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Farnborough International Air Show

AW139 To Target Long Range Offshore Market

AgustaWestland is undertaking work to certify the AW139 with a Maximum Gross Weight (MGW) of 6,800 kg (14,991 lb), a 400 kg (882 lb) increase on the current certified MGW of 6,400 kg. The increased MGW and payload will enable the AW139 to target the long range offshore transport market currently being met by larger 18/19-seat types.

The increased maximum gross weight will give operators even higher levels of productivity while maintaining the helicopter's excellent performance and operating envelope, including Category A/Class 1 performance. The increased MGW will be available on all new production aircraft as an option. A dedicated bulletin will be available to allow aircraft already in service to operate at the increased MGW. The bulletin involves minimal hardware modifications.

The increased MGW will not impact component TBOs and work is being undertaken to minimise the impact on maintenance, procedures and operating costs. EASA certification of the MGW increase is expected by the end of 2008 with FAA certification soon after. The AW139 in typical offshore transport configuration with 12 passengers and 30 minutes fuel reserve will have a range in excess of 300 nm (555 km), significantly greater than other helicopters in its weight class, while for long range operations the AW139 will be able to fly over 500 nm with six passengers, a mission only larger more expensive 10-ton class helicopters can currently perform.

The offshore transport-configured AW139 ensures unparalleled passenger comfort on long range flights thanks to the roomiest unobstructed cabin in its class and airline type crashworthy seats. Up to 300 kg can be carried in versatile baggage compartment. AgustaWestland has developed procedures which will enable the AW139 to operate at the increased MGW of 6,800 kg in Performance Class (PC1) and PC2e, as defined by the stringent European JAR OPS3 rules.

In order to respond to operators' requirement to be able to operate in more and more challenging environments, AgustaWestland is in advanced stage of development of a FIPS (Full Ice Protection System), which will clear the aircraft to operate in icing as defined by EASA/FAR Part 29. In flight test campaign, involving flying behind and icing tanker and in natural icing, has been conducted with success during the Northern hemisphere winter season 2007/2008.

More than 350 AW139 helicopters have now been sold with over a third being for offshore transport operations. The AW139 is already performing offshore oil and gas transport services in Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Australasia and the Middle East.

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