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**AgustaWestland signs contract for 18 AW139 helicopters with Qatar Armed Forces**

AgustaWestland signed a contract to supply 18 AW139 medium twin helicopters to the Qatar Armed Forces. These aircraft will be operated by the Qatar Emiri Air Force supporting various Government Agencies to perform several roles including utility, troop transport, search and rescue, border patrol, special forces operations, law enforcement and homeland security duties. The contract value is about 260 million Euro and includes crews training and initial spares package.

This contract marks the continued success of the AW139 in the Middle East market with over 100 units purchased in the region. This order increases the sales total to more than 370 helicopters ordered by over 100 customers in nearly 40 countries. Additionally, this order further expands the success of the military-configured AW139 in the market having already been ordered by the Irish Air Corps and the UAE Armed Forces. An Irish Air Corps' AW139 helicopter was recently showcased in the AgustaWestland static display at Farnborough International Air Show 2008.

The AW139 can be configured to carry 8 to 15 troops in its spacious eight cubic metre cabin. Large sliding cabin doors allow both troops and equipment to be loaded and unloaded quickly. The AW139 sets new standards for performance in its class with a maximum cruise speed of 165 knots (306 km/h) and a maximum range in excess of 570 nm (1060 km) with auxiliary fuel. The advanced integrated cockpit with state-of-the-art technology minimises pilot workload allowing the crew to concentrate on mission objectives.

As the only new generation medium twin in production, the AW139 has rapidly become the best selling helicopter in the medium twin market. The AW139 is the only helicopter in its class to meet the latest safety and certification requirements and has been proven in a wide range of government roles including troop transport, utility, law enforcement, homeland security, search and rescue, medical evacuation, VIP and head of state transport.