AIRBUS HELICOPTERS HANDOVER FIRST H145 FOR MIDLANDS AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY

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Airbus Helicopters formally handed over the first H145 for Midlands Air Ambulance Charity (MAAC) operated by Babcock Mission Critical Services (MCS) at an official ceremony at Helitech. The event, attended by senior representatives of Airbus Helicopters, MAAC and Babcock MCS, marked the latest milestone in Airbus Helicopters' support for UK Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) operations.

The aircraft, which has been acquired by MAAC to further extend their HEMS operations, will see Babcock MCS provide the Bucher medical interior as well as operate the aircraft on behalf of the charity. The new addition to MAAC's fleet, which is equipped with Airbus Helicopters' Helionix advanced avionics and autopilot suite, has a maximum range of more than 403 nautical miles and a Maximum Take-Off Weight (MTOW) of 3700kg. Until now, MAAC's fleet has been made up of three EC135 helicopters and the increase in range, payload and space that the H145 brings will help MAAC's increase and extend HEMS operations across a larger region.

Colin James, Managing Director of Airbus Helicopters in the UK said, "The handover of this aircraft is the latest evolution of our close collaboration and partnership approach to supporting critical services in the UK. With the H145, Babcock is set to provide a cutting-

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edge solution to Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, who will benefit from an aircraft that, time and again, has proved to be the ideal platform for UK HEMS operations."

This will be the tenth H145 to operate in UK HEMS when it enters service with MAAC which, with 25% of the market, makes it the second most popular aircraft for these missions after the EC135. Unlike its competitors, the H145 combines a spacious cabin and flat floor (easily accommodating patient, relative, paramedic as well as the latest medical equipment) with large payload and range. Rear, clam shell doors ensure easy access for stretcher-borne patients while the aircraft's outstanding performance delivers the highest availability and lowest operating cost of any aircraft in its category.

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