UPGRADED MI-28NM ATTACK HELICOPTER STARTED UNDERGOING FLIGHT TESTS

News / Manufacturer



The flight trials of the Mil Mi-28NM (NATO reporting name: Havoc) advanced upgraded attack helicopter have been kicked off in Russia, according to the Izvestia daily. A prototype of the Mi-28NM upgraded attack helicopter, also known as Product 296, has flown its early test sorties for its controls and engines to be tested and its behavior to be assessed. Although the cutting-edge aircraft was not unveiled yet, Algeria has displayed interest in it, Airrecognition.com reported.

At present, the Mi-28NM flies at the test facility of the Mil Helicopter Plant in Lyubertsy. According to a source close to the testing, the Mi-28NM will be handed over to the military after it passes its preliminary and factory tests. Russian Helicopters is intent on completing the work on the advanced machine before the end of the year and on launching its full-rate production as soon as next year.

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The aircraft has made its early test flights without problems worth mentioning. Therefore, the testers will switch over to the next stage of the trials, the defense industry source said.

According to Russian Deputy Defense Minister Yuri Borisov, the sophisticated Mi-28NM is much different from the baseline Mi-28N. In particular, it will carry a unique mast-mounted omnidirectional radar, advanced engines, an all-new control system and an air defense countermeasures system. The helicopter also will be fitted out with a more formidable weapons suite and cutting-edge main rotor blades that will increase its cruising speed by 13% and maximum one by 10% compared with the Mi-28N, which maximum speed stands at 340 km/h.

Its radar's antenna is mounted on top of the main rotor mast and covered by a special spherical radioparent fairing. Until recently, N025E mast-mounted radars have equipped only the Mi-28NEs exported to Iraq and Algeria. The Russian Aerospace Force has not received a single helicopter with the mast-mounted radar.

The new-generation mast-mounted radar is in production by the State Ryazan Instrument Plant, which Director General Pavel Budagov explained that the latest device has the all-round scanning capability and scans airspace in several wavebands. It processes data in several channels simultaneously, which has boosted the accuracy of its target acquisition and obstacle parameters, Budagov said. The device's simultaneous multiple-target tracking capability has been increased too.

The Mi-28NM is Russia's first combat helicopter powered by VK-2500P-01/PS engines made by Klimov as part of the import substitution program.

Under the import substitution program, all production-standard Mi-8/17 (Hip), Mi-28N, Mi-24/35

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(Hind), Kamov Ka-50 (Hokum) and Ka-27/29/31/32 (Helix) helicopters have been provided with all-Russian VK-2500P-01/PS turboshaft engines, a representative of the United Engine Corporation (UEC) says. Previously, the types had been equipped with Ukrainian-made TV3-117s. The VK-2500 is a more advanced, sophisticated derivative of the TV3-117.

According to UEC, the new engine's main feature is its FADEC system controlling it in flight in an automatic manner.

The latest design solutions embodied by the VK-2500PS allow more reliable operation of helicopters not only in temperate climate, but in hot and high environments as well.

According to a source in the defense industry, Algeria has taken interest in the Mi-28NM. It is in talks with Russian official arms exporter Rosoboronexport on the delivery of more sophisticated Mi-28NMs instead of the Mi-28Ns ordered in December 2013, according to the Izvestia daily.

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