encantados de que Kopter eligiese Louisiana y Lafayette para la fabricación de un nuevo producto aeroespacial”, dijo Edwards, señalando que la compañía podría haber elegido cualquier ubicación en Norteamérica para su centro de producción y servicio. De hecho, según Löwenstein, no menos de 38 localidades fueron evaluadas por la compañía antes de que se asentaran en Lafayette. “La fuerza de trabajo, los activos de las instalaciones de Louisiana y nuestro clima de negocios competitivo, hacen de Lafayette la opción clara para el futuro de Kopter en las Américas”.

Löwenstein señaló que la característica que más atractiva de esta ubicación, es su papel como un centro de actividad para el mercado de helicópteros de Estados Unidos, con muchos operadores sirviendo a la industria del petróleo y gas en el Golfo de México, y que está ubicado en el centro de los clientes en todo Estados Unidos.



Entre los incentivos para atraer aún más a Kopter, el estado ofreció su programa de entrenamiento de trabajadores FastStart, junto con una exención de impuestos industriales de 2,5 millones de dólares por adelantado. “Destinado en parte para renovar la instalación de producción y parte como ayuda al arrendamiento”, explicó Edwards. “Fue un paquete de incentivos competitivos que ofrecimos.”

Kopter planea que la producción del SH09s incorpore del 50 por ciento al 70 por ciento de los componentes fabricados en Estados Unidos, y construidos en Luisiana, para permitirle competir por contratos gubernamentales. “Muy fácilmente con este conjunto de niveles de contenido estadounidense se nos permitirá ser una parte importante de los contratos más grandes de ese tipo en el futuro”, dijo Löwenstein.

La empresa, también se prepara para aumentar la producción en sus instalaciones de la sede en Mollis, Suiza, a una cifra final de 50 helicópteros al año, donde está planeando una expansión de más de 20.000 metros cuadrados. El espacio adicional se utilizará para la producción de componentes dinámicos, incluyendo hélices de rotor, cajas de engranajes y cabezas de rotor, así como equipos de prueba y almacenes. Se espera iniciar el proceso este otoño, finalizando en 2021.

Gov. Edwards, Kopter Dedicate Lafayette Helicopter Assembly Site

March 11, 2019



Photo from Helicopter Industry

LAFAYETTE, La. — On Saturday, March 9, Gov. John Bel Edwards joined CEO Andreas Löwenstein of Kopter Group AG, Lafayette Mayor-President Joel Robideaux, Secretary Don Pierson of Louisiana Economic Development, and other state, regional and local officials to celebrate Kopter’s selection of Lafayette for assembly of its SH09 helicopters.

The ribbon-cutting event followed Tuesday’s announcement at the world’s largest helicopter trade show in Atlanta that Lafayette had been selected by Kopter for production and support of its helicopters throughout the Western Hemisphere. Details were shared in a press release from Louisiana Economic Development.

Kopter’s manufacturing site will be located at the Lafayette Regional Airport, where the company will create 120 new direct jobs with an average annual salary of more than \$55,000, plus benefits. In addition, the company will make a \$4.2 million capital investment to modify and equip a state-of-the-art, 84,700-square-foot helicopter assembly building at the Lafayette airport. LED estimates the project will result in an additional 157 new indirect jobs, for a total or more than 275 new jobs in Acadiana and surrounding regions.

“Louisiana has a rich and storied history in the aerospace sector,” Gov. Edwards said. “From key defense installations like Barksdale Air Force Base in Northwest Louisiana and the Naval Air Station at Belle Chasse, to industrial aviation employers at Chennault International Airport and our leadership role in space missions at NASA’s Michoud Assembly Facility, we have proven ourselves as a state of innovation in the flight sector. Kopter Group’s selection of Lafayette for one of the world’s most advanced helicopter production projects secures an even stronger position for Louisiana in the aerospace industry. We welcome Kopter to Acadiana, and look forward to the positive momentum this project creates for Louisiana.”

Headquartered in Switzerland, Kopter Group has designed, engineered and tested a series of prototype helicopters that lay the foundation for production helicopters to be assembled in

Lafayette. With technological innovations that include composite airframe parts, state-of-the-art avionics, enhanced safety features, room for up to eight passengers, and a payload of up to 6,600 pounds, the SH09 helicopter will be among the most competitive helicopters in its class. “The Lafayette facility will become Kopter’s main hub for the U.S. and the Americas,” Löwenstein said. “It will include a large variety of activities, such as production, customization and assembly of our helicopters, as well as customer services. We expect to gradually hire up to 120 local personnel by 2025 to produce around 100 helicopters per year, and support the growing fleet in the region. A significant number of additional jobs should be generated through suppliers that will join us around the airport to create a true helicopter industry in Lafayette.”

With industry suppliers that include Kaman (composite parts), Garmin (avionics), Parker Aerospace (hydraulic pumps), Collins Aerospace (external lighting) and Honeywell (turboshaft engine), Kopter’s SH09 helicopters ultimately will be assembled in Lafayette with U.S.-sourced components representing at least 50 percent of the aircraft value.

“I am incredibly proud that Lafayette was Kopter’s choice for its newest helicopter assembly site,” Lafayette Mayor-President Joel Robideaux said. “This announcement comes at a pivotal time as we continue to work on the diversification of our economy. I’m grateful to Mr. Löwenstein for recognizing the opportunity that exists in Lafayette, and to Governor Edwards and Secretary Pierson for working with us at the local level to make this a reality.”

LED began formal discussions about the project with Kopter in October 2018. To secure the project, the State of Louisiana offered the company a competitive incentive package that includes a pair of performance-based grants: one of \$1.2 million for facility modifications, payable at \$200,000 in 2019 and \$1 million in 2020; and one of \$1.3 million for lease support, payable in five annual installments from 2020 through 2024. Kopter will lease the state-funded facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission.

Kopter also will receive the comprehensive workforce solutions of LED FastStart® – the nation’s No. 1 state workforce training program – and the company is expected to utilize Louisiana’s Quality Jobs and Industrial Tax Exemption programs.

“Today, Kopter is joining Acadiana’s well-established aviation sector that has served energy, training, and emergency services companies for decades,” said President and CEO Gregg Gothreaux of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority. “The state-of-the-art facility at Lafayette Regional Airport that will be Kopter’s new home will undoubtedly be a showpiece for the company. Aviation plays a significant part in the region’s targeted industry strategy; and, we are excited about the quality employment opportunities Kopter will provide for our experienced aviation and manufacturing workforce.”

Kopter designed the SH09 to suit a variety of aerospace missions: medical evacuation; surveillance and law enforcement; passenger transport and sightseeing; aerial work; and utility missions, among others. In addition to Louisiana’s aerospace legacy in the defense, space exploration and fixed-wing aviation sectors, the state features an abundance of helicopter sector companies, including offshore energy transportation leaders Bristow Group, Era Helicopters, PHI Inc. and RLC; technical support leader Arrow Aviation; and medical air transport leader Metro Aviation.

“Kopter’s decision to establish this strategically important production and support center in Acadiana is evidence of our region’s reputation as a hub of manufacturing excellence,” said President and CEO Troy Wayman of One Acadiana. “Kopter’s exciting and innovative entry into the rotor wing market will serve as a strong anchor for Acadiana’s aviation sector. We are particularly proud to share this historic announcement with them as they establish a U.S. presence in Acadiana.”

At its 14.7-acre Lafayette Regional Airport site, Kopter will begin hiring later this year, with formal helicopter assembly activity and deliveries scheduled to begin in 2021. Production will ramp up to an anticipated annual volume of 100 helicopters by 2025.

ROB KIRKPATRICK

presented by **ARCO**
EQUIPMENT



OneAcadiana CEO Troy Wayman talks about the new deal for European helicopter manufacturer Kopter to move into the former Bell Helicopters facility at Lafayette Regional Airport.



When asked about specific jobs, Wayman says Kopter made some conservative estimates on jobs. They are promising 120 direct jobs at the facility. The aircraft manufacturing industry is known to build hubs around manufacturing operations like these. Wayman has high hopes for the project.

Ribbon cutting ceremony held Saturday at Lafayette's newest helicopter assembly site

March 9, 2019



On Saturday, Gov. John Bel Edwards joined CEO Andreas Löwenstein of Kopter Group AG, Lafayette Mayor-President Joel Robideaux, Secretary Don Pierson of Louisiana Economic Development, and other state, regional and local officials at a ribbon cutting event to celebrate Kopter's selection of Lafayette for assembly of its SH09 helicopters.

It comes only days after Lafayette had been selected by Kopter for production and support of its helicopters throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Kopter's manufacturing site will be located at the Lafayette Regional Airport, where the company will create 120 new direct jobs with an average annual salary of more than \$55,000, plus benefits.

In addition, the company will make a \$4.2 million capital investment to modify and equip a state-of-the-art, 84,700-square-foot helicopter assembly building at the Lafayette airport. LED estimates the project will result in an additional 157 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 275 new jobs in Acadiana and surrounding regions.

"Louisiana has a rich and storied history in the aerospace sector," Gov. Edwards said.

