

ENTRY INTO SAR SERVICE FOR LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES AS365 N3+

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The Lithuanian Ministry of Defence and the Lithuanian Armed Forces celebrated yesterday the entry into service of their next generation of helicopters for countrywide search and rescue missions with around-the-clock availability.

The Lithuanian Ministry of Defence and the Lithuanian Armed Forces assigned their three new AS365 N3+ helicopters to the 24/7 SAR mission service.

Only two years after ordering the helicopters, Lithuanian Armed Forces are now ready to ensure SAR 24/7 service with their AS365 N3+. Following the first two deliveries in June and September 2015, Air Force pilots, rescue workers and technicians were able to undergo a full training program, including on a full flight simulator.

Lithuanian Armed Forces received their third and last AS365 N3+ in December 2015 and started missions as of 11 of January.

"The acquisition of the AS365 N3+ contributes to the modernization of our fleet. We have already flown the aircraft for more than 200 hours in pilot training operations including specific SAR missions and we are sure that the up-to-date capabilities of this helicopter will allow us to perform all the different types of search and rescue missions that we must be able to execute," said Colonel Audronis Navickas, Air Force Commander.

"We are committed to providing customer satisfaction and these AS365 N3+ helicopters have been delivered with a three-year full warranty and a commitment to an 80% availability rate," explained Mickael Peru, Vice President Head of Central Europe at Airbus Helicopters. "The spare parts have been delivered and Airbus Helicopters' technical assistance is in place to ensure the aircraft's smooth entry into service," he said.

The three AS365 N3+ SAR helicopters are fully equipped with the latest technologies such as forward looking infrared (FLIR), radar, search lights, hailer, hoist, and stretchers. The full glass cockpit and the Airbus Helicopters' unique 4-axis autopilot with SAR modes significantly decrease the crew workload, allowing them to perform their highly demanding missions safely.

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