

Airbus and Korea Aerospace Industries to launch Light Armed Helicopter serial production

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Seoul, 31 August 2023 – Airbus Helicopters and Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) have signed an agreement to initiate the serial production phase of the Light Armed Helicopters (LAH). This follows the contract awarded by the country's Defence Acquisition Programme Administration to KAI in December 2022 to supply an initial batch of ten LAH to the Republic of Korea Army. Deliveries will begin at the end of 2024, with follow-on orders to continue into the next decade.

This agreement will see Airbus Helicopters and KAI enter into the next phase of the programme, ramping up production of the LAH at KAI's Sacheon facility in South Korea. Airbus Helicopters will support KAI's order fulfilment with delivery of the required kits for the mass production.

The two companies have also signed an agreement to deepen their commitment in the joint Korean Utility Helicopter (KUH Surion) programme, to meet a wide range of operational requirements for the military, civil and parapublic markets.

This follows the recent launch of the joint development of new KUH variants, such as the Marine Attack Helicopter and Mine Countermeasure Helicopter, and their corresponding future versions. These programmes will benefit from Airbus Helicopters' expertise in flight control systems and helicopter drive systems, and KAI's industrialisation capability for local production. Airbus Helicopters is also committed to supporting KAI for additional serial deliveries.

"KAI is a long-time trusted partner with whom we have successfully developed several helicopter programmes. We are happy to strengthen this strategic partnership with these agreements, where we will secure the delivery of these two highly performing platforms for many years to come," said Matthieu Louvot, Executive Vice President, Programmes of Airbus Helicopters.

"These two long-term agreements will contribute to increasing competitiveness of KUH Surion and LAH in both local and global markets, by stabilising kit deliveries and prices, while strengthening partnership in various rotorcraft businesses," said Han Chang Heon, Executive Vice President, Rotorcraft Division of KAI.

Airbus and KAI started their long-standing industrial partnership in 2006 when the two companies jointly worked on the KUH Surion, followed by the development of the LAH.

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The LAH prototype completed its first flight in July 2019 and was successfully qualified in 2022, upon completion of a rigorous test campaign for combat suitability in all-weather conditions.

These next-generation 5-tonne class helicopters have been developed to meet Korea’s requirements for local deployment in both civil and military sectors. The well-established partnership has seen the delivery of around 300 kits to KAI to-date, with additional orders for future deliveries.



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