

# Weststar to soar with new copters

**LANGKAWI:** Weststar Group's four new helicopters are set to take the company to new heights.

The aviation company yesterday signed orders for four helicopters, with a total value of RM150 million, at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) 2015 exhibition.

The first of two contracts was signed between Finmeccanica-AgustaWestland and Weststar General Aviation, a subsidiary of the Weststar Group, for three helicopters.

The helicopters are an AW119Kx, a GrandNew and an AW169.

All three helicopters will be used in the expansion of Weststar General Aviation's executive and corporate transport services.

The helicopters, costing a total of RM90 million, are renowned for their excellent performance, comfort and safety features.

Weststar Group managing director

Tan Sri Syed Azman Syed Ibrahim and AugustaWestland Malaysia managing director Vincenzo Alaimo inked the deal.

The signing was witnessed by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.

Another company within the group, Weststar Aviation Services, also took delivery of the first of four AW189 helicopters it ordered during LIMA 2013.

The state-of-the-art copter can carry up to 19 passengers, and will be the first of its kind to be operated in Asia.

"Currently, in the corporate transportation market segment, these types of aircraft are in high demand," said Syed Azman, adding that the group wanted to offer more variety to clients and enter new markets regionally.

"The helicopter charter services

market is growing, both in applications and the demand for certain types of helicopters."

Later, Weststar General Aviation also signed a contract with Sikorsky for the purchase of an S-76D VIP helicopter for RM60 million.

The S-76D VIP is the newest and most advanced medium size S-76, and the family helicopter is designed to give its passengers a new standard of flight comfort and quiet ride.

The contract was signed by Sikorsky sales vice-president Christophe Nurit and Weststar General Aviation chief executive officer Zaman Shah Khan.

The contracts for the helicopters bring the number of helicopters operated by the group to 54.

Since 2011, the group has been supporting oil and gas operations in the country, and recently began offering its services in Thailand and several African nations.



**Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein** (third from right) holding a model of the new helicopter after witnessing the signing of the agreement between Weststar General Aviation and Finmeccanica-AgustaWestland Malaysia. Pic by Muhd Zaaba Zakeria