"From key defense installations like Barksdale Air Force Base in Northwest Louisiana and the Naval Air Station at Belle Chasse, to industrial aviation employers at Chennault International Airport and our leadership role in space missions at NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility, we have proven ourselves as a state of innovation in the flight sector. Kopter Group's selection of Lafayette for one of the world's most advanced helicopter production projects secures an even stronger position for Louisiana in the aerospace industry. We welcome Kopter to Acadiana, and look forward to the positive momentum this project creates for Louisiana." Headquartered in Switzerland, Kopter Group has designed, engineered and tested a series of prototype helicopters that lay the foundation for production helicopters to be assembled in Lafayette. With technological innovations that include composite airframe parts, state-of-the-

art avionics, enhanced safety features, room for up to eight passengers, and a payload of up to 6,600 pounds, the SH09 helicopter will be among the most competitive helicopters in its class. “The Lafayette facility will become Kopter’s main hub for the U.S. and the Americas,” Löwenstein said. “It will include a large variety of activities, such as production, customization and assembly of our helicopters, as well as customer services. We expect to gradually hire up to 120 local personnel by 2025 to produce around 100 helicopters per year, and support the growing fleet in the region. A significant number of additional jobs should be generated through suppliers that will join us around the airport to create a true helicopter industry in Lafayette.”

With industry suppliers that include Kaman (composite parts), Garmin (avionics), Parker Aerospace (hydraulic pumps), Collins Aerospace (external lighting) and Honeywell (turboshaft engine), Kopter’s SH09 helicopters ultimately will be assembled in Lafayette with U.S.-sourced components representing at least 50 percent of the aircraft value.

“I am incredibly proud that Lafayette was Kopter’s choice for its newest helicopter assembly site,” Lafayette Mayor-President Joel Robideaux said. “This announcement comes at a pivotal time as we continue to work on the diversification of our economy. I’m grateful to Mr. Löwenstein for recognizing the opportunity that exists in Lafayette, and to Governor Edwards and Secretary Pierson for working with us at the local level to make this a reality.”

LED began formal discussions about the project with Kopter in October 2018. To secure the project, the State of Louisiana offered the company a competitive incentive package that includes a pair of performance-based grants: one of \$1.2 million for facility modifications, payable at \$200,000 in 2019 and \$1 million in 2020; and one of \$1.3 million for lease support, payable in five annual installments from 2020 through 2024. Kopter will lease the state-funded facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission.

Kopter also will receive the comprehensive workforce solutions of LED FastStart[®] – the nation’s No. 1 state workforce training program – and the company is expected to utilize Louisiana’s Quality Jobs and Industrial Tax Exemption programs.

“Today, Kopter is joining Acadiana’s well-established aviation sector that has served energy, training, and emergency services companies for decades,” said President and CEO Gregg Gothreaux of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority. “The state-of-the-art facility at Lafayette Regional Airport that will be Kopter’s new home will undoubtedly be a showpiece for the company. Aviation plays a significant part in the region’s targeted industry strategy; and, we are excited about the quality employment opportunities Kopter will provide for our experienced aviation and manufacturing workforce.”

Kopter designed the SH09 to suit a variety of aerospace missions: medical evacuation; surveillance and law enforcement; passenger transport and sightseeing; aerial work; and utility missions, among others. In addition to Louisiana’s aerospace legacy in the defense, space exploration and fixed-wing aviation sectors, the state features an abundance of helicopter sector companies, including offshore energy transportation leaders Bristow Group, Era Helicopters, PHI Inc. and RLC; technical support leader Arrow Aviation; and medical air transport leader Metro Aviation.

“Kopter’s decision to establish this strategically important production and support center in Acadiana is evidence of our region’s reputation as a hub of manufacturing excellence,” said President and CEO Troy Wayman of One Acadiana. “Kopter’s exciting and innovative entry into the rotor wing market will serve as a strong anchor for Acadiana’s aviation sector. We are particularly proud to share this historic announcement with them as they establish a U.S. presence in Acadiana.”

At its 14.7-acre Lafayette Regional Airport site, Kopter will begin hiring later this year, with formal helicopter assembly activity and deliveries scheduled to begin in 2021. Production will ramp up to an anticipated annual volume of 100 helicopters by 2025.

Swiss helicopter maker officially touches down in Lafayette, vows to 'conquer U.S. market'

March 9, 2019



Guests check out the helicopter prototype at the welcoming ceremony Saturday, March 9, 2019 at the former Bell Helicopter facility at Lafayette Regional Airport for the announcement of opening of the Kopter Production and Product Support Center which will deliver SH09 models throughout the Western Hemisphere using parts representing at least 50 percent of the aircraft's value from U.S. suppliers.

[Buy Now](#)

Robin May Photography



Gov. John Bel Edwards and Andreas Löwenstein, Kopter Chief Executive Officer perform the ribbon cutting at the welcoming ceremony Saturday, March 9, 2019 at the former Bell Helicopter facility at Lafayette Regional Airport for the announcement of opening of the Kopter Production and Product Support Center which will deliver SH09 models throughout the Western Hemisphere using parts representing at least 50 percent of the aircraft's value from U.S. suppliers.

[Buy Now](#)

Robin May Photography

State and local officials along with local business leaders officially welcomed Swiss helicopter maker Kopter on Saturday to its new North American home in Lafayette, saying it will spur economic activity well beyond the city's borders.

"Lafayette is helicopter country," Andreas Löwenstein, CEO of Kopter Group AG, said in discussing the company's choice of Lafayette over 38 other U.S. cities as the site for its production and product support center.

Kopter, he said, intends to "conquer the market here in the United States from right here in Lafayette." Löwenstein said Kopter considered a number of factors in making the decision to locate in Lafayette, including an available facility, proximity to potential clients, the \$120 million new terminal at Lafayette Regional Airport and the city's fiber optic network.

"You have a lot of qualified people here and are close to the big operators, but it's also a very welcoming area for companies like us," Löwenstein said. "We feel really at home."

Another major draw that allowed Lafayette to beat out other cities was having both the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and South Louisiana Community College to help provide talent and educate the next generation of talent for Kopter to hire.

"Our program produces aircraft maintenance technicians, so when the company starts operating, they're going to need those people, and we're already trying to expand our program to increase more aircraft technicians so they can be hired here," said Joel Matte, lead aircraft maintenance instructor at SLCC.

Kopter plans to employ about 120 people at the facility with an average salary of about \$55,000 a year plus benefits. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will also result in another 157 new indirect jobs.

Gov. John Bel Edwards said Kopter Group is an innovator in the aircraft industry and that locating in Lafayette will spur economic activity beyond just Lafayette and the Acadiana region. "We're excited about what this means for Lafayette and Louisiana," Edwards said. "Having a diverse economy is important for the future so that our young people know there's a job for them."

The 84,700-square-foot facility that will house Kopter is located along Evangeline Thruway and had previously been leased by Lafayette Regional Airport to [Bell Helicopter](#).

There, Kopter will produce its new SH09 helicopters that will be sold in North America and some Latin American markets. The company plans to make a \$4.2 million capital investment in new equipment and building additions at the Lafayette site. Kopter plans to open its doors in 2021 and hire on the full 120 people by 2025. The company plans to sell the SH09 helicopter primarily in the private sector but hopes to eventually expand into military production contracts, Löwenstein said.

Lafayette Parish Mayor-President Joel Robideaux said the company's decision to locate in the city "speaks incredibly highly of our workforce and our university and the fiber optic network that we have. It just proves that Lafayette can compete with a lot of these major American cities for global companies."

Executives and Edwards had previously announced Kopter's selection of Louisiana for its North American production location on Tuesday in Atlanta at the 2019 HAI Heli-Expo.

Business digest: Federal Reserve says U.S. growth slowed early in 2019

March 7, 2019

ECONOMY

Fed says U.S. growth slowed early in 2019

The U.S. economy cooled in the first two months of 2019, with growth characterized as “slight-to-moderate” across most of the country in a Federal Reserve survey released Wednesday.

“About half of the districts noted that the government shutdown had led to slower economic activity in some sectors,” according to the report.

The central bank’s beige book economic report, based on anecdotal information collected by the 12 regional Fed banks through Feb. 25, said consumer spending was also held back by harsh winter weather and higher costs of credit. Manufacturing strengthened, but companies reported “concerns about weakening global demand, higher costs due to tariffs and ongoing trade policy uncertainty.”

The report said that 10 out of 12 districts saw growth as “slight-to-moderate,” and two reported “flat economic conditions.”

The report, prepared by the Kansas City Fed, said labor markets remained tight with “notable worker shortages for positions relating to information technology, manufacturing, trucking, restaurants and construction.”

A majority of districts reported moderately higher wages and “modest to moderate” gains for overall prices.

— **Bloomberg News**

EMPLOYMENT

Small-business hiring slowed in February

Small-business hiring slowed dramatically in February, a sign that company owners may be getting cautious about the economy.

