FIRST UH-72B LAKOTA HELICOPTER DELIVERED TO THE U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

News / Manufacturer



Airbus Helicopters has delivered the first UH-72B, the latest variant of its Lakota helicopter, to the U.S. Army National Guard from its production facility in Columbus, Mississippi. This delivery is the first of 18 UH-72B Lakota helicopters currently on order to support the National Guard's critical missions.

"With the addition of the UH-72B Lakota to our fleet, the U.S. Army increases our capability to save lives, protect communities, and provide disaster relief when it's needed most," said Col. Calvin Lane, U.S. Army Project Manager for Utility Helicopters. "The Lakota helicopter has been a staple of the Army for more than 15 years now, and we look forward to benefitting from the latest technologies and performances that the newest 72B variant will provide, at no additional research & development costs for the Army."

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The UH-72B is the latest iteration of the proven commercial, off-the-shelf aircraft that has been the Army's Light Utility Helicopter since the first Lakota contract award in 2006. The Army is leveraging the benefits of a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) program by receiving product improvements and enhancements through the evolution of the aircraft, without investing any government money into the development of those capabilities.

Based on the widely successful H145, the UH-72B incorporates technologies that increase both safety and flight performance, including the five-bladed main rotor, the Fenestron shrouded tail rotor, Safran Arriel 2E engines, and the Airbus-designed Helionix avionics suite. The Helionix suite includes an advanced dual-duplex, four-axis autopilot to provide flight envelope and over-limit protection, automated takeoff, and fully-coupled approaches to hover.

"Our teams in Mississippi, many of whom are U.S. Army and National Guard veterans themselves, are proud to build and deliver the first of this newest Lakota variant in support of the Army's essential missions protecting and serving our country," said Scott Tumpak, vice president responsible for Airbus military helicopter programs in the U.S. "We thank the Army for the trust they've placed in Airbus for more than 15 years and counting, as we continue to build on the Lakota legacy for the women and men in uniform that depend on it."

With nearly 10 different configurations available, the Lakota delivers proven performance, outstanding operational reliability, and unmatched versatility for a broad spectrum of military missions. Airbus Helicopters, Inc. builds the Lakota at its production facility in Columbus, Mississippi, which employs a workforce of nearly 250 employees that is made up of 40% U.S. veterans.

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