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AW119T in  Heil Ha'Avir

First Flight of Israeli Air Force New Trainer Helicopter

The Israel Air Force's new trainer helicopter, the Leonardo AW119Kx, has completed its first flight in country. The helicopter was selected in 2019 in a competition against the Airbus H125 and Bell 407

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Israel MoD, May 26, 2024 - Today Sunday, "Ofer" helicopter, AW119KX, took off for the first time for a flight in the skies of Israel. The helicopter manufactured by Leonardo, will replace the "Saif" helicopters (Bell 206) of the flight school in the initial phase of helicopter training.

"This is the beginning of a new era that will give cadets in the pilot course a completely different flight experience and will open up a new world of training and instruction in the Air Force," a spokesman said.

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The new helicopter project was launched for the first time in 2018, in search of a modern platform to replace the Bell 206, which has served the flight school for about 50 years. Today Sunday, an Israeli MNT (Flight Test Center) pilot, together with an American pilot, took off with the "Ofer" helicopter for its first flight in the skies of Israel to test the capabilities of the future training helicopter.

Brigadier General Gilad Bar-Tal, head of the helicopter group, explains, "This is the beginning of a new era that will give the cadets in the pilot course a completely different flight experience and will open up a new world of training and instruction in the Air Force. The transition from training on a helicopter from the 1970s to an innovative helicopter affects the entire perception of the world in terms of training, avionics, and instruments. This day marks a technological leap for us, and I have no doubt that it will produce even better pilots in the future."

In recent years, the Air Force tested three different models that were flown by senior officers and UAV pilots, with each model issued a report detailing its capabilities, its suitability for the training mission, the level of safety, and the level of similarity to operational helicopters used by the Air Force. "After in-depth work at the field and headquarters levels, they realized that the 'Ofer' helicopter is the most suitable for 'initial helicopter' stage," says Captain A, deputy commander of the construction team.

The helicopter introduces new operational systems made by Blue-White to integrate into other platforms that the corps uses, and that did not exist in the Bell 206. "One of the changes we made to the helicopter is a navigation system that will allow the helicopters to communicate with each other and understand where everyone is in space. Another system includes a monitor that reflects the data on a screen directly in front of the pilots," he continues.

As mentioned, one of the main goals of the new helicopter is to cause a sharp increase in the professional learning curve of the future pilot in the helicopter array, in a way that will position them at the technological forefront. For this reason, we are currently building a dedicated simulator capable of simulating diverse scenarios. "The training will be more in-depth and relevant to the challenges of the present and future. We aspire that this will bring us to a point where the gap between the 'Ofer' and the 'Owl' (the UH-60 Black Hawk) helicopter that they learn about in the advanced phase of the pilot course will be narrowed."




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"When I imagine the future helicopter pilots, I don't want them to deal with technical challenges," describes Brigadier General Bar-Tal. "Thank the 'Ofer', the challenges will be reduced, and thus the air crews will be able to focus on their main mission, as we are seeing right now - rescu the wounded and assisting our forces on the ground."



Apparecchi acustici che non costano una fortuna (finalmente!)

 Aircraft mentioned in this article : [AW119T 301](#) (*Heil Ha'Avir*)

 Location : [Hatzerim](#)

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