That report comes from payroll provider ADP, which said Wednesday that its customers with up to 49 staffers added just 12,000 jobs last month, down sharply from 107,000 in January and 84,000 in December. Small-business hiring was relatively weak compared with job growth at larger companies; ADP’s business customers of all sizes added a solid 183,000 jobs last month.

The February reading may be revised. Both of the previous readings were changed, with the January figure raised sharply and December’s downwardly adjusted. Still, the erratic pace of hiring shows that small-business owners are sticking to a strategy of hiring only when their

revenue justifies the added expense and risk. It also reflects the slippage in owners' optimism that has been seen in recent surveys.

— **Associated Press**

Also in Business

A Swiss company says it will assemble helicopters in Louisiana, bringing 120 jobs to the state. Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) and the chief executive of **Kopter** Group made the announcement Tuesday in Lafayette. **Kopter** will lease a facility from the Lafayette Regional Airport that was the home of a Bell Helicopter operation that closed in August. The **Kopter** Production and Product Support Center will deliver SH09 models throughout the Western Hemisphere. At least 50 percent of the company's suppliers will be U.S.-based businesses. **Kopter** Group will invest more than \$4 million in new equipment for the building.

Dollar Tree is closing up to 390 Family Dollar Stores this year and rebranding about 200 others under the Dollar Tree name. The company closed 84 of the stores in the fourth quarter, 37 more than originally planned. The company has said that it will renovate at least 1,000 stores this year. The company said Wednesday that it is seeking rent concessions from landlords at the stores closed late last year and if it doesn't get them, it will speed up the pace of store closings to as many as 390 locations. The company had 15,237 stores in 48 states and five Canadian provinces as of Feb. 2.

SeaWorld Orlando announced Wednesday that its "Sesame Street" section is opening at the end of March. The six-acre area of the Florida theme park will feature the namesake street, the famous stoop, Mr. Hooper's store and Big Bird's nest. When Sesame Street at SeaWorld opens March 27, it will mark the latest move of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment away from live animal shows, particularly ones involving its famous orcas.

— **From news services**

Coming today

8:30 a.m.: Commerce Department releases international trade data for January.

8:30 a.m.: Freddie Mac, the mortgage company, releases weekly mortgage rates.

10 a.m.: Federal Reserve releases consumer credit data for January.

Kopter expandiert in die USA

Die Molliser Kopter Group AG baut in Lafayette im US-Bundesstaat Louisiana eine Produktionsstätte für ihr Helikoptermodell SH09 auf. Bis 2025 sollen dort 120 Arbeitsplätze entstehen.

März 07, 2019



CEO Andreas Löwenstein gab am Mittwoch bekannt, dass in Lafayette künftig rund 100 SH09-Helikopter pro Jahr produziert werden sollen
SASI SUBRAMANIAM

Bekannt gegeben wurden die Pläne der Kopter Group AG am Dienstagmittag (Ortszeit) an ihrem Stand an der Heli-Expo in Atlanta. Mit dem Gouverneur des US-Bundesstaates Louisiana, John Bel Edwards, gab Kopters Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Andreas Löwenstein im Rahmen einer Medienkonferenz bekannt, dass in Lafayette künftig rund 100 SH09-Helikopter pro Jahr produziert werden sollen. So entstünden bis 2025 rund 120 Arbeitsplätze.

Kopter miete ein fast 8000 Quadratmeter grosses, «hochmodernes Helikopter-Montagegebäude von der Eigentümerin Lafayette Airport Commission», steht in der Mitteilung weiter. Dieses zukünftige Produktions- und Support-Center ergänze die bereits bestehenden und in Kürze erweiterten Kopter-Standorte in der Schweiz und werde Kunden in Nord- und Südamerika bedienen.

Für die lokale Wertschöpfung sollen Fertigungsteile von US-Lieferanten bezogen werden. Diese Teile sollen «wertmässig über die Hälfte des Wertes des SH09 ausmachen», der pro Stück und je nach Ausrüstung ab etwa 3,3 Millionen Franken kosten wird.

Auslieferungen in zwei Jahren

Den Bau der 25,3 Millionen Dollar (rund 25,4 Millionen Franken) teuren Montageanlage auf dem Gelände des Regionalflughafens Lafayette habe ursprünglich der Staat Louisiana finanziert. Kopter plane nun aber «bedeutende zusätzliche Investitionen in neue Geräte und Gebäudeerweiterungen».

Mit dem Einstellen von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern wolle Kopter noch in diesem Jahr beginnen und die Betriebsaufnahme per Mitte 2020 vorbereiten, um mit der Auslieferung der ersten dort montierten Helikopter 2021 zu beginnen. «Bis 2025 will Kopter in Lafayette mindestens 120 neue direkte Arbeitsplätze schaffen, während die Produktion auf ein erwartetes Volumen von rund 100 SH09 pro Jahr ansteigen soll», steht in der Mitteilung.

Zitiert wird in dieser auch Gouverneur Edwards: «Wir freuen uns, dass Kopter Louisiana und Lafayette als Montagestandort eines dynamischen neuen Luftfahrtprodukts ausgewählt hat.» Zur «ersten Wahl für die Zukunft von Kopter auf dem amerikanischen Kontinent» gemacht habe Lafayette «Louisianas hervorragende Mitarbeiterbasis und die Betriebsanlagen sowie unser wettbewerbsfähiges Geschäftsklima». Denn: «Kopter hätte jeden beliebigen Standort in Nordamerika für die Montage dieses neuen Helikopters wählen können.»

Monatelange Vorgespräche

Laut Kopter-CEO Löwenstein gibt es mehrere Gründe für die Standortwahl. Er wird in der Mitteilung so zitiert: «Erstens wegen Louisiana, einer schnell wachsenden und attraktiven Region und bereits heute Standort mehrerer wichtiger Helikopterbetreiber und vieler Industrieunternehmen.»

Zweitens ermögliche der Standort den einfachen Zugang zu qualifizierten Arbeitskräften «und einem qualitativ hochwertigen Bildungsumfeld», und drittens genüge die Anlage höchsten Ansprüchen und ermögliche einen praktisch sofortigen Betrieb. «Die Lage am Flughafen bietet eine ideale Produktionsumgebung mit schneller, einfacher Logistik und kommerzieller Anbindung.»

Vorausgegangen seien der Wahl des Standorts monatelange Gespräche mit der Standortförderung Louisiana Economic Development. In diesen habe der Staat Louisiana Kopter ein «wettbewerbsfähiges Incentivierungspaket», also verschiedene Anreize angeboten.

Bereits im Juli 2018 hatte Kopter die 100-prozentige US-Tochtergesellschaft Kopter North America als Limited Liability Company (LLC) oder Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (GmbH) gegründet. CEO dieser LLC ist Kopter-Kundenchef Christian Gras, Larry Roberts leitet den Verkauf, das Marketing und den Kundendienst.

Kopter to Build Half of All SH09s in Louisiana

March 6, 2019



Kopter SH09 (Photo by Dan Parsons)

ATLANTA — Kopter Group plans to build a new 84,700-square-foot manufacturing facility in Lafayette, Louisiana, where it will build up to 100 of its new SH09 light single-engine helicopters per year over the next decade.

The announcement was made by Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards and Kopter Chief Executive Andreas Löwenstein on March 5 at the Helicopter Association International's HeliExpo conference here.

Located at Lafayette Airport, the new facility should be online by 2025 and create at least 120 skilled jobs. A video announcement by Kopter is [available here](#).

“We are delighted that Kopter chose Louisiana and Lafayette for the assembly of a dynamic new aerospace product,” Edwards said. “The SH09 helicopter will be highly competitive in the marketplace and provide outstanding performance, great passenger and cargo capacity, and superior engineering and design. Kopter could have chosen any location in North America to assemble this new helicopter. Louisiana’s outstanding workforce and facility

assets, and our competitive business climate, make Lafayette the clear choice for Kopter's future in the Americas."

Kopter will lease a 84,700 sq. ft. facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission, which owns the helicopter assembly buildings. Kopter's future production and support center will complement existing Kopter sites in Switzerland and will serve customers throughout the Americas.

Eventually, the Louisiana site will source parts from U.S. suppliers and will account for up to half of all SH09 production, Löwenstein said.

The state of Louisiana initially funded construction of the \$25.3 million Lafayette facility on a 14.7-acre airport site. Kopter plans to make additional capital investment in new equipment and building extensions. The company will begin hiring personnel later this year and prepare operations by mid-2020, with deliveries of locally-assembled helicopters to start in 2021. Kopter intends to create at least 120 new direct jobs by 2025 in Lafayette, while production should ramp up to an anticipated volume of around 100 SH09 per year.

"Kopter Group chose the Lafayette site for several reasons," Löwenstein said. "First, because of Louisiana, which is a rapidly growing and attractive region and already hosting several key helicopter operators and many industrial players. Second, for the easy access to a qualified workforce and a high-quality educational environment. And third, for the facility itself, which meets the highest standards and allows almost instant operations. Its location on the airport provides an ideal production environment, with quick and easy logistics and commercial access."

In the framework of a thorough site selection process, Kopter Group conducted formal discussions with Louisiana Economic Development (LED) for several months. To secure the project, the state of Louisiana offered the company a competitive incentive package.

