
Airbus Group delivers first new UH-72A Lakota for Army initial-entry trainer mission

Newest aircraft to join seven Lakotas already modified to training configuration

HERNDON, Va. (March 26, 2015) – Airbus Group yesterday delivered to the U.S. Army the first UH-72A Lakota helicopter to come off the Airbus Helicopters Inc. production line configured for the Lakota's latest mission, as the service's initial-entry training helicopter.

The aircraft will join seven Lakotas previously in the Army inventory that have already been modified to the training configuration and fielded to Fort Rucker, in preparation for the Lakota's formal introduction into the training curriculum in early fiscal 2016. Ultimately, Army plans call for an initial-entry rotary wing training fleet of 187 Lakotas, made up of a mix of new deliveries and already in-service aircraft reconfigured for the training mission.

To date, the Department of Defense has ordered 411 Lakotas, 400 for the U.S. Army. With today's delivery, 332 completed aircraft have been delivered – all on time and on budget – from the Airbus Helicopters Inc. production facility in Columbus, Miss.

“For a program to succeed in the current budget environment, affordability and reliable program performance must accompany mission flexibility,” said Allan McArtor, Airbus Group Chairman and CEO. “Since awarding the contract in 2006, the Army has managed this program unfailingly on cost and on schedule, and we're proud to see that record continue as we deliver the latest configuration of this versatile, multi-mission aircraft.”

“We're making the necessary important investments to ensure a successful transition of the Lakota into training operations at Fort Rucker,” said Marc Paganini, President and CEO of Airbus Helicopters Inc. “We're honored that future Army aviators will begin their flying careers at the controls of the Lakota.”

The Lakota was competitively selected in 2006 to fill a wide variety of roles for the Active Army and Army National Guard, including search and rescue, medical evacuation, border security, command and control, VIP transport, general utility and training. Army National Guard units, operating UH-72As equipped with the Security & Support Mission Equipment Package, are deployed supporting Customs and Border Protection missions along the U.S.-Mexico border. The Lakota is also operated in a training role by the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School.

The Royal Thai Army has ordered UH-72As through the U.S. government's Foreign Military Sales program. These Lakotas are scheduled to be fielded to Thailand within the coming months. Airbus Helicopters is marketing the UH-72A to other allied nations with requirements for a modern, low cost multi-mission helicopter.

A modern, twin-engine aircraft, the UH-72A is a powerful, stable, and agile platform with a glass cockpit that is compatible with night vision goggles. The Lakota is single-pilot Instrument Flight Rules certified. It has the lowest cost to buy, own and operate of any U.S. military helicopter in production, and is built in Columbus, Miss., by a workforce that is 43 percent U.S. military veterans.

About Airbus Group Inc.

Airbus Group, Inc. is the U.S.-based operation of Airbus Group, a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. Airbus Group – comprising Airbus, Airbus Defense and Space and Airbus Helicopters – contributes more than \$15 billion to the U.S. economy annually and supports over 245,000 American jobs through its network of suppliers. Airbus Group, Inc., headquartered in Herndon, Va., offers a broad array of advanced solutions to meet U.S. military and commercial requirements, including fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, homeland security systems, public safety communications, defense electronics and avionics, and threat detection systems.

About Airbus Helicopters Inc.

Airbus Helicopters Inc. (AHI) is the U.S. affiliate of Airbus Helicopters, the largest helicopter manufacturer in the world, and a subsidiary of the Airbus Group. Airbus Helicopters Inc. manufactures, markets, sells and supports the broadest range of civil and parapublic helicopters offered in the U.S. The product line represents the industry's most cost-effective, technologically-advanced helicopters serving all markets and missions. The company's headquarters and main facility are in Grand Prairie, Texas with a large manufacturing and production facility in Columbus, Miss.

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