

PRESS RELEASE

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DRF Luftrettung Academy expands portfolio **First trainee pilots start training as professional helicopter pilots**

Initial professional helicopter pilot training at DRF Luftrettung has kicked off: the DRF Luftrettung Academy is expanding its portfolio and thus completing the range of services offered by its flight school. The first seven trainee pilots were welcomed to the DRF Luftrettung Operation Center on September 1st as part of a fly-in of the training machine, a Robinson R44 Raven II.

September 1st marked the first day of training for the seven trainee pilots, six men and one woman, who will be trained as commercial helicopter pilots at DRF Luftrettung over the next two years. Last Thursday, DRF Luftrettung officially added the brand-new R44 training helicopter to the training fleet at its Operation Center at Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden Airport and presented it to the flight students. "The launch of our new course is a milestone for DRF Luftrettung. Having been offering special training courses for experienced pilots within our Approved Training Organisation for almost twenty years, we are adding an important element with the new basic training. Our aim is to pass on our expertise to third parties and, as one of Europe's largest air rescue organisations, make a further contribution to aviation safety. At the same time, we are also securing our own young talent for DRF Luftrettung's currently 29 HEMS bases in Germany. After all, we also need highly qualified pilots for the special field of air rescue over the long term," emphasises Dr. Peter Huber, Executive Board member of DRF Luftrettung.

Following professional helicopter pilot training, the air rescue organisation plans to offer prospective pilots further prospects at DRF Luftrettung or its subsidiaries. Suitable candidates could join DRF Luftrettung as co-pilots at selected HEMS bases in order to gain further experience under the monitoring of experienced pilots and become qualified for air rescue missions.

Pilot trainees benefit from the expertise of DRF Luftrettung

Throughout the entire training process, the students are guided and supported by DRF Luftrettung flight instructors with extensive experience. The trainee pilots will particularly benefit from their extensive expertise, e.g. in night flights, hoist rescues, take-offs and landings in densely built-up areas, as well as missions in impassable and alpine terrain.

The course takes place at the DRF Luftrettung Academy in Bühl and at the DRF Luftrettung Operation Center at Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden Airport. "In addition to the regular training content, participants will also gain practical insights into the various areas of the air rescue organisation, for example in the form of seminars with the technical and medical departments of DRF Luftrettung," explains Florian Kliner, project manager responsible for the training programme.

Applications for 2023 from 2 September possible

Applications for the second training course, which will start next year, will now be possible. More information at <https://www.drf-akademie.de/8/de/pilotenausbildung>

About DRF Luftrettung

DRF Luftrettung is based in Filderstadt, Germany, and is one of Europe's largest air rescue organisations. The non-profit organisation conducts emergency rescue missions from 29 bases in Germany and provides inter-hospital transfer flights for critically ill or injured individuals. Crews are on standby around the clock at eleven of these bases, with helicopters with rescue hoists deployed at four sites. DRF Luftrettung also repatriates patients from abroad using its own ambulance aircraft. DRF Luftrettung carried out a total of 38,076 missions in 2021.

The Austrian organisation ARA Flugrettung, with two bases and a winter site, has been part of DRF Luftrettung since 2001, with NHC Northern Helicopter – which performs air and water rescue from three bases – joining in 2019. DRF Luftrettung also has a stake in Switzerland's Alpine Air Ambulance, which operates two HEMS bases.

The non-profit air rescue organisation is reliant on financial support in order to continue taking its life-saving mission from strength to strength. DRF e.V. can already count on the generosity of approximately 400,000 members.

For more information, please visit www.drf-luftrettung.de

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