Kopter joins now a growing list of companies active in the helicopter sector in Louisiana, including offshore operators Bristow Group, Era Helicopters, PHI and RLC and the medical air transport leader Metro Aviation.

This major step for Kopter's development in the US follows the formation in July 2018 of a fully-owned U.S. subsidiary, Kopter North America.

Kopter Selects Louisiana for U.S. Production and Service Center

March 6, 2019



Swiss OEM Kopter selected Lafayette, Louisiana, as the location for its U.S. production and service facility, company CEO Andreas Löwenstein and Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) jointly announced on Tuesday morning at Heli-Expo 2019. Kopter is preparing to freeze the design on its large-cabin, single engine SH09 helicopter ahead of anticipated certification in the second quarter of 2020.

The company expects more than 50 percent of its market over the next decade to come from North America, with orders for 25 SH-09s already on the books from U.S. customers. Thus, the announcement tracks with its stated intention to have production facilities located near its demand centers. A similar facility is also planned for Asia.

Kopter will lease an 84,700-sq-ft facility from the Lafayette Airport Commission, which owns the complex, that was once occupied by Bell as a planned construction site for its 505 light single helicopter. Bell decided to build the 505 at its Mirabel facility in Canada, leaving the Louisiana site fallow.

The state initially funded construction of the \$25.3 million facility, which occupies nearly 15 acres at Lafayette Regional Airport/Paul Fournet Field. While the lease on the facility was clear for reassignment, litigation against the former occupant is still proceeding, according to Don Pierson, Louisiana's economic development secretary.

"We have here a turnkey solution," said Löwenstein. "It's a facility that has been built to assemble and deliver helicopters."

The company expects to begin outfitting and staffing the U.S. facility later this year, with an eye towards beginning production there later in 2020. The first U.S.-assembled SH-09 is expected to be delivered in 2021. Edwards noted that the company will create 120 jobs at the location with a \$7 million payroll, and it is expected to ramp up production to 100 aircraft a year from the location by 2025.

“We are delighted that Kopter chose Louisiana and Lafayette for the assembly of a dynamic new aerospace product,” said Edwards, noting the company could have chosen any location in North America for its production and service hub. Indeed, according to Löwenstein, no fewer than 38 locations were evaluated by the company before it settled on Lafayette. “Louisiana’s outstanding workforce and facility assets, and our competitive business climate, make Lafayette the clear choice for Kopter’s future in the Americas.”

Löwenstein noted the most attractive feature area for the location is its role as a hub of activity for the U.S. helicopter market, with many operators serving the oil and gas industry in the Gulf of Mexico, and it is centrally located to customers throughout the U.S.

Among the incentives to further entice Kopter, the state offered its Faststart worker training program, along with a \$2.5 million up-front industrial tax exemption. “Part of that is to renovate the production facility and part of that is some lease assistance,” explained Edwards. “It was a competitive incentive package that we put on top of the facility.”

Kopter plans for the production SH09s to incorporate 50 percent to 70 percent of U.S.-made components, and being built in Louisiana, to allow it to compete for government contracts. “We will quite easily with this set up reach levels of American content which will allow us to be an integral part of bigger contracts of that type in the future,” said Löwenstein.

As it prepares to ramp up production at its headquarters facility in Mollis, Switzerland, to an eventual 50 helicopters a year, the company is also planning a more than 215,000-sq-ft expansion. The additional space will be used for production of dynamic components, including rotor blades, gearboxes, and rotor heads, as well as housing testing rigs and warehouses. It expects to break ground this fall, with a targeted completion in 2021.

HAI Convention News

DAY 2
March 6, 2019

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« Heli-Expo attendees crowded the Kopter booth on the show's opening day as CEO Andreas Löwenstein revealed the company's plan to build new SH09 helicopters for the U.S. market at a former Bell facility in Lafayette, Louisiana. The single-engine SH09 is near design freeze, and certification is planned in 2020. Löwenstein expects more than 50 percent of sales to be in the U.S., and plans call for another factory in Asia to serve those markets.

Kopter lands in Bayou State

by Curt Epstein

Swiss OEM Kopter selected Lafayette, Louisiana, as the location for its U.S. production and service facility, company CEO Andreas Löwenstein and Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) jointly announced yesterday morning at Heli-Expo 2019. Kopter is preparing to freeze the design on its large-cabin, single engine SH09 helicopter ahead of anticipated certification in the second quarter of 2020.

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proceeding, according to Don Pierson, Louisiana's economic development secretary.

"We have here a turnkey solution," said Löwenstein. "It's a facility that has been built to assemble and deliver helicopters."

» continues on page 30

Kaman seeks FAA approval for pilot-optional K-Max

Kaman aims to have the first pilot-optional helicopter certified by the FAA, the Connecticut-based airframer said this week at Heli-Expo 2019. It expects to have such a version of its K-Max heavy-lift helicopter available for commercial use by 2020.

The aircraft, with its unique intermeshing twin rotors, was first certified in 1994 for manned operations, but two were used in a demonstration project by the U.S. Marine

Corps in Afghanistan in 2011 to test unmanned capabilities in combat zone cargo deliveries. "It started out as a limited objective experiment and was supposed to fly for 30 days," said Romin Dasmalchi, the company's senior director of business development. "It was such a resounding success that three years later they decided to redeploy back to the U.S. after the work was done in Afghanistan."

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FAA OKs Sikorsky S-70M for utility ops

The FAA has awarded Sikorsky type certification in the restricted category for the S-70M, enabling the Lockheed Martin company to produce the non-military version of the UH-60M for special-purpose civil operations such as external cargo, agriculture operations, and forest and wildlife conservation, the airframer announced Tuesday at Heli-Expo 2019.

Sikorsky v-p of strategy and business development Nathalie Previte said the certification “will be tremendously attractive to local government agencies,

municipalities, and commercial transport companies across the U.S., and even to some international operators, that want to acquire new Black Hawk helicopters direct from Sikorsky to accomplish specific tasks.”

The Connecticut-based manufacturer (Booth B2507) said it is increasingly receiving orders and inquiries from municipalities in California and other western states for the S-70 Firehawk, a modified Black Hawk with a 1,000-gallon external water tank. The U.S. Army has purchased more than 1,000 UH-60Ms since 2005. **J.S.**

› continued from page 1

Kopter planning to build in Louisiana

The company expects to begin outfitting and staffing the U.S. facility later this year, with an eye towards beginning production there later in 2020. The first U.S.-assembled SH09 is expected to be delivered in 2021. Edwards noted that the company will create 120 jobs at the location with a \$7 million payroll, and it is expected to ramp up production to 100 aircraft a year from the location by 2025.

“We are delighted that Kopter chose Louisiana and Lafayette for the assembly of a dynamic new aerospace product,” said Edwards, noting the company could have chosen any location in North America for its production and service hub. Indeed, according to Löwenstein, no fewer than 38 locations were evaluated by the company before it settled on Lafayette. “Louisiana’s outstanding workforce and facility assets, and our competitive business climate, make Lafayette the clear choice for Kopter’s future in the Americas.”

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oil and gas industry in the Gulf of Mexico, and it is centrally located to customers throughout the U.S.

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U.S. Components

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As it prepares to ramp up production at its headquarters facility in Mollis, Switzerland, to an eventual 50 helicopters a year, the company is also planning a more than 215,000-sq-ft expansion. The additional space will be used for production of dynamic components, including rotor blades, gearboxes, and rotor heads, as well as housing testing rigs and warehouses. It expects to break ground this fall, with a targeted completion in 2021. ■

› continued from page 1

Optionally-piloted K-Max coming soon

Those two aircraft, known as CQ-24A in their military designation, survived their deployment under challenging operating conditions with an operational readiness better than 95 percent, hauling more than 4.5 million pounds of cargo to remote outposts—essentially 900 ground vehicle loads. In that role, the two aircraft protected the lives of soldiers by keeping them off of mine-strewn roads and reduced the possibility of ambushes. Upon the helicopters’ return to the U.S., they were then put into preservation by the USMC. Kaman is again working with the Marines on the latest version of unmanned technology for battlefield logistics and will soon return the pair to flight status.

Dasmalchi said the idea for the future K-Max will be to create an optional modification that will allow the user to decide whether the mission calls for a manned pilot or unmanned configuration. “The unmanned system that we’re building, you could think of it as a modular kit,” he explained. “If you have an existing K-Max, you could purchase the unmanned kit and it could be installed for you, then you could operate both manned or unmanned.” The option would also be available factory installed for new aircraft.

Flight testing for the unmanned equipment will begin by the end of the year, according to Dasmalchi, who described it as being able to act autonomously. “It is controlled by a laptop, not by a joystick where somebody physically manipulates the aircraft,” he said. “You’re just going to hit the button on the computer and the machine is going to fly and execute the whole mission.”

While it expects to receive FAA certification for the system next year, what exactly that will entail has yet to be determined. “The existing unmanned K-Max, the ones that the Marines used were on an experimental certification,” Dasmalchi said. “We don’t know yet what requirements the FAA will do for the unmanned. We know the FAA is making a push to certify this class of UAS.”

