

Boeing Pilot Instructors Complete Training on EC135 Helicopter with Surf Life Saving Queensland

Boeing has offered Eurocopter EC135 as platform for next-generation Australian Army training program

OAKEY, Queensland, Oct. 31, 2012 -- Flight instructors from Boeing [NYSE: BA] subsidiary Boeing Defence Australia (BDA) recently traded their training posts at the Oakey Army Aviation Centre for Gold Coast beach patrols as part of a unique arrangement between BDA and Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ).

The Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service provided three-day training sessions for 12 BDA helicopter instructors on its EC135 aircraft, giving them hands-on experience with the aircraft Boeing has offered in a bid for the Australian Defence Force's Helicopter Aircrew Training System (HATS) program. The SLSQ plans to use the funds earned from the BDA training to invest in equipment upgrades.

"The training provided an opportunity for BDA to experience the Eurocopter EC135's capabilities in a variety of real-life situations," said Mark Brownsey, BDA Army Aviation Training and Training Support (AATTS) project manager. "The program is part of our pilot engagement strategy, which allows BDA instructors to update their skills on a modern aircraft to support our partnership with the Australian Army."

The BDA flight instructors on the AATTS program currently provide basic flight training to Australian Army pilots using Kiowa aircraft, and more than 100 pilots have graduated from the program in the past five years. HATS is a follow-on contract to AATTS and will provide training to Royal Australian Navy and Australian Army pilots.

"The training partnership between Boeing and SLSQ has provided an excellent opportunity for our pilots to share information about this very capable, technologically advanced twin-engine aircraft," said Peter Bird, chief pilot for the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service Queensland. "BDA's training investment will help the SLSQ fund ongoing equipment upgrades for the service so it can continue to provide this important public service along the Gold and Sunshine coasts."

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