Papillon Group to Unveil Golden Helicopter in Celebration of 50th “Golden” Anniversary during HAI HELI-EXPO 2015, March 3-5

*Media Invited to Attend a Special Champagne Toast for the One-of-a-Kind Helicopter on Tuesday, March 3 at 12:45 p.m. at Booth No. 2437*

**Orlando, Fla.** – Attendees at HAI HELI-EXPO 2015, the world’s largest helicopter exposition and trade show, will be among the first to see Papillon Group’s "Golden Helicopter," created to celebrate the company’s 50th golden anniversary. The show will take place Tuesday, March 3 through Thursday, March 5. This occasion provides a rare opportunity to see the special edition helicopter, which will be located at Airbus Helicopters booth No. 2437. Media are invited to join Papillon and Airbus Helicopters executives for a special Champagne toast that will take place on the first day of the show at 12:45 p.m.

Papillon ordered the specially painted and equipped Airbus Helicopters EC130 T2, the world’s leading aerial tour helicopter, to mark its 50th anniversary as the largest and longest running
helicop
ter tour company in the world. "We are celebrating this special year in our company’s history by placing into service this extraordinary, customized helicopter,” says Brenda Halvorson, President and CEO, Papillon Group.

"We are honored Papillon and the Halvorson family decided to have this beautiful helicopter produced for the company’s 50th anniversary," said Marc Paganini, President and CEO, Airbus Helicopters Inc. "This is such a momentous year for Papillon. All of us at Airbus Helicopters are proud Papillon has repeatedly selected our helicopters for its business and we pledge to work every day to provide great service and support."

Papillon's story began in 1965, thanks to the vision of Elling Halvorson, who was a young contractor at the time charged with building a 13.5-mile-long water pipeline from the North Rim to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. It was during this project Halvorson was first introduced to helicopters, which he used to lower sections of pipeline into place. Upon completion of the project, he recognized the incredible opportunity to utilize helicopters for air tours and Grand Canyon Helicopters was born. The company would go on to make history by becoming one of the first aerial sightseeing companies in the world and the first helicopter tour operator to fly the Grand Canyon. Years later, as the company expanded into Hawaiian tour operations, it adopted the name Papillon Helicopters.

Halvorson’s daughter, Brenda, and son, Lon, both joined the company in the late '80s. Brenda Halvorson has served as president and chief executive officer of Papillon Group for the past two decades. Under her leadership the business has grown by more than 600 percent. Lon Halvorson, who is well known and respected in the helicopter industry, serves as executive vice president. He oversees fleet acquisition and financing, and manages large fleet agreements with aircraft manufacturers. He has helped grow Papillon’s fleet from 23 airplanes and helicopters to 75 in the past 20 years. The company is now welcoming a third generation of family into the business to ensure the legacy continues.

The concept of a symbolic 50th anniversary helicopter was several years in the making. The unique gold livery with red eagle is a reversal of Papillon’s traditional red livery-and-gold eagle design. The original livery was designed by Airbus Helicopters, along with Papillon executives, in 2002 as a throwback to the original Grand Canyon helicopter logo designed by Elling Halvorson in 1965. The interior package for this helicopter was created and manufactured by Andy Mirabelli, owner, American Aircraft Interiors.

The Airbus Helicopters' EC130 T2 is a light single-engine helicopter equipped with the latest navigation and safety technology and a spacious modular cabin that can accommodate one pilot plus up to seven passengers. It is the quietest helicopter on the market: its Fenestron tail
rotor and automatic variable rotor speed control result in a significantly reduced external sound level.

HAI HELI-EXPO 2015 will take place at the Orange County Convention Center. The show floor hours will be Tuesday, March 3, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday, March 4, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursday, March 5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The helicopter will be officially unveiled to the public on Thursday, April 16 in Las Vegas during Papillon's 50th anniversary celebration.

To download a high-res version of the Golden Helicopter, click here. Photo credit: Airbus Helicopters Inc.

About Papillon Group
Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2015, Papillon (French for “butterfly”) is the world's largest and longest running helicopter tour company with 3,500 passengers served daily on 75 state-of-the-art helicopters and airplanes, specifically designed to reveal panoramic views beyond imagination. Family owned and operated, its brands include Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters, Grand Canyon Helicopters, Grand Canyon Airlines, Scenic Airlines and Grand Canyon Coaches. Papillon is also one of the few companies that fly the entire Grand Canyon, including the South and West rims, Las Vegas and Page, Ariz. Tours afford maximum flight time, enabling guests to fully discover the Grand Canyon’s great wilderness and scenic attractions. For more information, go to www.Papillon.com or find on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

About Airbus Helicopters Inc.
Airbus Helicopters Inc. is the U.S. affiliate of Airbus Helicopters, the largest helicopter manufacturer in the world, and a subsidiary of the Airbus Group. Airbus Helicopters Inc. is a manufacturer, markets, sells and supports the broadest range of civil and parapublic helicopters offered in the U.S. The product line represents the industry’s most cost-effective, technologically-advanced helicopters serving all markets and missions. The company’s headquarters and main facility are in Grand Prairie, Texas with a large manufacturing and production facility in Columbus, Miss.