

## Schiebel Showing Off Camcopter UAV



The Schiebel Camcopter S-100 UAV is the first rotary unmanned air vehicle to demonstrate at ILA Berlin, and will transmit real-time aerial images from its onboard EO/IR cameras to showground viewing screens during its daily flight demonstrations. This in-production pre-programmed rotorcraft made its flying public debut at last year's Paris Air Show—the first-ever UAV (rotary or fixed wing) to demonstrate there.

“The current airframe is extremely well balanced when it comes to payload versus endurance, engine power, etc.,” said Hans Georg Schiebel, manager of Vienna-based Schiebel Industries AG. “A number of continuous upgrades are being incorporated, the latest is an external auxiliary fuel tank added for a U.S. customer which increases endurance from 6-8 hours to 8-12 hours.”

Schiebel is also working on a much larger variant of the airframe. “We are staying with the concept but planning a bigger helicopter which will be about three times the take-off weight,” he told Aviation Week’s Show News. “It will be different, but we will stay with the current tail rotor concept. We intend to show concept drawings by year-end, with first flight planned for 2012.”

The current S-100 is a fully tried and tested autonomous UAS (Unmanned Aerial System) and has orders and deliveries to prove it. The United Arab Emirates has taken delivery of 60, and holds options on a further 20. Schiebel says over 120 are on order or have already been delivered to customers in 10 countries.

The aircraft is programmed to fly autonomous missions via a point-and-click computer interface, or be directed manually with a joystick. It can operate under adverse weather conditions and beyond line-of-sight on land and at sea, day or night. Its datalink range extends up to 200 km, with a service ceiling of 18,000 ft. In the standard configuration it can carry a 75 lb payload for over six hours.

In the summer of 2008 the S-100 successfully completed a three-week series of test flights from a German Navy K130 corvette as well as with a German Army reconnaissance unit. Insiders say that it is common knowledge that the S-100 has been accepted by both arms of the German military and is currently being integrated into their systems. It has also been demonstrated to Spain, Pakistan, India and is currently under test in France and the U.S.

“We can disclose we have sold (the S-100) to the U.S. Government for its counter IED (Improvised Explosive Devices) program known as ‘Yellow Jacket,’ said Schiebel. The U.S. technology company CenTauri Solutions LLC sub-contracted Schiebel to demonstrate the S100 as part of the answer to combating these lethal devices. This is Schiebel's first sale to the U.S. DoD but the company was unable to divulge the numbers of S-100s involved.

Last year Schiebel teamed with Boeing’s newly created Unmanned Airborne Systems Division and conducted a demonstration for the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) at

Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, integrating the S-100 and ground unmanned systems for psychological operation missions in-theatre. An S-100 was equipped with an American Technology Corporation loudspeaker capable of addressing crowds at a distance of up to 2 km, a leaflet-dropping capability, and an IAI POP300 EO/IR camera payload.

Use of UAVs in civilian airspace in Europe is still “tricky” says Schiebel, “but in a lot of other countries they take a more pragmatic approach treating UAVs just like a manned aircraft. In South East Asia for instance operations have come quite a long way.”

Schiebel Industries has production facilities in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, and Abu Dhabi, UAE, as well as offices in Warrenton, Virginia, and Phnom Penh, Cambodia.