

POLISH MI-14 'HAZE' NEEDS REPLACEMENT

The maritime Mil Mi-14 in Poland has to be replaced. Actually, this was planned for 2015. But when it appeared that the Mi-14 would become part of a much larger project, including the replacement of airforce and army helicopters. This implicates a written competition to various companies over which the decision will be made in 2015. Though it seems that perhaps it will still take a little longer. A good time to once more take the Mi-14 'under the microscope'.

MI-14 BEST KNOWN IN POLAND

Nowhere the contact with the Mi-14 was as close to the citizens of Western Europe and Poland. Indeed, this type has never been so widespread in the service. There were East German ones who served after the fall of the Wall and the reunification of Germany for some time in the Air Force, but that was soon over and within the armed forces of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, there were only few copies active. These have been too long out of service. Actually the largest series flew in Russia itself, which they inherited from the Soviet Union times. Also, Russia is now finished with the type. Some came to visit new countries such as Georgia and Ukraine and these are still operational.

Of the few ruimte copies supplied to Cuba, North Korea, Yemen, Syria, Libya and later to Pakistan the status is unknown. Mi-14 was designed from the Mi-8, but compared to this type only modest numbers were produced. In the domestic market in Russia is Kamov finally proved much more successful in the development of maritime helicopters with more suitable types for operations from ships. Thereby, the MI-14, which only operated from land was not strongly developed any further. In 1981, Poland bought four Mi-14PS rescue helicopters and 12 Mi-14pl (also called Mi-14PW) for anti-submarine warfare where (when in the midst of the Cold War) really was a strong need. Later on two Mi-14pl were converted to rescue helicopters.

DESIGNED FOR MULTIPLE TASKS

The Mi -14 was equipped with more powerful engines Klimov TV3-117 to perform longer at sea. The landing system is retractable and the watertight hull is constructed so that the device has amphibious ability. Another notable feature is the large spherical radome under the fuselage where a large 'Iniziativa 2M' radar is mounted. The submarine detection system consists of an 'Eye 2' OKA-60 Sonobuoys system which can be dropped out of special cassettes, and a druggable APM 60 'Orsha' MAD system, while torpedoes and depth-charge bombs can be taken in a special arms storage. To be able - during detection, if the APM 60 is lowered - still be able to hang steady in one place above the sea a AP-34-B autopilot / auto hover SAU-14 vehicle control system is installed that interacts with the DISS 15 Doppler velocity meter and RW3 radio altimeter. For the designer MIL this avionics combination, before the first time it was used, was so complex that it took seven years to get this done. Meanwhile, the Polish Navy employs some Kaman SH-2 Seasprites for submarine anti-warfare and firefighting tasks.

LARGE SAR HELICOPTER

The SAR version has interesting characteristics. There is a retractable hoist, large searchlight are ejected on either side of the hull, and there may be a total of 10 liferafts which can each carry 20 people. The cabin has room for 10 persons rescued, including two stretchers and possibly more (depending on weight) while liferafts can be taken in tow (!). Rescues are performed something other with Western helicopters. In a kind of basket three people at a time can be raised. A typical flight is done by four crew members with a pilot and pilot / observer, a navigator-radar operator that operates the 7071 search system and a hoist operator. In contrast to the anti-submarine warfare version where the operators are positioned centrally around a tactical display, the rescue version is easily accessible with a large door and an open cabin. The Mi-14 can stay in the air for four hours and has a range of 900-1000 km, but for safety reasons it is not flown more than 200 kilometers from the base.

IMPROVEMENTS IN OWN COUNTRY

In the period of 1995-1997 modifications followed, carried out by the private industry WSL-1 in Lodz, also performing maintenance. The Technical University of Gdansk and a technical institute of the Air Force were involved in this, it concerned improvements to the OKA-2 sonobuoys and placement of Koden 911 GPS and Radwar RS6106-7 radio systems for the SAR variant. Subsequent improvements in 2002 included improved IFF and improvement to the APM-60 magnetometer. Unfortunately some helicopters crashed. One ne airframe was purchased in 2010. The Polish Navy is flying the aircraft from Simierowice, Darlowo (44th Naval Air Base) and is supported in the SAR task by the W-3RM "Anakonda" which, however, has a smaller capacity.

COMPETITION FIGHT ERUPTS.

The needs for Poland are called to replace the Mi-14 in a "tender" which is issued to replace helicopters in both air force, army and navy tasks. It lists a number of 48 transport versions, 16 SAR versions 6 and ASW versions with the latter indicating that the attention yet again remains in the anti-submarine warfare, and that has everything to do with the erratic behavior of Vladimir Putin and his Baltic fleet. The order will go to a Western helicopter manufacturer and the candidates all have a connection to the Polish aircraft industry. Airbus helicopters has a connection with Heli Invest / WZL-1 and provides the EC-725 Caracal while AgustaWestland acts this way with the AW-149 through PZL Swidnik. Offcourse the Sikorsky S-70i Black Hawk by PZL-Mielec has a very good chance. In the course of 2015 will be clear who gets the loot.

[Kees Otten & Wim Das](#)