Though the manufacturer shuttered its production line for the turbine-powered K-Max in the early 2000s, Kaman restarted it in 2015, and after a 17-year hiatus began new deliveries of the \$7.25 million aircraft. It has since delivered 10, bringing the worldwide fleet of the specialized helicopter to 32.

“The phrase I would use is ‘back by popular demand,’” Dasmalchi told AIN. “The current fleet of operators is very satisfied with the helicopter, and clearly there is a demand for it.” ■

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When Kaman’s optionally-piloted K-Max achieves certification in 2020, it will be one of the largest unmanned aerial vehicles in the sky.

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Due to weather concerns, Kopter has shifted flight testing from Switzerland to southern Sicily.

Kopter finalizing SH09 specs

by Rick Adams

Kopter (Booth B4016) expects its flight-test team to be ensconced this month at the southern tip of Sicily in Pozzalo, Italy. The push is on to finalize the design of its new SH09 single-engine, large-cabin helicopter targeted for the air medical, rescue, law enforcement, utility, and passenger transport market segments. According to Kopter CEO Andreas Löwenstein, “Pozzalo is probably the spot in Europe where they have the best and most stable weather conditions,” as well as “a very good airport and air traffic management infrastructure for flight testing a helicopter.”

The weather conditions around Kopter’s Mollis, Switzerland production facility can be capricious, including snow, fog, and wind. “Conditions here do not allow us to have a dense and well-planned flight sequence,” lamented Löwenstein. “Some months you can fly 10 percent of what you plan. We cannot go to certification on this path.”

At the end of last month, Kopter’s third prototype (P3) completed more than 50 hours of flight testing, including achieving a speed of 126 knots—the eventual cruise

target is 140—and an altitude of more than 5,000 feet. “We feel that the aircraft is behaving very well, so it’s a good confirmation of the expected performance,” Löwenstein told AIN.

“We are quite confident that most of the configurations will stay stable now, so we are already starting to build the long-lead components for [pre-series] PS4,” he added. By late summer, PS4, representing the design freeze version, will join the test program. It will have a larger cabin capable of carrying an additional eighth passenger as a result of a redesign of the fuel tank system. “We are planning for several hundred flights,” Löwenstein said.

By the end of this year, PS5, a clone of PS4, will be produced for the extreme weather portion of certification testing, including cold-weather regions (likely Alaska). Kopter is working with both EASA and the FAA toward early 2020 certification, which Löwenstein acknowledged is “not so easy to predict.” He promised initial customer deliveries in late 2020 against a “committed order book” of 65 aircraft and nearly 100 letters of intent.

Kopter believes the SH09’s spacious cabin, large sliding doors, and flat floor for “quick interchangeability of mission layouts” will help the helicopter compete against not only single-engine models “but in some not totally marginal cases, we will equally address twin markets,” Löwenstein said. “People have twin-engine helicopters because they need bigger cabins; we have the cabin but at single-engine cost.”

The SH09 “has been laid out in a manner that will allow us to address five or six of the main subsegments that are steadily growing and where you have a tremendous replacement need in the coming years,” noted Löwenstein. “We have in mind from the beginning to address all these markets with the corresponding mission equipment. We will not come with a naked helicopter.”

Mission equipment to be offered will include special doors, flotation, cargo ropes, and a flat floor that permits quick cabin conversion from utility to passenger transport or from transport to medical, “basically taking minutes to change the configuration of the aircraft.”

“When you see it with the eyes of the EMS operator, it is the ideal EMS vehicle. When you see it with the eyes of a law enforcement team, it is the ideal law enforcement helicopter. When you put passengers into it for tourism, it’s the ideal tourism helicopter,” the Swiss executive stated.

True to its upstart spirit, Kopter has selected a non-traditional approach to training for the SH09—VR Motion (HAI Booth B3831), a relatively new virtual reality company. “When you come into the market with a quite sophisticated single-engine helicopter, you must be obsessed by safety,” Löwenstein told AIN. “We do not have a track record in terms of reliability and safety so we will emphasize from the beginning our pilots must be well trained.”

He called VR Motion “a very innovative company bringing new technology to the market; this is a very good means with reasonable cost to have outstanding pilots flying our aircraft.” Kopter plans to have its own pilot and maintenance training organization.

VR Motion CEO Fabi Riesen thinks virtual reality technology “is going to change the simulator market.” The small northeastern Switzerland company began experimenting with VR in 2013 and kicked into higher gear two years later, expanding their engineering team in collaboration with HSR University in Rapperswil. Its new product combines a VR headset with high-resolution graphics and a motion platform. The company produced a “marketing mockup” trainer for Kopter’s Heli-Expo exhibit in less than a month.

Löwenstein said Kopter, which rebranded a year ago from the original Marengo Swiss Helicopter name, should no longer be regarded as an engineering startup. It currently has 300 employees and expects to add another 100 this year. “We have to set up the product support organization, logistics, training—everything that is necessary to deliver service and operate helicopters.”

New Airbus H145 to have five-blade rotor, Fadedec

by Mark Huber

Airbus Helicopters is introducing an upgraded version of its H145 twin this week at Heli-Expo 2019. Scheduled for EASA certification in early 2020, the improved model will feature a new five-blade, bearingless main rotor system; two Safran Arriel 2E engines with Fadedec; four-axis autopilot with the Helionix digital avionics suite; and an integrated wireless airborne communication system (wACS). Cumulatively, the improvements will

give the H145 an increased useful load of 330 pounds and boost maximum takeoff weight to 8,377 pounds. Airbus Helicopters CEO Bruno Even said the improvements emanated from customer feedback “over the years about the aircraft.” Deliveries will begin later in 2020, he said, adding that the upgrade will be offered as a retrofit for legacy H145 aircraft.

The new rotor system provides a useful load equivalent to the H145’s empty



weight, reduces maintenance requirements, improves reliability, and shrinks overall rotor disk diameter, allowing the aircraft to operate in more confined areas. The wACS wireless communications system will facilitate real-time data transmission from the helicopter facilitating live health and usage monitoring. Airbus Helicopters is displaying the H145 at its booth (C305).

HAI: Kopter acquires Lafayette site for SH09 assembly

March 05, 2019

Swiss helicopter developer Kopter has acquired a former Bell facility in Lafayette, Louisiana, where it plans to open a US assembly line for its single-engined SH09 light helicopter.

The new site, which Kopter announced on 5 March during the first day of HAI Heli-Expo, will enable the company to meet demand from US customers, which will likely account for half of early SH09 deliveries, says chief executive Andreas Lowenstein.

"We found the ideal facility – [a] turnkey, production-ready facility," Lowenstein tells FlightGlobal.

Kopter, formerly known as Marenco Swisshelicopter, has already acquired the 7,870sq m (84,700sq ft) site at Lafayette Regional airport and expects to deliver the first SH09 from there in 2021, Lowenstein says.



Kopter showcased a mock-up of its SH09 light helicopter at its HAI Heli-Expo booth in Atlanta

Bell in 2015 opened an assembly plant for its 505 light-single at the \$26.3 million Lafayette facility, which was bankrolled by state funds. However, prior to the first JetRanger X rolling off the line, Bell switched production of the 505 to its existing factory in Mirabel, Canada. It promised to replace that work with cabin assembly for the larger 525, as well as modifications on the model 407-based Northrop Grumman MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned aircraft.

Then, last year, Bell also abandoned that plan.

Lowenstein calls Lafayette "one of the best places for helicopters in the US", noting the region has an established aerospace workforce and a supplier base. It is also centrally located in the USA and near potential oil and gas industry customers, he says.

Kopter's Lafayette move makes good on its promise to open a US site; it also plans to unveil a similar Asia-Pacific assembly line at a later date.

SH09 components will be manufactured at Kopter's primary assembly site in Mollis, Switzerland, then shipped as kits to Lafayette for final assembly.

Lafayette's output will ramp up slowly to maintain quality and to ensure the supply chain keeps pace, Lowenstein says. The company expects the site will deliver about 100 SH09s annually by 2025.

Kopter has received more than 60 firm orders for the SH09, which is powered by a single Honeywell HTS900. The company holds letters of intent for around another 100 aircraft, Lowenstein says.

A UTOPIAN DREAM?



Collins Aerospace's HeliSure cockpit display system integrates 3D visualisation, sensors and databases, providing pilots with increased situational awareness. (Image: Collins Aerospace)

The civil helicopter market is awash with theories about how a forthcoming urban air mobility network will utilise new technologies to create cockpit configurations and flight control systems that are unlike anything conventional rotorcraft have thus far been able to achieve. It is therefore easy to get caught up in the hype without fully appreciating the technical leaps required for such concepts to take hold.

An assessment of the developments across more traditional rotary-wing types, particularly those yet to be certified in the civil sphere – such as the Airbus H160 medium, the Bell 525 Relentless super medium and **Kopter's** SH09 light single – sheds light on the newest, and arguably most capable, flight decks being offered to their respective markets.

