

AVES Receives UH-169D LUH: Latest Generation Light Multirole Helicopter

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On April 28, 2025, the Italian Army took a significant step forward in the modernization process of its helicopter fleet. In a ceremony held at the hangar of the 28th Squadron Group “Tucano” in Viterbo, the first unit of the UH-169D LUH (Light Utility Helicopter), a model marking an important evolution in the operational and technological capabilities of the Army Aviation (AVES), was delivered. The ceremony was attended by the Chief of Staff of the Army, General of the Army Corps Carmine Masiello, the leaders of the Directorate of Aeronautical Armaments and Airworthiness (DAAA), and representatives of Leonardo Helicopters S.p.A.

The UH-169D is the result of a close collaboration between the Italian Army, the General Secretariat of Defense – Directorate of Aeronautical Armaments and Airworthiness, and Leonardo Helicopters. This new helicopter, part of a global fleet modernization plan, represents a decisive leap forward in terms of technology and operational capabilities. The model was developed based on the AW169M helicopter, a military version of the latest generation twin-engine Leonardo AW169 helicopter, and meets the changing needs of modern operations. The

program foresees the progressive replacement of older helicopters such as AB206, AB205, AB212, and AB412, which will be replaced to ensure greater efficiency in terms of logistics, operations, and training.



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A Helicopter Suited to Modern Needs

The UH-169D is an advanced multirole helicopter, designed to perform a wide range of missions, including utility transport, MEDEVAC (Medical Evacuation), and CASEVAC (Casualty Evacuation) operations. Thanks to its versatile configuration, this model represents a fundamental element for enhancing national security and the international operations of the Italian Army. The new helicopter, in fact, allows for more effective responses to complex and uncertain scenarios, where speed and flexibility are essential.

One of the main advantages of the UH-169D is the ability to operate in synergy with other AW169 helicopter fleets already present in Italy in various fields, including police forces and public utility services. This interoperability ensures greater efficiency in joint operations, which can be conducted with greater safety and coordination among the different government forces.



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Innovation and Interoperability

During the delivery ceremony, Gian Piero Cutillo, Managing Director of Leonardo Helicopters, emphasized how the new helicopter represents the beginning of a “new era” for the Italian Army, thanks to advanced technical support capabilities, mission flexibility, and interoperability in the light helicopter sector. The partnership between Leonardo and the Army, which has lasted for decades, has led to the creation of an aircraft that fully meets the operational needs of military personnel, optimizing response capability in complex scenarios.

General Masiello, in his speech, highlighted the importance of this achievement for the future of the Italian Army. The modernization of the helicopter fleet is, in fact, a fundamental part of the Armed Force's development plan, which aims to provide soldiers with the best tools to operate on the front line. The synergy between institutions and industry, such as that between the Ministry of Defense and Leonardo Helicopters, is essential for the success of ambitious programs like the LUH, which meet the demands of an increasingly dynamic and complex operational environment.

Advanced Technology and Capabilities

The UH-169D is characterized by a series of innovations that make it highly performant. The advanced propulsion system ensures high performance in all operational conditions, even at high altitudes and in the presence of high temperatures. The cabin, one of the most spacious in its category, allows for rapid reconfiguration and easy entry, while the latest generation digital

avionics offer pilots unprecedented visibility and greater situational awareness. This makes the UH-169D ideal for tackling a variety of missions in both national and international operational contexts.



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A Promising Future

The UH-169D program involves the acquisition of 25 units and represents a milestone in strengthening the operational capabilities of the Army Aviation. The first unit follows the delivery of two UH-169B training helicopters, which allowed crews to become familiar with the characteristics of the new model. The modernization plan does not stop here: the goal is to equip the Army with a modern and highly efficient fleet, ready to respond to all the challenges that the operational future will hold.

In conclusion, the introduction of the UH-169D represents not only a significant technological advancement but also a strengthening of the Italian Army's response capability in both national and international contexts. This new light multirole helicopter, the result of collaboration between the Army and Leonardo, is destined to become one of the fundamental tools for the Armed Force's operations in the decades to come.