China’s first helicopter flight using sustainable aviation fuel

@airbusheli @SGCCofficial @SafranHCEngines #H125 #sustainableaviation #sustainableaviationfuel

Hefei, 12 June 2023 - An Airbus H125 helicopter belonging to State Grid Space Technology Co., Ltd (SGST) has successfully used sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for a flight demonstration at Hefei Shiwan Airport in China. This is the first helicopter flight using SAF in China, marking an important milestone in the development of low-carbon aviation in Chinese aeronautics. The H125, which is powered by a Safran ARRIEL 2D engine, flew at a hybrid ratio of 40% of SAF provided by CNAF (China National Aviation Fuel).

“The success of this flight is of great significance to stimulate SAF promotion and its application,” said Du Guihe, Board Chairman of SGST. “It makes a positive impact on the enterprises which are proactive on low-carbon general aviation development. It is also a breakthrough for China's general aviation industry to better implement carbon emission reduction in the post-pandemic era.”

“I am proud that our customer, SGST, launched this noteworthy SAF flight with the H125, marking Airbus Helicopters as the first helicopter manufacturer to perform a SAF flight in China,” said Colin James, Managing Director of Airbus Helicopters in China. “In an effort to reduce carbon emissions and set a standard within the industry, we are working with our partners to use locally-produced SAF.”

“The takeoff of SAF-powered helicopters in China once again illustrates the achievements of Safran Helicopter Engines in terms of innovation and SAF application. We have a full engine portfolio certified to operate on up to 50% of SAF. We would like to recall hereby our willingness to play an active role in China by providing propulsion solutions. With our main partners SGST and Airbus Helicopters, we will make further contributions to promote our joint vision of green aviation,” said Marc Delort, General Manager of Safran Helicopter Engines China.

This milestone comes just a few weeks after Airbus and the CNAF signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to intensify Chinese-European cooperation on the production, competitive application and common standards formulation for SAF during the French state visit to China. SAF is an alternative aviation fuel made from feedstock ranging from used fat, oil and grease, to municipal and forestry waste. Compared to fossil jet fuel, SAF has been shown to result in up to 80 percent reduction in CO2 across the entire SAF lifecycle. This cooperation agreement between Airbus and CNAF aims to optimise the SAF supply chain by

diversifying the sources and enhancing SAF production towards the ambition of using 10 percent SAF by 2030.

The use of SAF is one of Airbus Helicopters' levers to contribute to ATAG's Scenario 3 outlook to NetZero in 2050. One of the main benefits of using this new fuel is that it allows the aircraft to minimise its carbon footprint while maintaining the same flight performance.

Today, all Airbus helicopters are capable of flying with a blend of up to 50% of SAF mixed with kerosene, with the aim of having the aircraft operate with 100% SAF by 2030.
Please visit our website to learn more about sustainable aviation fuel.

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Newsroom

Contacts for the media

Laurence Petiard
Airbus Helicopters
+33 618 79 75 69
Laurence.Petiard@airbus.com

Belen Morant
Airbus Helicopters
+33 (0) 6 75 81 80 70
Belen.Morant@airbus.com