From a safety and business perspective, it is evident that a focus on supporting pilots through more intuitive avionics suites

As emerging technologies continue to offer greater safety and lighten pilot workload, which concepts will shape the future direction of avionics manufacturing and cockpit training? *Shephard* assesses the latest industry developments and looks at which innovations are expected to drive future change.

By Tim Martin

and increased automation remains central to OEM and supply chain competition.

A fly-by-wire future

Looking specifically at approaches to safety with respect to in-development aircraft, Bell has selected fly-by-wire technology on the 525. This is partly because its architecture enables a set of three or more independent systems to control the rotorcraft, 'making it extremely improbable over the typical 50-plus-year life of the fleet that a loss of control event could occur', according to Byron Ward, VP of the 525 programme at the OEM.

Such functionality and redundancies are fitted into navigational, altitude, electrical, flight-processing and hydraulic systems, he added in a statement to *Shephard*. Bell also expects benefits of the design to include changes to the way in which the vehicle flies, which will mean new control laws and inceptors can be used to make aircraft handling and navigation easier.

With the 525 set for FAA certification at the end of 2019, the helicopter will become the first commercially available type to feature fly-by-wire technology. This means that mechanical flight controls have been

replaced with an electronic interface that is capable of autonomously managing variables such as flight trajectory and air speed (as well as an assortment of other technical data) at a much quicker rate than a pilot.

However, it must be acknowledged that there is a common debate – often fresh within the fixed-wing community following a crash caused by a misjudged fly-by-wire computerised process or malfunction – over whether the event could have been prevented or consequences made less severe if the pilots had been capable of overriding the issue. Whichever side of the argument is more persuasive, the rarity of accidents, combined with the quality and sophistication of flight-control capabilities, does seem to suggest that the advent of fly-by-wire technology within the rotorcraft industry is an important step in strengthening safety issues and reducing pilot fatigue.

Fingertip access

On the avionics front, the Relentless will be equipped with the Garmin-manufactured G5000H touchscreen suite, which provides operators with fingertip access to navigation and communications functions like hover performance and electronic checklist entries, according to company literature.

Displays can also be switched between primary flight or multifunction modes, with each capable of multi-pane configurations that support customised views of maps, charts, checklists and helicopter terrain

awareness and warning system (HTAWS), flight planning, weather and video data.

Documenting the value of its 3D Helicopter Synthetic Vision Technology (HSVT), which is integrated on the G5000H, Garmin points out that the widescreen aspect ratio of the primary flight display can be used to create a panoramic view of the HSVT – a scenario that lets pilots access a virtual-reality depiction of traffic and in-flight obstacles.

The inclusion of 3D audio technology is also looked upon as key to identifying separate communication channels (COMM). 'For example, COMM 1 will seem to be coming from the left, while COMM 2 may seem to be coming from the right, making it easier to discern a call from ATC from inbound weather,' a product overview reiterates.

As well as the 3D HSVT technology, Garmin is increasingly prioritising a five-colour HTAWS and its WireAware wire-strike avoidance technology, which a company spokesperson told *Shepherd* continues to enhance situational awareness and reduce pilot workload. 'When paired with an HTAWS-equipped GTN 650/750 or GNS navigator, HTAWS offers forward-looking avoidance to predict in advance where potential terrain, tower or obstacle hazards may exist,' they explained.

'Garmin uses a helicopter-specific obstacle database that features over 200,000 low-altitude obstacles, and an expanded version offers 700,000 miles

[1.13 million km] of powerlines. WireAware takes this data and overlays powerline location information and relative altitude on the moving map and provides both aural and visual alerting when operating near these powerlines,' the spokesperson continued.

For prototyping purposes, Garmin currently uses 3D printing but has not yet implemented the technology at a manufacturing level. Key to the company's evaluation of new products and technologies is a 'human factors' department, a full-motion simulator and a flight operations department, with more than 25 rotorcraft available for flight testing and certification of avionics, flight decks and software. A range of technical expertise is provided by the hundreds of pilots that are employed across engineering, product support, marketing and flight-testing departments.

Despite such a wealth of resources and talent, new developments regarding technical prototyping, research and design could not be commented on by the spokesperson, who only indicated that Garmin is always exploring new capabilities and is aiming to advance its avionics suites and integrated flight decks.

Under evaluation

The Garmin G3000H, a scaled-down version of the G5000H, will be installed on all **Kopter** SH09 light-single helicopters once customer deliveries commence after the platform's certification at the end of 2019.

This decision was reached with the heavy influence of strategic and commercial planning. Michele Riccobono, chief technology officer at **Kopter**, explained that central to the selection of the G3000H was the Swiss company's intention of acquiring FAA certification initially for single-pilot VFR-type flights, followed by a four-axis upgrade option for single-engine, single-pilot IFR operations. 'From a technology point of view, it's one of the most modern avionics suites available on the market,' he said.

Although SH09 prototype test flights have been under way since 2014, **Kopter** has not yet tested the G3000H and is currently flying with the outgoing Safran ICDS 8A glass cockpit. Riccobono explained that the main basis for switching to the G3000H – after Garmin struck a deal with **Kopter** in May 2018 – is because the Safran suite could not be upgraded for IFR certification. ▶

The 525 Relentless is set to become the first commercially available helicopter to feature fly-by-wire technology. (Photo: Bell)



The Garmin G5000H gives operators fingertip access to navigation and communications functions like hover performance and electronic checklist entries. (Image: Garmin)



A flight test team finalised a large 'system integration lab' shortly before the end of last year in preparation for installation of the new Garmin avionics on prototype 4 (P4) in Q3 2019. The integration comprised a test bench with all of the flight-deck hardware fitted to it, explained Michiel Dekkers, flight test engineer at **Kopter**.

With the pilot's perspective of course being key, assessment of the G3000H was carried out prior to its selection during a two-day visit by Dekkers to a US-based Garmin facility. The configuration of two large, widescreen, high-resolution displays and a single flat-screen controller suited **Kopter's** requirements. The company also favoured the viewing angles and high-contrast specifications that the system offers.

The assessment itself took place in a laboratory. The high-fidelity nature of the testing environment meant that nothing was simulated as all hardware was attached to live systems. 'Anyone who has ever worked with a Garmin system – say the G1000, which is very widespread in all of the current retrofitted helicopters – will have no problem operating this new cockpit because of familiarity,' Dekkers explained. 'There may be new features, but all the control strategies are very much the same.'

For now, internal company and external collaborations with Garmin are being prioritised in order for the G3000H to be ready for P4. To that end, the first version of **Kopter's** specific software for the suite was completed in January 2019.

The SH09 programme team now intends to evaluate the software using its in-house test bench and, depending on their conclusions, requests for improvements will then be relayed to the Garmin team. 'In addition to that, we also have a cockpit mock-up in our headquarters [Wetzikon,

Switzerland],' Dekkers added. 'We are also modifying the cockpit mock-up so that we can fit at least the screens and the touchscreen controller and then evaluate it in a cockpit environment before we conduct the first flight.'

From a technical standpoint, Dekkers suggested that changes from avionics OEMs to address and improve 'technical feedback' from cockpit equipment would be one area of development that would be worthwhile. 'From a pilot's point of view, anything really that helps us focus on the outside [environment] all the time would be beneficial for helicopter operations. So, you can think of 3D audio or visual cueing systems or LiDAR [Light Detection and Ranging],' he said. This is important because pilots being better able to locate or anticipate possible obstacles in plain view is considered a necessity for safety.

'If you look at all the advancements made in car manufacturing nowadays with auto-drive functions, the technologies are out there so it should be a small step to have that incorporated, hopefully in the near future, into helicopters,' Dekkers continued.

Standing out

Taking a different approach, Airbus Helicopters has opted to develop its own avionics suite, named Helionix, rather than partner with a supplier. Initial customer operations of the system began in 2015, and more than 100,000h of flight time had since been registered by March 2018.

Based on two computers and up to four electronic displays, Helionix hosts a four-axis autopilot, a first limit indicator displaying engine instrument data, GPS navigation, communication systems and traffic advisory software.

Installed on H135 light twin, H145 light twin, H175 super-medium and the incoming

H160 helicopters, the suite was designed so that Airbus-manufactured models could be better integrated with existing electronic flight-control systems, according to Jean-Jacques Mevel, avionics programme director at Airbus. 'We could have, for example, relied on commercially available displays from Garmin or Esterline, or those which are leading the market, but when you talk about autopilot or management systems, or functions which control the machine and protect it from failure, we are the only [OEM] doing that ourselves,' he said.

Future adjustments to Helionix will offer improvements in pilot assistance, with Airbus having already added 'mission-specific functionalities' for SAR and oil and gas operators for landing and take-off phases.

Maintenance advancements could also eventually see customers provided with earlier warnings on 'ageing and reliability' issues relating to their aircraft. 'Thanks to avionics now being capable of capturing hundreds of signals from different points on a helicopter, we can record a lot of information and run algorithms in order to anticipate failure before it happens,' Mevel confirmed.

Making connections

The development of connected rotorcraft capabilities is beginning to take hold across the industry, but prohibitive costs have not always been to operators' collective liking.

