

SINGAPORE

Weststar aims for better year

Aviation unit sets to expand offshore helicopter transportation services

WESTSTAR Aviation Services Sdn Bhd (Weststar), a subsidiary of the Weststar Group, is aiming for at least RM10 billion worth of contracts by expanding its offshore helicopter transportation services to the oil and gas companies by year-end.

Chief executive officer Tan Sri Muhammad Ismail Jamaluddin said the company would provide two helicopters to an oil and gas company in Morocco next month as the next plan of the company's expansion programme.

He said the company signed contracts in Thailand last month to supply six helicopters and was planning to expand services in

Morocco next month.

"We are also in the bidding process to win contracts in Mozambique," he told a media conference after signing an agreement for 10 AW139 intermediate twin-helicopters with Agusta Westland, an Italy-based helicopter maker, yesterday.

Muhammad Ismail signed on behalf of Weststar at the signing while Agusta Westland was represented by its Malaysian managing director Vincenzo Alaimo.

Muhammad Ismail said currently the company has eight billion ringgit worth of contracts.

The AW139 helicopters make up the majority of the Weststar

Aviation Services fleet, he said, adding that "we have enjoyed a stellar track record."

"As Weststar Aviation Services is now moving forward in its international expansion efforts, we are delighted and confident to further cement Agusta Westland as our preferred helicopter partner," he said.

The company would receive its first AW139 three helicopters by the first quarter of this year.

Weststar is the first helicopter services operator worldwide chosen to benefit from the commonality in design across the entire AW139 family new generation helicopters.

Asked why Weststar picked the AW139 model, Muhammad Ismail said the model not only has the same high performance flight characteristics and safety features

but also shared a common cockpit layout, design philosophy and maintenance concepts like AW169 and AW189, which are bigger than AW139. - Bernama



NEW PURCHASE: Muhammad Ismail (right) and Alaimo exchanging documents