New Tiltrotor Venture Orders 609

The Bell Boeing Tiltrotor Team and Hawker Pacific Pty Ltd of Dubai joined Shiekh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Shiekh Mejeren in announcing the sale of another Bell Boeing 609 commercial tiltrotor aircraft. Overshadowing the sale was the simultaneous announcement of the creation by Shiekh Sultan of the formation of the first company solely intended to operate the revolutionary new tiltrotor. Tiltrotors combine the vertical take off and landing capabilities of a helicopter with the speed, range and operating efficiency of a turboprop airplane.

The new company, Petroleum Tiltrotors International (PTI) will be a 50/50 partnership between Shiekh Sultan and a prominent Dubai oil and gas support company. The new Dubai-based tiltrotor operation will use Aerogulf Services, also of Dubai, to provide engineering support for the 609. Aerogulf, a multi-service aviation company that has been operating since 1976, is involved in providing offshore helicopter support for the oil and gas industry in Dubai and the Northern Emirates.

According to Shiekh Sultan, "With the opportunities now open to our new partnership, we feel it is reasonable to believe that PTI can become the largest civilian tiltrotor operator in existence." PTI plans to purchase as many as ten to fifteen 609 aircraft over a decade.

As was recently announced at the 1997 Paris Air Show, Shiekh Sultan is the third of 45 announced 609 purchasers. He will take delivery of the fourth production 609 destined for customers.

The Bell Boeing 609 is produced by Bell Helicopter, Textron of Fort Worth, Texas, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Textron, Inc. and The Boeing Company in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a unit of The Boeing Company. Also announced was the appointment of Capt. Robert Denehy to be managing director of PTI. Capt. Denehy is presently director of Marketing and manager of Tiltrotor Operations at Aerogulf Services.

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