Although signal interference from rotor blades has troubled attempts to produce quality connectivity in the past, technical advances are now offering solutions to this issue. For example, Honeywell's Aspire satellite communication systems are embedded with 'proprietary technology' that allows the devices to transmit through rotor blades to satellites with no interruption, said Rick Buchanan, director of sales at the OEM. This means

that up to 650kb/s of data can be sent from the rotorcraft to a satellite and then delivered to a ground station.

The Aspire product line was originally developed for the fixed-wing community, but adaptations were made over two years ago to ensure its entry into the helicopter market, with a strong focus on key sectors. 'We've done a lot of segmentation work – for example, EMS operators who want to transmit a bunch of patient data on and off the aircraft and parapublic missions, where [users] want to tie in FLIR data and subsequently then transmit to a ground station – that's a very large market. VIP transport is another area where a CEO could be connected during the entire flight, transmitting data and doing video conference calls.'

Analysing the market naturally forms a basis for sales and commercial projections, but as Aspire is relatively new, demonstrating its potential is looked upon as an equally valuable aspect of business development and growth.

Currently, Honeywell is under contract with three operators for connected systems on platforms including the Leonardo AW139 medium twin and Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk. The company also holds four STCs for the Airbus AS350 light single, AW139, Bell 429 light twin and UH-60.

Efforts to increase customer partnerships through sales and marketing campaigns include a dealer network and plans for future demonstration flights with connected systems in an AS350 aircraft, beginning with the North American market. Buchanan explained that

installation of the Aspire system is in process at the moment. Once this is complete, the demonstration flights will commence.

He admitted that technical maturation and greater interoperability of Aspire and flight control systems, smarter engines and auxiliary power units are integral to future market growth. 'Those components all have electronic control, which can be combined with aircraft data. Aspire's wide bandwidth capability means that transmission of large amounts of data on and off the aircraft [can be achieved],' he said.

Clearly then, while Honeywell is confident that more operators will invest in Aspire systems, business predictions must consider the company's dependence on helicopter and engine OEMs delivering new technologies, ideally off the shelf or capable of easily merging with Aspire, before any significant spike in market growth can be realised. As is typical with aviation programmes, the longer the wait for new customer orders, the shorter the programme duration.

Different approaches

Looking at other cockpit-based technologies, Honeywell has completed the six-year development of its combined (synthetic) vision system, which now has its first customer (undisclosed).

According to Jason Bialek, director of marketing and product management for Primus Epic integrated flight decks at Honeywell, the system offers newer capabilities than similar competitor products. 'We've been working on this for

quite some time on the AW139, and we're close to certification,' he said. 'We cannot announce the date for when it will be certified. We're expecting that folks will be taking delivery of it in the next year or two.'

Differing from other solutions on the market insofar as the technology is track-based rather than heading-based, the system can make vertical angle adjustments on approach, a particular advantage for steep approaches, according to Bialek.

Leveraging experience in the fixed-wing industry, Honeywell has also been working on 3D airport moving map technology in a bid to overcome the difficulties of using more conventional flight system functions to navigate in low-visibility or night conditions. 'If pilots are asked to reposition or to approach a certain part of the airport without clear visibility of the airport, they're not able to see the taxiway intersections like they can with a 3D airport moving map,' Bialek explained.

As for other developments in the works by avionics OEMs, the Collins Aerospace HeliSure cockpit display system is pending certification for an undisclosed Asia-Pacific operator, having been flying since 'early 2018', according to a company spokesperson.

The flight deck integrates 3D visualisation, sensors and databases to give operators increased situational awareness, company literature states. 'In the near term, we will be delivering updates to the HTAWS capabilities for customers with our cockpit display systems on Leonardo Helicopters AW169 and AW189 rotorcraft,' the representative added. 'These latest updates will provide improved operating modes and safety for offshore operations.'

Making definitive predictions about the ways in which future cockpit technologies will unfold is no small task, given that industry tends to carve out particular niches within the avionics manufacturing and design field. However, most OEMs are actively involved in delivering systems with increased pilot safety and simplified touchscreen technology for ease of flight management.

In truth, the long-awaited revolution or transition to fully autonomous flight controls is only in its infancy, but the introduction of fly-by-wire technology does seem to be a welcome step in this direction. ■

The Airbus-manufactured Helionix avionics hosts a four-axis autopilot, a first limit indicator displaying engine instrument data, GPS navigation and communication systems.
(Photo: Airbus Helicopters)



Heli-Expo 2019: Kopter Group will exhibit its SH09 helicopter in a passenger transport configuration and unveil an innovative flight training solution

February 19, 2019



- Full-scale SH09 mock-up to be displayed with a seven-seat cabin layout, proudly carrying the colors of U.S.-based operator Papillon Helicopters
- Innovative simulator from VRM Switzerland will be exhibited following a strategic alliance signed with Kopter Group

Wetzikon, Switzerland, February 19, 2019 – Kopter Group will have a high-profile participation at this year’s Heli-Expo show in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, displaying a full-scale mock-up of its new SH09 helicopter outfitted with a seven-seat transport configuration (five passengers and two pilots) engineered and manufactured by Metro Aviation. After developing SH09 law enforcement and EMS interiors, Metro Aviation has extended its cooperation with Kopter Group to feature this new cabin layout – once again emphasizing the SH09’s versatility and attributes.

The multi-role SH09 helicopter is a highly adaptive and versatile platform to transport passengers with the highest levels of safety, comfort and visibility. Thanks to its large cabin,

the SH09 allows multiple interior layouts that provide ample legroom as well as flexibility for added luggage loaded through the rear clamshell doors. The helicopter's low vibration levels with its five-blade main rotor, as well as the silent noise signature of a shrouded tail rotor, create the ultimate flying experience.

The SH09 mock-up is presented in the livery of Papillon Helicopter's "Grand Canyon Golden Eagle" paint scheme. Widely regarded as one of the largest and most accomplished aerial sightseeing operators in the world and well known for their unforgettable Grand Canyon aerial excursions, Papillon Helicopters is a mainstay for helicopter tours from Las Vegas and Boulder City to the West Rim and other spectacular tours from the Grand Canyon's South Rim. Papillon's sister company Rainier Heli International Inc., an aircraft leasing company, has placed an SH09 order for 5 firm and 5 option positions.

In parallel with Kopter Group's presence at Heli-Expo 2019, the company is continuing the SH09 flight test activities. Prototype 3 (P3) currently is operating from Kopter Group's Mollis, Switzerland production facility ahead of its departure to Sicily for a campaign that is to significantly open the helicopter's flight envelope.

Heli-Expo debut for VRM Switzerland's innovative SH09 simulator

Included on Kopter Group's booth will be the SH09 motion-based simulator from VRM Switzerland, which follows a newly-signed strategic alliance that enables both companies to jointly offer flight training solutions for the SH09. VRM Switzerland, based in the Innovation Park Zürich, has developed a highly innovative device that will allow SH09 customers to train more efficiently and cost-effectively – benefitting from features that include a high-resolution virtual reality visual system, a highly-dynamic six degree-of-freedom (6 DOF) motion platform, and a high-speed control unit that leverages the motion system's full performance

Kopter's Group's investment in training solutions underscores the company's emphasis on developing digital and global services to best support its customers worldwide.

Journalists are invited to Kopter Group's press briefing on 4 March at 4:00pm in Room B207 at the Georgia World Congress Center to learn more about the most recent company developments. Kopter Group also has scheduled an event on 5 March at 12:00 on its stand (Booth B4016) where major announcements will be made.

About Kopter Group AG

We develop, produce and support a new generation of helicopters. Our first – the single-engine, turbine-powered SH09 – outperforms its peers with increased modularity, modern electronic systems, and a larger cabin and cargo hold. The SH09 delivers safety, performance and comfort at low operating costs. Outstanding performance – including fast cruise speeds and excellent hot-and-high capabilities – is combined with a low noise signature resulting from the newly developed dynamic assembly and shrouded tail-rotor.

Kopter Group's 300 talented team members are based near Zürich, Switzerland – with corporate/engineering offices at Wetzikon, and the production and assembly facilities in the cities of Mollis and Näfels.

Kopter expands its presence at Mollis airfield

February 12, 2019

After the positive vote of the citizens of Glarus North at the municipal assembly last November, the Kopter Group is starting its next expansion step. It has commissioned architect Dima & Partner, based in Glarus, with the design, planning and construction of a new 215,280-square-foot (20,000-square-meter) building for its pre-assembly activities at the Mollis airfield. Dima & Partner emerged as the winner of Kopter's call for tender with its project proposal.



The highlighted red area shown in the photo indicates where Kopter's new facility will go. After moving into the new building in 2021, Kopter will have the necessary capacities for ramping-up the production of its SH09 helicopter. Kopter Photo

The detailed design and planning of this new building will be completed in summer 2019, with the construction due to start in autumn of the same year. After moving into the new building in 2021, Kopter will have the necessary capacities for ramping-up the production of its SH09, a new generation helicopter for the worldwide markets. The new building is planned for manufacturing and pre-assembly and will include the production of dynamic components such as rotor blades, gearboxes and rotor heads. Testing rigs and a central warehouse will also be located at this site. Kopter already owns an existing building of 45,210 square feet (4,200 square meters) at the Mollis airfield, which will then host the final assembly lines and administrative functions.

