RUAG HOLDS FIRST SWISS-BASED HELICOPTER CREW TRAINING FOR MAINTENANCE CHECK FLIGHTS AHEAD OF 2019 EASA REGULATION

News / Maintenance / Trainings

RUAG Aviation flight test pilots applied their significant knowledge and experience in helicopter Maintenance Check Flights (MCF) to train fellow Swiss pilots and other interested parties in the first-ever training of its kind in Switzerland. The theory-based courses are offered by RUAG to prepare flight crews and technical personnel for the introduction of MCF regulations by the EASA, expected in 2019. Instruction took place at the RUAG Aviation Helicopter Competency Center in Alpnach.

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“Maintenance Check Flights are a critical aspect of the safety process for all aircraft. As a Center of Excellence in this specific area, we have considerable expertise and resources to contribute,” states Heinz Scholl, Senior Vice President Military Aviation, RUAG Aviation. “We are proud to support our Swiss colleagues to ensure further safety and accuracy going forward.” The RUAG instructors and their helicopter training courses are supported by the Swiss aviation authorities. Heinz Scholl concludes, “Together, we are dedicated to reducing risk factors by promoting meaningful crew education.”

Meant to test functions which can only be checked during actual flight, Maintenance Check Flights are regularly required by aircraft original equipment manufacturers (OEM), Continuing Airworthiness Management Organizations (CAMO) and maintenance support providers throughout the aircraft’s service life. As of 2019 EASA will introduce regulations for MCF set to confirm safety guidelines, clearly define pilot requirements and apply stringent procedures to the testing process for helicopters and other complex platforms.

“The Maintenance Check Flights course offered by RUAG provides an excellent structure for performing maintenance flights,” explains MCF course participant, Jonathan Volorio, Pilot, Geneva University Hospital (HUG). “RUAG Aviation flight test pilots gave us excellent advice and instruction covering the topics of preparation, risk analysis, briefings and collaboration between the different teams working in and around the helicopter, as well as debriefings. They also used excellent teaching aids. It was a very pleasant day with a good exchange with pilots and mechanics from all over Switzerland.”

Maintenance Check Flights are routine for maintenance organizations like RUAG, although for most pilots, MCF only take place periodically. The RUAG flight test pilot instructors took this into account when preparing the course. “Until now, preparation for helicopter MCF activities has been largely reliant on advice and the exchange of information, from colleague to colleague. The formalization by EASA and our recognized competency to offer these courses all combine to improve the situation greatly, reduce risk, increase quality and enhance pilot confidence,” confirms

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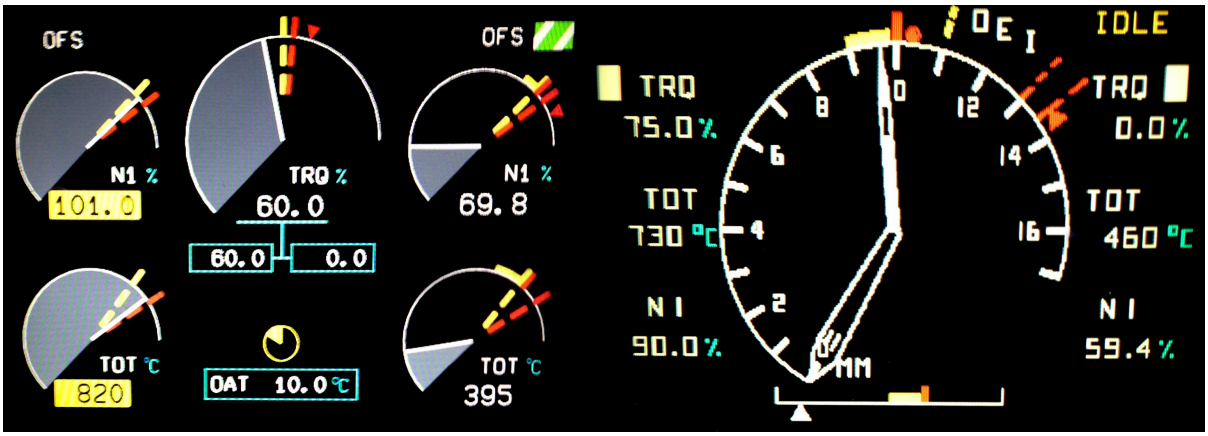
Beat Furrer, Factory Flight Test Pilot, RUAG Aviation, course instructor and author of “The Handbook of Helicopter Maintenance Check Flights”, provided as course documentation. RUAG provides further support as course participants have the option to extend their knowledge with a practical helicopter training, upon completion of the theory-based instruction.



RUAG Aviation proves a unique heritage and thorough experience in helicopter and aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services for the Swiss Armed Forces, as well as numerous other international air forces. This affords RUAG optimal conditions for developing and sustaining the Center of Excellence for MCF.

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