

Script for second industry-day 23rd June 2009.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, I would like to welcome you all to this second industry-day under the Norwegian Search and rescue helicopter program.

The last time we met, in Paris 2007, my hope was that we would have a contract in place by now. I can assure you all that the time elapsed since then has been used fruitfully to prepare for the decision.

The Norwegian regime of Quality Assurance of larger investments requires the program to undergo a thorough study before any decision is made. The final analysis shall also be looked upon by an external quality assurer in order to reduce risk.

Even though this regime is demanding, I am confident that in the end it will pay back in good decisions at known risks.

I will personally express my gratitude to all of you for the patience you have shown to the project and the willingness you have given to support the need for information. I can assure you that the project has been working hard to support the Ministry in preparing for the decision.

The Norwegian government aims to have a high quality Search and Rescue helicopter service. Our ambition is, therefore, to provide high quality helicopters capable of rescuing the right number of persons in distress, to the right time.

We want you, as the professional industry partner, to help us make the right choice in due time.

We know from the RFI process that there are some interesting solutions in the market and as we from this year have established an improved emergency preparedness solution on all bases, it is important that new rescue helicopters can be in place in short time as it becomes increasingly more demanding to operate our Sea King helicopters.

As I am sure you all are aware of, the Norwegian Search and Rescue service is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice and the Police.

The future operator of the new helicopters will continue be the Royal Norwegian Air Force.

Today they operate our five fully equipped bases on the Norwegian mainland. In addition to these five bases, this government has decided to open an additional base this September in Florø. This gives us a better coverage of our rescue area.

Every mainland base consists of at least one rescue helicopter at 100 % readiness with another helicopter as a back-up.

The Search and Rescue helicopter is considered to be an emergency preparedness resource. Our vision is that the service shall be predictable, solid, visible and robust with capacity to reach all potential emergency situations throughout the Norwegian rescue responsibility area at shortest possible time.

Norway is a long country with fjords and mountains and great stretches of open sea. Norwegian rescue area is six times larger than the Norwegian land areas. The Norwegian coastline is one of the world's longest, with its 25 000 kilometres.

The Norwegian climate fluctuates throughout the year and has in some areas, large variations between the four seasons.

Norwegian and other commercial activities are increasing in large parts of the rescue area. With this increased activity comes an increased need for rescue services.

Although most Search and Rescue missions are near the coast or over land, our service is designed to solve large sea-incidents far from land. Over the past four decades, it has been registered approximately twenty sea-incidents with a large number of people involved.

Recently we have seen incidents far away at sea. This has once again convinced us that we must be to be capable of handling these kind of situations.

I was recently in Moscow on behalf of the Norwegian government to sign an agreement between Finland, the Russian Federation, Sweden and Norway regarding rescue and emergency preparedness for the Barents

region. In our opinion, this represents a new era within rescue cooperation in the region.

The Barents Region is huge with long distances and scarcely located rescue resources. It is also characterized by a cold climate and rough weather. A well established search and rescue cooperation across borders can therefore be of vital importance to ensure a successful rescue operation.

In the future we expect to see an increase in activities, especially up north. The risk based scenarios developed by various interest groups show that lots of persons are at risk in distress situations especially over Norwegian waters.

At one hand, these kinds of situations are rather demanding and is calling for huge capacity. On the other hand, we also need the right equipment in order to be able to perform mountainrescuing, glacierrescuing and airambulance services. In other words, we have to find equipment that satisfies a broad range of requirements and needs.

Finally, I would like say a few words about the process that we have ahead of us.

Norway has established an acquisition project under the strict responsibility and management of the Ministry of Justice and the Police. The project mandate is to ensure acquisition and deliveries of the best possible rescue helicopters in time, based on approved specifications and further ensure a seamless phased-in operation and related logistic support and training.

Our plan is to replace the Sea King with new all weather search and rescue helicopters in due time. We do, however, have a quality assurance process that we have to comply with.

A contract shall be established that ensures low risk for the public over a long life span. The process shall be well inside the laws and regulations and shall be held in a correct, impartial and objective manner.

It is also important that the purchase can be done in compliance with the environmental goals the Government has for Norway.

I hope our message and discussions over the two next days will continue to encourage you as suppliers of helicopters and equipment to participate in such a fair and open process.

Again, welcome to the event and good luck to you all. I will hand over the forum to the project leader, Mr. Kjell Jacob Johannessen, who will take you through the program and give further presentation materials.

Thank you for your attention