This new facility will establish the Mollis site as Kopter's company-wide competence center for production, assembly, flight-testing, training and maintenance for the SH09.

Andreas Löwenstein, CEO of the Kopter Group, commented: "We are very pleased with the appointment of Dima & Partner, a well-known local partner with national and international standing, to build our new, state-of-the-art facility, which will allow us to work in the best conditions and to serve our customers worldwide."

The Kopter Group expects to achieve an annual production rate of 50 helicopters in Mollis in the next five years, which will lead to an increase in the number of employees from 100 today to around 400. In addition, the site will manufacture up to 150 further prefabricated sets of subassemblies that will be supplied to the final assembly facilities planned in the U.S. and Asia

Kopter to spread SH09 light-single assembly across globe

February 11, 2019

Swiss helicopter developer Kopter plans to set up final assembly bases for its SH09 in the USA and Asia-Pacific over the next four years to cater for anticipated strong demand from those regions for the eight-seat, light-single.

Initial production of the new helicopter will take place at Mollis in Switzerland.

The move comes as Kopter – formerly known as Marenco Swisshelicopter – closes in on Swfr250 million (\$250 million) of investment, which will help fund its global manufacturing and support infrastructure, complete development of the SH09, and fund new product innovation.

Kopter says the USA will be its largest market and plans to announce the location of its final assembly plant at the HAI HeliExpo show in March.

It has not yet selected a site for its Asia-Pacific base, but expects the facility to be ready in 2023. Given the region's demand for single-engined helicopters, it could overtake the USA as biggest market for the SH09 within two decades, says Kopter chief executive Andreas Löwenstein.

“We are experiencing huge interest for the SH09 from China, Japan, Australia and a few other countries, which is encouraging us to set up a production and delivery capacity there,” says Löwenstein.

But Mollis will remain Kopter’s “industrial backbone”, he adds. “We will produce our dynamic components in Switzerland, knowing that the country is highly recognized for its precision and mechanical skills.”



So far, the programme has accumulated around 100 flight hours using three prototypes, while rotor turning times have reached more 300h. In addition, several thousand hours of dynamic component testing has taken place, says Löwenstein.

Assembly of two production-conforming aircraft is under way at Mollis, and the pair are scheduled to join the flight-test campaign in the third and fourth quarters, respectively. To be based in Sicily, PS4 will be used to evaluate the helicopter's, avionics and airfield performance and will also be used for load survey and human factors certification. PS5 will undergo cold weather trials in Fairbanks, Alaska, during the northern winter, says Löwenstein.

The Honeywell HTS900-powered SH09 is targeted at a range of markets including VIP charter, corporate, utility, air ambulance and law enforcement; Kopter has secured 65 orders for the type to date. Customers include Switzerland's Air Zermatt and Alpinlift Helikopter, Helitrans of Norway, US operators Papillon, and Paradise Helicopters, along with SAS (Malaysia).



Certification is scheduled for the first half of 2020, with deliveries to start soon after.

Löwenstein says Kopter's strategy is to ramp-up "carefully" in order to ensure a "maximum level of safety and quality together with our suppliers".

The first SH09s will be delivered to selected launch customers to allow Kopter to gain "rapid experience and maturity for the fleet", Löwenstein adds.

Production will be ramped up in parallel, reaching "triple digit" output from 2024 across the three production sites.

Kopter has been financed to date by a private shareholder, Russian financier Alexander Mamut, who has committed around Swfr350 million to the project.

Response from outside investors for an additional Swfr250 million has been very strong, and Löwenstein says the company has narrowed its choice of stakeholders to single digits.

"We had numerous interested candidates of very different nature," he notes. "We expect the final investor [or investors] joining our current shareholder to be of a 'strategic' nature - contributing either important market access or industrial synergies."

Kopter erweitert seine Präsenz auf dem Flugplatz Mollis

February 11, 2019

Nach dem positiven Votum der Bürgerinnen und Bürger von Glarus Nord an der Gemeindeversammlung im letzten November, startet die Kopter Group ihren nächsten Ausbauschritt. Zu diesem Zweck hat Kopter die Glarner Architekturunternehmung Dima & Partner AG mit dem Entwurf, der Planung und Errichtung des neuen, 20'000 m² grossen Gebäudes für ihre Vormontageaktivitäten am Flugplatz Mollis beauftragt.

Der detaillierte Entwurf und die Planung des neuen Gebäudes werden gemäss Kopter im Sommer 2019 abgeschlossen. Der Spatenstich soll im Herbst 2019 erfolgen. Nach Bezug des neuen Gebäudes 2021 verfüge die Kopter Group über die notwendigen Kapazitäten, um die Produktion ihres SH09, eines Helikopters der neuen Generation für die Weltmärkte, hochzufahren, informiert das Unternehmen.

Unternehmensweites Kompetenzzentrum in Mollis

Kopter besitzt heute bereits ein Gebäude mit einer Fläche von 4200 m² am Flugplatz Mollis. Während in diesem bestehenden Hangar weiterhin die Endfertigung der ersten Helikopter der SH09-Serie angesiedelt sein wird, wird das neue Gebäude neben der Vorfertigung auch die Produktion von dynamischen Komponenten wie Rotorblätter, Getriebe und Rotorköpfe sowie Prüfstände und Lagerräume umfassen. «Damit werden weitere notwendige Voraussetzungen geschaffen um den Standort Mollis als unternehmensweites Kompetenzzentrum für Produktion, Fertigung, Supply Chain, Ausbildung, Flugerprobung, Auslieferung und Instandhaltung zu etablieren», schreibt Kopter in einer Mitteilung.

Jahresproduktion von 50 Helis und 300 zusätzliche Mitarbeiter

Die Kopter Group plant, in den kommenden fünf Jahren in Mollis eine Jahresproduktion von 50 Helikoptern zu erreichen, was zu einem Anstieg der Mitarbeiterzahl von heute 100 auf rund 400 führen soll. Überdies ist die Produktion von jährlich 150 weiteren vorgefertigten Modulen vorgesehen, mit denen künftig die geplanten Endmontagebetriebe in Amerika und Asien beliefert werden.





THE 2019 ROTORCRAFT PRO OEM OUTLOOK

By James Careless

TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES NOTWITHSTANDING, LAST YEAR WAS BUSY AND INNOVATIVE FOR THE HELICOPTER OEMS (ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS). ACCORDING TO THE OEMS WHO SPOKE WITH ROTORCRAFT PRO, 2019 LOOKS TO BE EVEN BUSIER AND MORE INTERESTING. HERE'S WHAT THEY TOLD US...

kopter

Formerly known as Marenco Swisshelicopter, Kopter Group AG is focused on bringing its SH09 multi-purpose, light single-engine helicopter to market. This is a 'clean sheet' composite fuselage rotorcraft with rear clamshell doors and a reconfigurable large cabin that can carry five to eight people.

"The SH09 has the largest cabin/cargo volumes in the single-engine category, outstanding modularity and modern electronic systems," said Andreas Löwenstein, Kopter Group AG's CEO. "With a cruise speed of 260 km/h (140 knots) it is not only one

of the fastest helicopters in its category, but it also offers a long range in excess of 800km (430 nautical miles) with standard fuel tanks."

Last year saw this rebranded company conduct development tests with the second and third SH09 prototypes (P2 and P3), to refine the helicopter's design and test its onboard components and systems. At the same time, Kopter hired nearly 100 new employees in engineering, production, and customer support. It started gearing its factory to begin manufacturing in 2019.



"We established several significant partnerships with key suppliers in the industry, like for example with Garmin, who will equip all our serial aircraft with their latest avionics suite, the G3000H," Löwenstein said. "We also grew our order book. The different exhibitions that we attended allowed us to convince customers across many different market segments about the superiority of the SH09 compared to its competitors."

This year is big for the SH09, with Kopter's "overarching objective is to get EASA/FAA certifications before year-end," Löwenstein said. "To achieve this, we will conduct intensive flight testing in Sicily with our P3 and then with our Pre-Series 4."

While flight tests and the certification process are underway, Kopter will get its production system ready to start building SH09s for delivery in early 2020. Doing so will include "a major infrastructure construction project, comprising 20,000 square meters in particular for component manufacturing and pre-assembly," Löwenstein

said. Kopter also will finalize its supply chain for the SH09, and lay the groundwork for opening a U.S. plant to serve the important American market. If everything goes to plan, the first SH09 will be delivered to customers shortly after the aircraft receives EASA/FAA certification.

"The biggest challenge for Kopter is its build-up and preparation for instant growth," said Löwenstein. "This is a challenging but highly motivating journey for all our employees, who are greatly determined to make Kopter one of the leaders in the industry as they are aware of the unique opportunity this represents."

THE 2019 ROTORCRAFT PRO
OEM OUTLOOK



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