



Media Release

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Microflite makes history with first sustainable fuel helicopter flight in Australia

Microflite today made history by being the first operator of a sustainable aviation fuel helicopter flight in Australia at the Avalon International Airshow in Melbourne.

Melbourne-based Microflite, working in partnership with Airbus, Safran and Neste, conducted a series of demonstration flights at the Airshow using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), which is made mostly from waste products, in the presence of the Federal Minister for Transport Catherine King, and other dignitaries, including Stephen Forshaw, Airbus Chief Representative for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

Microflite, which has 20 helicopters in its fleet and services a diversity of customers from private charter to emergency services, is determined to take the lead on sustainable rotary-wing aircraft flight across Australia and will increase its use of SAF in the future as well as adopt electric powered helicopters when they are approved for operation.

Today's Microflite flight at the Avalon Airshow was fuelled with 200 litres of renewable jet fuel, containing about 40 per cent of SAF blended with Jet A-1, powering Safran's Arriel 2D engine.

Microflite uses Airbus helicopters, which are currently certified to fly with up to 50 per cent blend of SAF mixed with kerosene, with the goal of reaching 100 per cent SAF flights for future fleets.

Airbus, supported by Microflite, has launched a SAF User Group dedicated to the rotary-wing community, in a bid to drive the deployment of biofuels. The company has also started using SAF for helicopter training and test flights at its sites in France and Germany.

Rodney Higgins, COO of Microflite, said the company was proud to display its leadership for a future where the aviation industry in Australia becomes cleaner and greener.

"Today's flight is historic because it shows there is a sustainable pathway where helicopters can become part of the net zero future for the aviation sector. We are so pleased to be partnering with Airbus, Safran and Neste to show all operators across Australia that the industry will soon be able to operate on sustainable fuels," he said.

"As a young and fast growing Australian owned aviation company, Microflite today successfully completed the first of many steps which is part of our 10-year vision to one day operate a complete sustainable fleet of aircraft, whether that is using SAF or a new generation of electric powered helicopters."

Stephen Forshaw, Airbus Chief Representative for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific said today's Microflite demonstration flight underscored the commitment by Airbus to help customers achieve more sustainable operations.

“The use of SAF is one of Airbus’ levers to reduce carbon emissions, and we are proud to have achieved this milestone SAF flight with long-standing partners Safran and Microflite,” he said.

“Today is an important step in our journey towards decarbonisation, as we join like-minded industry partners for a wider adoption of SAF in flights.”

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