

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Australian Special Forces Acquire Helikite Long-Range Communications Capability

The Australian Defence Force and Australian Special Forces have acquired a new Helikite aerostat, over-the-horizon communications system.

The unique Helikite aerostat, made by Allsopp Helikites Ltd in England is a new type of high altitude platform that has been highly acclaimed by the ADF trials team during the recent Talisman/Sabre radio trials. It proved brilliant reliably providing previously impossible over-the-horizon comms. In fact, the performance of this compact, rapidly deployed aerostat system proved to be so good, that the actual trials Helikites were rapidly acquired by the SAS for their immediate use.

Digital radios can provide superb high-data-rate communications, which give the Australian troops numerous advantages such as streaming video, mapping applications, messaging, voice, and GPS independent positioning. Their only fault is that they are strictly line-of-sight only. This normally renders them short range tools, and greatly restricts their potential in a rapidly moving battlefield. Flying these radios high into the sky allows their full potential to be realised. After trying out all other competing airborne platform systems, the miniature, all-weather, Helikite aerostats proved themselves to be the only practical way of lifting these superb radios hundreds of feet into the sky.

The Helikites' unique abilities are extremely useful to all forces needing wide area, high data-rate comms, but they are especially useful to the Special Forces operating behind enemy lines. Helikites flown safely in friendly territory proved to be able to consistently project forward broadband radio comms up to 42 miles behind enemy lines. This allows the Special Forces to have secure, high-data-rate comms in a way that was never before possible. Hence their enthusiasm for the Helikite systems.

Deployment of the Helikite aerostat is easy. Four Pelicases contain everything required, including the Helikite, helium cylinders, electric winch, launch pad and radio payload. It takes under 30 minutes to deploy, inflate and fly to 1,000ft in all weathers. Then the Helikite can stay airborne for many days or weeks.

When software-enabled, digital radios are flown on Helikites the number of radios required to provide comms links between troops is dramatically reduced. This is because a single Helikite radio has a massive range and can cover an area of thousands of square miles. Over one hundred expensive, complicated, masts + radio systems may be required to provide the same area of communications of each, small, inexpensive Helikite. Helikites hugely reduce the need for expensive radios. As each radio costs tens of thousands of dollars, this is a massive cost saving.

As can be imagined, there is also an immense saving in manpower when using Helikites as only two operators are needed to launch one, after which it flies automatically, completely unattended. Helikites are tremendous force-multipliers, whereas deploying numerous masts will inevitably require hundreds of troops to be taken from the frontline to protect and operate them.



About Allsopp Helikites Limited

Allsopp Helikites Ltd is a privately owned SME and a designer and manufacturer of advanced lighter-than-air, compact, all-weather aerostat systems. The company delivers a full range of products including Helikite aerostats, rapid Helikite launch systems, trailers, winches, video surveillance cameras, aerial photographic equipment, and radio-relay equipments.

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