

European heliports alliance for the North Sea offshore energy market

European heliports unite to ensure efficient and safe helicopter operations for the offshore energy market.

Hamburg, Germany: 26 September 2018 - **Today the North Sea Heliports Alliance (NSHA) was presented by Mr. Olaf Lies, Lower Saxony Minister for the Environment, Energy, Building and Climate Protection. The alliance of the six largest European offshore helicopter airports will develop a vision on future offshore helicopter operations for the large offshore wind farms and on maintaining a scheduled service between several heliports. WindEnergy Hamburg was chosen by the directors of Aberdeen International Airport, Emden Airport, Esbjerg Airport, Humberside Airport, Stavanger Airport and Den Helder Airport to present itself as the North Sea Heliports Alliance (NSHA).**

The NSHA is to become a platform for European offshore helicopter airports to assist governments, energy companies and port and industry to develop sustainable and safe helicopter services for the offshore wind market. With this NSHA wants to prepare Europe for the future large-scale roll-out of the offshore wind industry in the North Sea. The idea originated from the European ambition to use a large part of the North Sea to generate renewable energy.

“This platform is a think tank for developing a vision of future offshore helicopter operations and is a response to the developing market. The idea arose from an increasing demand for helicopter flights for offshore wind projects in the North Sea and is aimed at providing the fullest possible support for wind farm operators”, says chairman Nick Waterdrinker.

On the initiative of Den Helder Airport director Conny van den Hoff, a leading coalition was first formed together with the directors of Emden Airport and Esbjerg Airport in 2017. The directors of the six largest European offshore helicopter airports then joined for the first time in February 2018 for a two-day conference in Den Helder to discuss the energy transition.

"This new market requires efficient helicopter services and expertise, not only for the construction of offshore wind farms over the next fifteen years, but also for a vision on long-term maintenance and supply strategies. There is a clear energy transition into offshore wind and we, as NSHA, can contribute to a broader and cost-efficient service for the offshore wind market in the North Sea”, says Olaf Schmidt, director of Emden Airport who is hosting the NSHA in the Emden Booth during WindEnergy Hamburg.

The six directors decided also to hold the NSHA meetings each time at a different airport, in which they also invite the local energy operators to participate. The inaugural meeting took place in June this year at Aberdeen International Airport and the whole week the alliance is presenting itself at the international WindEurope 2018 fair in Hamburg.

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Editor's note, not for publication:

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