

## Airbus and Leonardo to launch NH90 Block 2 studies responding to a request from NAHEMA

**Paris, France, 18 June 2025** - Airbus Helicopters and Leonardo are joining forces to carry out an architecture study to define the basis of the NH90 long-term evolution, known as Block 2, responding to a request from NAHEMA (NATO Helicopter Management Agency). The Block 2 upgrade will include key structural improvements to the aircraft such as modular avionics, greater configuration commonality, improved maintenance and performance, as well as new capabilities in the field of collaborative combat, connectivity and crewed-uncrewed teaming. The study, which is expected to be contracted with NAHEMA before the end of the year, should allow nations to decide the next steps for the Block 2 evolution in a timeframe coherent with other ongoing studies on next-generation capabilities and technologies.

"There are several studies running at the moment at NATO, EU, and national levels to assess the future of military helicopters," said Bruno Even, CEO of Airbus Helicopters. "Together with Leonardo we believe that the NH90 will have a central role to play in the future of European defence capabilities. The NH90 Block 2 evolution will benefit from some of the technologies being investigated by the European Next Generation Rotorcraft Technologies study that we are collaborating on in partnership with Leonardo," he added.

"The NH90 Block 2 study clearly complements on the longer term the evolution roadmap of the NH90 for which a major step based on the Software Release 3 contract (also called Block1) had already been outlined last year," said Gian Piero Cutillo, Managing Director of Leonardo Helicopters. "We're committed to delivering a study able to meet NAHEMA's expectations as well as bearing in mind nations' needs and their evolving rotorcraft capability requirements," he concludes.

In May 2024 NAHEMA and NHIndustries (NHI) signed a short-to-medium term programme enhancement plan known as Block 1 (also called Software Release 3), involving various nations, to boost their in-service fleets' capabilities in terms of tactical information, data exchange, sensors, navigation and weapon integration. The Block 2 architecture study will of course capitalise on the Block 1 upgrade.

The teaming between the two manufacturers stems also from the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two partners in July 2024, with the ultimate goal to perform an extensive analysis of the NH90 helicopter programme status and explore future potential solutions for its evolution.

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