

# HOT BLADE 2014 (HB14)

From 16 to 30 July 2014, Hot Blade 2014, the seventh exercise supported by EDA under the umbrella of the Helicopter Exercise Programme (HEP), will take place in Ovar, Portugal. Six countries are expected to participate (Austria, Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, and UK) with 25 helicopters, 12 fixed wing aircraft and over 800 helicopter personnel. Observers from Italy, Sweden, Hungary, Brazil and NSHQ will also attend and a total of 3000 military personnel will be directly involved.



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## Overview

HB14 will be delivered by the Portuguese Air Force. The HEP is part of the EDA Helicopter Training Programme (HTP) which is consisting of the HEP, HTC (Helicopter Tactics Course), HTIC (Helicopter Tactics Instructors Course), OELC (Operational English Language Course), DisSim CCD (Distributed Simulation Capability Concept Demonstrator) and the Basic Helicopter Flying Training (BHFT) projects/programmes. The overall objective is to prove that at very low cost, immediate operational output can be achieved.

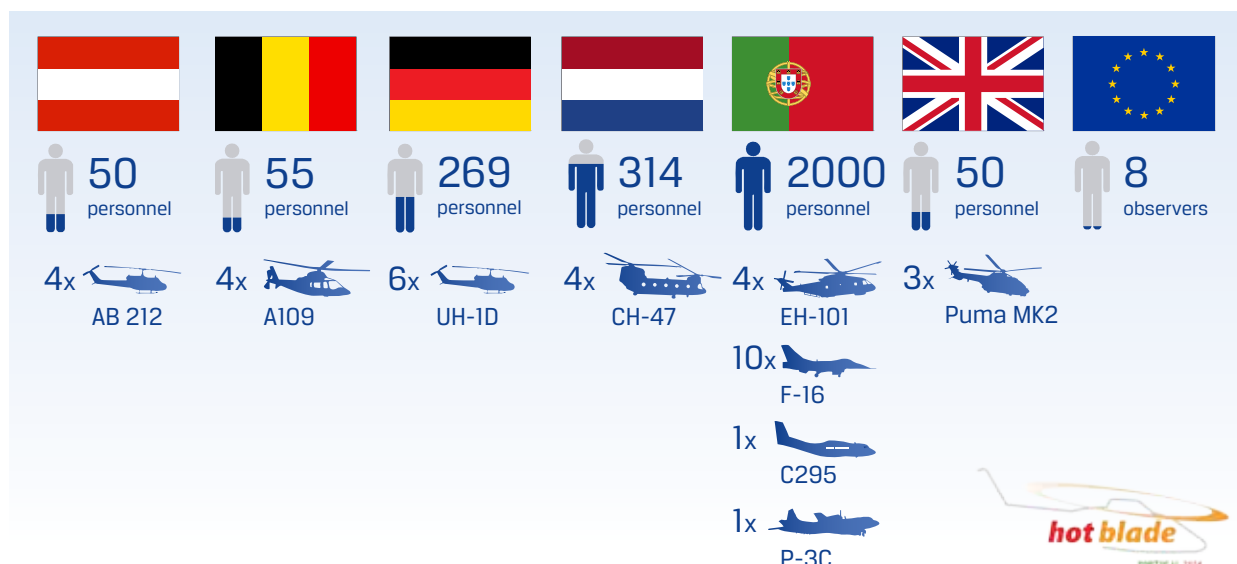
HB14 will allow crews to practice operations in a hot, high and dusty environment replicating the challenges and dynamic conditions that participant forces are expected to encounter when deploying to a theater of operation.

The exercise will also implement "Joint Interoperability Training" based on joint interoperability tasks including Air

Assault (AA), Special Operations Aviation (SOA), Combat Service Support (CSS), Close Air Support (CAS) including Urban CAS and Emergency CAS, Convoy/helicopter escorts, Reconnaissance and Security (R&S) operations, Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), Personnel Recovery (PR), and Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC).

All missions will be launched from Ovar air base, functioning as a Deployable Operating Base (DOB), and the aircraft will return to the DOB each day. This model will maximize coordination and ensure a joint briefing and debriefing, where emphasis will be given to flight safety and lessons learned. As air operations will be developed largely in a TRA (Temporarily Restricted Airspace), a Helicopter Forward Operating Base (FOB) will be implemented in the civilian aerodrome of Seia. This option will increase operational flexibility and ensure the dynamics and realism of the scenario.

## Participants



## Exercise Aim & Objectives

The aim of HB14 is 2-fold:

- To develop joint interoperability through the integration of multinational elements, both in the air and on the ground, to achieve a range of aviation tasks.
- To facilitate individual instruction and training in an environment similar to that of a possible theatre of operations (hot, high and dusty conditions and mountainous areas).

The Aim of the Exercise will be achieved with the following Objectives:

- Maximize integration of interoperability and operational tasks (formation, coordination, complementarity, mutual support, etc.). The units will fly a diverse set of missions replicating day and night operations, and focusing on the integration and synchronization of helicopters as members of combined arms teams. The purpose is to provide adequate tactical training to all participating units, presenting aircrews with a spectrum of missions as complete and realistic as possible.
- Maximize missions in high temperatures, high altitude, and dusty conditions in order to increase aircrew skills and qualifications to operate under adverse weather conditions. This should include all tactical aspects, with lots of dust landings and carriage of underslung-loads during night and day, both in flat and mountainous areas.

The HB14 exercise will be set within a scenario of a failing state whose own forces will encounter opposition from both conventional and insurgent forces. The operations may consist of several major operations occurring simultaneously: humanitarian assistance, peace support, and combat operations.

## Concept

The exercise will deliver tactical training over a two to three-week period, offering participants a unique opportunity to plan and execute missions within a joint combined framework. One of the main challenges of the exercise will be to ask participants to integrate capabilities rather than simply de-conflict operations.



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The exercise is developed on a building block approach design, starting with cross-training activities on small COMAO (Combined Air Operations) missions, in order to build a mutual understanding of each participant's equipment and standard operational procedures. As the exercise progresses the complexity and numbers of assets in each COMAO missions will increase.

## Broader View

During HB14, a selection of the freshly trained instructors coming out of the second edition of the HTIC, held in April-May 2014, will meet at Ovar Airbase and form the Mentor Team for HB14 to support the multinational crews in preparation and execution of the challenging COMAO missions.

This link between the HEP, the HTIC and the HTC will ensure the participation of Instructors in all three parts of the "triangle". This contributes to an increased exchange of knowledge, as well as to the establishment of a standardized and European-wide training pipeline. This interaction is also providing the opportunity to use the HEP for the evaluation of the participating units, as executed by some of the cMS on a purely national basis.

HB 14 delivers an outstanding opportunity to expose helicopter crews to the training methodology and tactical knowledge of other member states. Together with the exchange of knowledge regarding the integration of the mentor team, HB 14 fosters not only the common understanding and methodologies of how others operate military helicopters. It furthermore fosters the building of trust amongst the European military helicopter community as a key factor for future multinational operations.

More information on helicopter initiatives available on: <http://www.eda.europa.eu/projects/projects-search/helicopter-initiatives>

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