

# HOT BLADE 2012

## About the Exercise

Portugal will host HOT BLADE 2012, a multinational helicopter exercise, from 9 to 19 July 2012, based at Ovar Military Airfield, near Porto, Portugal. Delivered by the Portuguese Air Force and supported by Luxembourg, HOT BLADE 2012 is part of the European Defence Agency's Helicopter Training Program. Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Netherlands and Spain participate in the exercise.

The exercise is designed to allow European helicopter crews to practice operations in a hot, high and dusty environment, simulating the challenge and the dynamic conditions that participating forces will encounter when they deploy to a current theatre of operation, taking into consideration the lessons learned from recent scenarios like Afghanistan and Libya.

Besides the focus on flying in challenging environmental conditions, the exercise will be developed to implement "Joint Interoperability Training" and efforts will be made to maximize integration of joint interoperability tasks, including Air Assault, Special Operations Aviation, Combat Service

Support, Close Air Support including Urban CAS and Emergency CAS, Convoy/helicopter escorts, Reconnaissance and Security operations, Combat Search and Rescue, Personnel Recovery, Military/Non Military extractions, Medical Evacuation and Casualty Evacuation.



Image credits: Gorup/Austrian Airforce/IT CALL

## Helicopter Training Program

The HTP concept was approved at the Ministerial Steering Board in November 2009. The aim of the HTP is to provide a framework to Member States to allow them to develop, consolidate and share best practices to meet the challenges of flying helicopters in the modern operational environment.

By the end of 2011, the EDA had delivered three exercises: one in Gap, France, one in Logrono, Spain, and one in Viterbo, Italy. Two Helicopter Tactics Symposia have taken place, both hosted by Luxembourg. A total of 92 helicopters, 16 crews and over 1800 personnel from 16 nations have participated. In addition to Hot Blade 2012, the EDA will also hold Green Blade 2012 in Belgium this Autumn, focusing on coordination with special forces.

These exercises have met an urgent training requirement for the participating Member States, greatly enhancing the helicopter capacity available. They are complimented by the EDA's 3-week Helicopter Tactics Course, 10 of which will be held in 2012.

Further information: [www.eda.europa.eu](http://www.eda.europa.eu)

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