Sikorsky Celebrates 100th Anniversary, Honors Brazilian Armed Forces At LAAD 2023



Sikorsky executives Dina Halvorsen, Felipe Benvegnu and Adam Schierholz stand with Brazilian Armed Forces representatives during LAAD 2023, April 12. Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. (Photo: Lockheed Martin)

Rio de Janeiro, April 12, 2023 – Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, celebrated its100th anniversary alongside defence and industry partners at the biennial Latin America Aerospace and Defence and Security (LAAD) *trade show* today.

Sikorsky executives highlighted the longstanding partnership with Brazil's armed forces and honored their ongoing accomplishments and contributions to vertical flight.

"2023 is a significant year for Sikorsky as we celebrate our 100th anniversary," said Sikorsky Latin America regional executive Adam Schierholz. "Our founder, Igor Sikorsky, envisioned the helicopter becoming a powerful tool for saving lives and performing missions in the direst and most complex conditions. Our customers' missions—especially here in Brazil and throughout Latin America—are a testament to that vision and motivate us to continue innovating and improving our aircraft and how we build them."

Schierholz highlighted Sikorsky's nearly 70-year relationship with Brazil, which dates back to 1958 when the Brazilian Air Force acquired four H-19D Chickasaw helicopters assigned to the 2nd/10th Aviation Group's "Pelican Squadron" for search and rescue operations. From there, Sikorsky's relationship with Brazil developed. In 1972, following a fire that engulfed a 26 story-building in Sao Paulo, Igor Sikorsky wrote his last correspondence commending the rescue operation that involved 20 helicopters saving the lives of 400 people, confirming his vision for the helicopter as an "outstanding vehicle for the greatest variety of life-saving missions." That bond continues to this day with the Brazilian Army and Air Force's fleet of UH-60L/M Black Hawks and the Navy's operation of S-70B Seahawks.

"The multi-mission Hawk family of aircraft provides the Brazilian Armed Forces with critical capabilities that will continue to support their readiness, interoperability and security for decades to come," said Schierholz. "We will continue to provide our operators with the support and competitive edge they need to stay ahead of 21st Century Security challenges."

During the recognition ceremony, Schierholz and Felipe Benvegnu, Sikorsky Global Aftermarket Director, presented plaques to representatives from Brazil's Army, Air Force and Navy to honor each service's aerial achievements while operating Sikorsky aircraft, including:

- Brazil's Army Aviation forces received recognition for 25 years of Black Hawk operations;
- The Air Force was commended for achieving its 50,000th flight hour with its UH-60L fleet; and
- The Navy was recognized for reaching its 10,000th flight hour milestone with its S-70B Seahawk fleet.

"All of these aircraft have been an important part of search, rescue and relief missions, including the recent humanitarian operations supporting the Yanomami people in January," said Benvegnu. "We are absolutely honored to support the courageous work of the Brazilian Army, Air Force and Navy, and we are thrilled to be here at LAAD to mark this occasion alongside such distinguished operators."

Sikorsky continues to grow its business in Latin America. To ensure highest readiness rates of more than 300 fielded helicopters, Sikorsky established S-92 and S-76 rotor blade repair and parts stocking capabilities in Brazil to serve the offshore oil industry; and in Colombia, flight training, maintenance and repair operations facilities to support the region's Black Hawk aircraft.

"We are committed in our support to all H-60 and S-70 operators and look forward to enduring partnerships on the Hawk program in the years to come," added Dina Halvorsen, program director, Black Hawk Sustainment at Sikorsky. "It remains our top priority to fulfill customer requirements and meet the needs of current and future operational units. With unmatched versatility and global interoperability, Hawk aircraft continue to advance Combined and Joint All Domain Operations."

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