

## **Leonardo: US EMS Operator contracts for first IFR-certified AW119 in the civil market allowing safer operations in challenging weather conditions**

- **Life Link III signed a contract for one helicopter with delivery in 3Q2021, adding to an existing fleet of ten AW119Kx**
- **The world's first fully FAA IFR-certified single engine in decades, the type allows safe operations in low visibility and challenging weather conditions combined with high performance and cabin space while keeping single engine economics**
- **Over 350 AW119s sold to more than 130 customers in 40 countries to date to perform a wide range of roles including EMS, utility, fire-fighting, law enforcement, passenger transport, training and government/military duties**

**Rome, 7 July 2020** – Leonardo announced today that the EMS operator Life Link III, based in the upper-midwest United States, has placed an order for one IFR-certified AW119 single engine helicopter with a future option for a second aircraft. The aircraft will be added to an existing fleet of ten AW119Kx helicopters delivering in-flight critical care and transporting patients in Minnesota and Wisconsin with over 21,000 total flight hours amassed. Delivery from the AW119 final assembly line in Philadelphia is expected in the third quarter of 2021.

The contract marks the first sale for the FAA certified IFR capable AW119 in the civil market and for emergency medical service roles. The type is the first single engine helicopter in decades to fully meet current IFR requirements without compromise, allowing pilots to operate the aircraft safely in low visibility and challenging weather conditions, thanks to advanced avionics by Genesys Aerosystems and redundant flight systems. The IFR-capable AW119 adds one more option and an ideal IFR entry point for commercial and public service operators who seek for the highest level of safety and performance in demanding conditions while keeping single engine economics. This combines with the AW119's unique light-twin like multiple redundancies of critical systems and cabin space delivering outstanding reliability and safety.

Steve Sterner, Chief Executive Officer of Life Link III, shared: "Our decision to become the first civilian user of the IFR-certified AW119 fully supports our mission of providing safe and effective air medical transport. The advanced avionics and technology on this aircraft elevate our ability to provide life-saving critical care resources to those in need. With high degrees of performance, safety, speed and efficiency, this aircraft is well-suited to meet the needs of our crew members and patients."

William Hunt, Managing Director of Leonardo Helicopters in Philadelphia, said: "We are proud to introduce the IFR-certified variant of the AW119 to the civilian market and to do so with an incredible partner like Life Link III. This aircraft's advanced technology and dual flight systems

will ensure that our first responders are able to fly safely in challenging weather conditions while providing the same accessible, efficient cabin configuration for patient treatment and transport that the AW119 is known for.”

The AW119 has met high standards of operational requirements and mission effectiveness - including NVG capability - since the first aircraft was delivered to Life Link III in early 2014. Life Link III's IFR AW119 will feature a special cabin interior with an articulated patient loading system, ensuring full patient body access for two medical professionals on board. This latest sale represents the growing share of Leonardo's helicopters in the North American EMS market, which now totals more than 113 across a fleet of AW119s, AW109s, AW169s and AW139s.

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS ON THE AW119 HELICOPTER**

Built at Leonardo's FAA Part 21 production facility in Philadelphia, the AW119 is a best in class single engine helicopter featuring a state-of-the-art avionics system for enhanced situational awareness, mission effectiveness and safety by flight and mission avionics, power margin, multiple system redundancies and crashworthiness. The AW119 is perfectly suited to perform many roles including EMS, utility, fire-fighting, law enforcement, passenger transport, training and government/military duties. Over 350 AW119 helicopters have been sold to over 130 customers in 40 countries. A variant of the AW119 was selected by the United States Navy in January to train the country's next-generation of naval aviators.

#### **ABOUT LIFE LINK III**

Life Link III operates eight helicopter bases that include Alexandria, Blaine, Brainerd, Duluth, Hibbing, and Willmar, Minnesota, and Marshfield and Rice Lake, Wisconsin. A new helicopter base is planned for Rush City, Minnesota in August 2020. The company's helicopter and airplane services provide on-scene emergency response and inter-facility transport for patients requiring critical care. Life Link III's transportation services are accredited by CAMTS (Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transportation Systems), ensuring the highest standards of quality and safety are met. Life Link III is a non-profit consortium made up of the following member-owner organizations: Allina Health, CentraCare Health, Children's Minnesota, Essentia Health, Fairview Health Services, Regions Hospital/HealthPartners®, Hennepin Healthcare, Marshfield Clinic Health System, St. Luke's, and HSHS Sacred Heart/St. Joseph's. Life Link III's Leonardo AW119 fleet has amassed over 21,000 flight hours. For more information, visit [www.lifelinkiii.com](http://www.lifelinkiii.com).