

The airborne capabilities of Thailand's navy and air force will be significantly enhanced with the acquisition of two mission-ready Airbus Helicopters rotorcraft types: the light-utility EC645 T2 and the 11-ton-class EC725.

The Royal Thai Navy signed for five EC645 T2s to be deployed on transport duties and other missions, with deliveries scheduled to begin in 2016. Its purchase represents the first export order of this militarized version of the EC145 T2, which is the newest and most powerful model in Airbus Helicopters' proven EC145 light twin-engine helicopter family.

In the Royal Thai Air Force's reorder of Airbus Helicopters' EC725, the military service is obtaining two of the tactical transport rotorcraft for SAR/CSAR (search and rescue/combat search and rescue) missions, operating from Wing 2 at Lop Buri Air Base in Thailand's Lop Buri Province. These aircraft will be provided in 2017, joining the four previously-ordered EC725s booked in 2012 for deliveries from 2015.

"By acquiring both the EC645 T2 and EC725, Thailand will be operating two of the most capable helicopters in their categories, delivering high levels of mission flexibility with their modern avionics and rugged airframes," said Philippe Monteux, Airbus Helicopters' Head of Region South East Asia & Pacific.

The EC645 T2 features a modern digital cockpit and a 4-axis autopilot. With a maximum take-off weight of 3.7 tons, the helicopter is powered by Turbomeca Arriel 2E powerplants equipped with dual-channel full authority digital engine controls (FADEC). Operational safety is enhanced by Airbus Helicopters' Fenestron shrouded tail rotor, particularly for landings and takeoffs in confined landing sites, as well as during loading/unloading on the ground while the rotor is turning.

The EC725 is a highly capable twin-engine helicopter with a digital 4-axis autopilot and five-blade composite main rotor. It can perform multiple missions that range from combat search and rescue, long-range tactical transport and aeromedical transport to logistic support and naval duties.

Currently operated by the military forces of France, Brazil, Mexico, Malaysia, Thailand and soon in Indonesia as well, the EC725's reliability and durability has been confirmed in such crisis areas as Lebanon, Afghanistan and Mali, while also supporting French troops during NATO-led operations in Libya.