BELL TAKE SEVEN HELICOPTERS TO HELI-EXPO

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Bell have provided details on the helicopters they will be showing at Heli-Expo 2016, which runs next week in Louisville, Kentucky.

As usual, the major OEMs will each take huge amounts of floor space, and are spaced out to encourage Expo visitors to walk throughout the massive halls. Bell is in the North Wing and has more space than Airbus and Finmeccanica, while Sikorsky has the smallest area of the four.

One reason for Bell to have the largest space is that they are joined by related Textron group companies including Aeronautical Accessories, TRU Simulation & Training and McTurbine. No mention is made of SkyBooks – the Textron company which offers an aviation fleet management application designed to monitor and improve operating efficiency.

Bell are taking two prototypes to Louisville, the second flight test vehicle from the 525 Relentless programme and the third from the 505 JetRanger X. These are expected to attract the most attention, along with a mockup of their V-280 Valor, the Texas manufacturer's joint bid with Lockheed Martin for the US Army Future Vertical Lift program.

Heli-Expo has for many years featured a Static Display Area, where exhibitors can show a helicopter without the the need to pay for carpet, extra lighting and so on. In this area, Bell will show a 412EPI in utility configuration, and a corporate 407GX.

27 FEBRUARY 2016

SOURCE: HELICOPTERINVESTOR

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