

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Disaster Management in Helicopter Hoist Operations** **5th International Winch Symposium of DRF Luftrettung**

**The 5th International Winch Symposium hosted by DRF Luftrettung focused on the potential of rescue hoists in disaster response, international case studies, and the latest developments in winch operations. Around 130 experts from across the globe attended the event to exchange insights on current challenges, best practices, and the key topic of “Next Gen Hoist.” The conference program was complemented by a industry exhibition offering insights into the latest technical developments, innovations and solutions.**

“Especially in disaster situations, such as the floods in the Ahr Valley in 2021, the operation of winches can be lifesaving,” emphasizes Sebastian Schneider, Chief Hoist Instructor/Trainingsmanager HoistOps and organizer of the symposium. “In situations marked by widespread destruction and in highly dynamic situations, suitable landing sites are often unavailable. By using winches, people can be quickly reached, provided with medical care, and evacuated safely even in these challenging circumstances.”

In planning this year’s symposium, the organizers placed a special emphasis on highlighting various perspectives on the use of winches in disaster situations, in particular with a focus on organizational challenges. The topics addressed in the presentations also included general issues of disaster management and the efficient deployment of available rescue resources, current developments in crew member training, and the role of mountain rescue.

Detailed insights into real-life operational scenarios were also a cornerstone of the symposium. “We are delighted that, once again this year, the HHO Symposium was able to provide a platform for in-depth professional exchange of experiences. “The willingness of all speakers and participants to share their extensive expertise and knowledge is one of the event’s strengths,” emphasizes Schneider. The exchange on realistic operational scenarios, best practices, and new approaches opens up valuable perspectives for the future development of winch operations and contributes to further increase both safety and operational efficiency.

#### **Bringing Together Expertise in Winch Operations**

“Now in its fifth year, the symposium has demonstrated that we have successfully established a European platform for professional exchange in winch operations. The positive feedback from our participants confirms that we share a common goal: to continue enhancing safety and efficiency in winch operations. We would like to express our sincere thanks to our sponsors – Vincorion, Onboard Systems, reel, Airbus, Axnes, Bucher, Priority 1 Air Rescue, and Reiser Simulation and Training – for their support. We are committed to continuing the symposium in the years ahead,” says Jörg Redetzky, Manager Specific Approvals.

For more informationen visit [www.drf-luftrettung.de](http://www.drf-luftrettung.de)

## **About DRF Luftrettung**

The DRF Luftrettung, based in Filderstadt, is one of the largest air rescue organisations in Europe. The helicopters and ambulance aircraft of the non-profit organisation take off for their missions from 34 bases at 32 locations in Germany. These include emergency rescue missions, transports of intensive care patients between hospitals, as well as repatriation flights of patients from abroad. At 13 of these bases, crews are on standby around the clock, at one further HEMS base in daytime operation with extended off-peak hours (6 a.m. to 10 p.m.). Helicopters with rescue hoists are used at five bases. In total, the DRF Luftrettung performed 36,407 missions in 2025. The non-profit air rescue organization relies on financial support to continuously expand its life-saving mission. The DRF e.V. already has around 400,000 supporting members at its side. For more information, please visit [www.drf-luftrettung.de](http://www.drf-luftrettung.de)

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