

CHC Search and Rescue Service Reaches 2,000 Mission Milestone on Both Sides of the Globe

(Sep 15, 2010)

Leading search and rescue (SAR) service provider CHC Helicopter has marked a significant milestone in its SAR services with crews in the UK and Australia both undertaking their 2,000th missions.

CHC has operated the service for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in the UK since 2007 from four bases at Stornoway, Sumburgh, Lee on Solent and Portland. Through its membership of the Soteria consortium, it has been identified as the preferred bidder on the UK SAR-H program, a 25-year contract to provide helicopter-based SAR services from 12 bases throughout the UK.

The company was also recently awarded a 10-year, €500 million contract to provide SAR services on behalf of the Irish Coast Guard from 2012 onwards. CHC already provides SAR services from bases at Waterford, Dublin, Shannon and Sligo but the new contract will see the existing fleet of S-61N aircraft replaced with new technology Sikorsky S-92A helicopters that are custom fitted for SAR work.

The 2,000th mission in the UK was a medical evacuation carried out by the Stornoway team in an S-92 aircraft. Western Australia's life saving emergency rescue helicopter service, RAC Rescue, completed its 2,000th mission on September 10.

Tilman Gabriel, President of CHC Europe, said: "We operate one of the world's largest civilian networks of SAR, emergency medical and humanitarian helicopter services. Our aircraft are among the most modern in the world and our crews trained to the highest international standards. Our goal is constant improvement to services that save lives and it is a significant achievement that our investment in new technology to deliver safe, reliable performance is delivering results on both sides of the world. It doesn't matter if the required service is land-based or covers maritime areas, if the mission profile is clifftop rescue or abandonment of a stricken vessel in heavy seas—we can adapt our capabilities to meet the remit, every time."

The CHC Helicopter group of companies is the world's largest helicopter services organization and, in addition to its SAR services, also specialises in the transport of personnel to offshore oil platforms. Through its helicopter maintenance subsidiary Heli-One, the company is also a world-leader in helicopter maintenance, repair and overhaul. CHC Helicopter is headquartered in Vancouver, Canada and operates more than 250 aircraft in some 35 countries around the world.