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All systems go: Rheinmetall starts maintenance on first two German Air Force CH-53G transport helicopters at Diepholz air base

Rheinmetall has taken over maintenance operations for the Bundeswehr's fleet of CH-53G helicopters, as planned. Embedded in the organization of the 64th Helicopter Squadron at Diepholz Air Base, Rheinmetall Aviation Services GmbH now received the first two aircrafts in their maintenance bay.

The takeover of maintenance operations by Rheinmetall proceeded remarkably smooth and quickly. The Bundeswehr and Rheinmetall signed a maintenance contract on 27 November 2020; together with involved elements of the German Air Force, especially the local detachment of the 64th Helicopter Squadron at Diepholz, it took just 77 days to lay the groundwork basis necessary for assuring a start of operations on 29 March 2021 on time. This was only achievable due to superb support and cooperation of the Bundeswehr.



At Diepholz, the local detachment of the 64th Helicopter Squadron is responsible for major maintenance and repair operations, with five Bundeswehr-owned maintenance bays dedicated for the CH-53G – an aircraft that has been in the Bundeswehr inventory ever since 1972.

Prior to taking over the maintenance operations, Rheinmetall Aviation Services had to contend with multiple organizational and logistical challenges. Among other things, experienced personnel had to be located and hired, who in some cases had to undergo additional training and be schooled in the specific requirements of the Bundeswehr. Moreover, countless tools and items of work equipment had to be purchased at short notice.

About Rheinmetall Aviation Services

Headquartered in Bremen, Germany, Rheinmetall Aviation Services GmbH was founded at the beginning of 2019 to facilitate strategic cooperation with CH-53 manufacturer Sikorsky in the Bundeswehr's Heavy Transport Helicopter (STH) procurement programme. Rheinmetall and Sikorsky have been cooperating intensively in various procurement projects ever since 2009. At Diepholz, the Bundeswehr is now benefitting from expertise gained by Rheinmetall as a result of this partnership.

► Key facts



- First two German Air Force CH-53G helicopters now being serviced in Rheinmetall-run maintenance bays
- Project starts just 77 working days after of signing of contract
- Contract runs for five years with optional one-year extension

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