



MULTINATIONAL HELICOPTER TRAINING CENTRE (MHTC)

Since 2009, EDA has been managing cooperative activities in the area of helicopter training and exercises, which over time were bundled in three EDA helicopter training programmes: the Helicopter Exercise Programme (HEP), the Helicopter Tactics Course (HTC) programme and the Helicopter Tactics Instructor Course (HTIC) programme.

Those programmes have evolved during the last decade to become among EDA's most dynamic and successful training activities, highly recognised among Europe's rotary wing community.

However, it is a basic principle underlying all programmes run by EDA that as soon as they reach a sustainable level of support, maturity and output, the aim becomes to transfer them to a permanent facility hosted and managed by a Member State or organisation in order to enable EDA to free resources and engage in other collaborative helicopter activities to support filling new capability gaps reported by EDA Member States.

Against this backdrop, the decision was taken by participating EDA Member States in August 2019 to set up the Multinational Helicopter Training Centre (MHTC) programme with the aim to support the transition of the HEP, HTC and HTIC programmes to a dedicated centre to be established in Sintra, Portugal, towards the end of 2023.

Transition

The transition already started in mid of 2020, with the relocation of the current EDA Helicopter Training Centre from UK to Portugal, where it is meant to remain operational until the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) of the MHTC is achieved. In this centre, located at the site of the future MHTC, EDA is

currently delivering all training courses with the help of the Agency's helicopter training simulator which allows to practice tactics procedures in a highly realistic synthetic environment.

On 28 June 2022, the MHTC Technical Arrangement was signed by Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia and Sweden. This marked the formal launch of this international project and kicked off the MHTC build-up phase.

MHTC Mission

The MHTC's mission is to improve European military helicopter interoperability and capability through a coordinated approach to training Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) and doctrine

- by increasing the ability of participants to safe and effectively train together and exchange best practices at the operator's level, in order to enhance interoperability and helicopter tactical awareness in the current and future areas of operations and training notably by creating standardised procedures and by building up a European helicopter community and a cadre of instructors.
- by delivering multinational advanced tactical training on a recurring basis with the aim to increase interoperability and standardisation, harmonise common TTPs, and

create a repository of lessons identified and lessons learned coming from the different training and operational activities. Furthermore, it will allow the pooling and sharing of simulation facilities, instructors, knowledge, assets and training facilities and areas, sharing their costs and burden,

- by aiming to improve deployment preparation and readiness, considering the current and future operational theatres.

Objectives

The objective is to make this MHTC a permanent European centre of excellence for advanced helicopter training and to develop, consolidate and share best practices to meet the challenges of flying helicopters in a modern operational environment.

Way forward

The MHTC will deliver administrative and training functions to serve both as a central hub for the coordination of helicopter training across Europe and be the provider of the iteration of the HEP, HTC and HTIC.

The centre is expected to reach initial operational capability (IOC) by beginning 2024 and it is estimated to operate for a period of 15 years, which can be extended to 30 years if agreed upon by its participants. The MHTC will be manned permanently with 10 international staff and supervised by the MHTC Steering Board.

This centre will continue to deliver all training activities of the current helicopter programmes, while it will have an important growth potential and more freedom to engage with third parties.

Background: HEP, HTC and HTIC

In the frame of the current helicopter programmes, EDA is delivering the following annual activities:

- up to 2 multinational helicopter exercises
- 1 annual helicopter tactics symposium
- 1 Helicopter Tactics Instructors Course
- up to 10 Helicopter Tactics Courses
- up to 3 Electronic Warfare (EW) courses
- up to 2 Composite Air Operations (COMAO) planning courses

- an update of the common Tactics Technics and Procedure (TTPs), the HEP Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), used in all EDA helicopter training activities.

The aim of those programmes is to better prepare European helicopter units for deployment abroad and to improve their ability to engage successfully in multinational trainings and operations. The best way to achieve this is to perform common multinational trainings and support the build-up of a European community of helicopter operators.

Thereby, EDA helps foster standardisation and improve interoperability, by delivering relevant and specialised tactics training at the level of the complete helicopter crew.

Participants

AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, FI, HU, IT, NL, PT, RS, SE, SI.

