



PRESS-INFORMATION

Bell 47 G-3B-1 (Soloy)

Reg. OE-XDM

The Bell 47 G-3B-1 (Soloy) of the Flying Bulls was built in 1966. It is one of a total 16,000 Bell 47's produced in various versions. The design of this helicopter model was approved on December 8, 1946, making it the first civilian helicopter worldwide. The Bell 47 helicopter has proved its toughness and longevity over decades. Numerous models, including the Flying Bulls' OE-XDM, were retrofitted with turbine engines in order to extend their functional life.

Originally, the Bell 47 was designed for the US military and subsequently deployed during the Korean War. Beginning in 1955, twelve new Bell and Agusta Bell 47 G-2's were made available to Austria under the US "Military Aid Program". Licensed models were produced at Agusta in Italy, Kawasaki in Japan, and Westland in Great Britain. Westland alone built 350 models for the British army between 1965 and 1968, which were deployed throughout the entire Commonwealth. They began to be sold off in 1976.

The classification Soloy stems from the conversion work performed by the Soloy company, which replaced the original piston engines with the Allison 250 C-20B engine, the same engine type used in the well-known Jet Ranger. Compared to the piston engine, which possessed a mere 270 hp and required servicing every 50 hours, the 420 hp Allison engine with its maintenance interval of 100 hours was substantially more economical.

Since 1988 the history of our OE-XDM (former D-HEBA) has been documented more carefully. In that year, the Bell was sold by the USA to Europe, where it was used for aerial spraying of plants by the Air Lloyd corporation based in Bonn Hangelar. Its main area of service was on the steep slopes of vineyards along the Rhine and Mosel, where spraying



from the ground is impractical. Everything went fine until July 8, 1998, when, after exactly 9,906 flight hours and 28 minutes, or 4,372 cycles (one cycle corresponds to a single engine start), the Bell was heavily damaged in a hard landing. Presumably, the N1-regulator (power controller) failed while hovering and fell back into the idling position—resulting in an abrupt drop in power.

In November 1999, the Bell came to the attention of Christian Haiml, an expert in rotor aircraft with over 3,500 hours of helicopter flight hours. Haiml transferred the chopper to the aircraft plant in Offenburg, where he dismantled, rebuilt, and lacquered it in its original colors. After three years and 1,200 hours of work, Haiml successfully performed the test flight in December 2002.

With its distinctive glass cockpit and its classical, simple construction, the Bell 47 has become a rarity—since the spring of 2003, it is also a true gem in the fleet of the Flying Bulls.

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Technical Specifications

Bell 47G-3B-1 Soley

Registration	OE-XDM
Manufacturer	Bell Helicopter Textron
Year of construction	1966
S/N	3575
Power plant	Rolls-Royce 250-C20 B
Power	420 HP/ PS
Cruising speed	75 kts / 145 km/h
Max. speed	90 kts / 165 km/h
Service ceiling	16.000 ft / 4.880 m
Max. endurance	3h
Fuel on Board	315 l
Fuel Consumption	approx. 95l / h
Length Airframe	32,6 ft / 9,9 m
Total lenght (incl. main rotor)	43,6 ft / 13,3 m
Height	9,3 ft / 2,8 m
Diameter main rotor	37,1 ft / 11,3 m
Diameter tail rotor	5,8 ft / 1,8 m
Empty Weight	1.733 lbs / 786 kg
MTOW	2.943 lbs / 1.335 kg
Seats	1 pilot / 2 passengers
Specials	Converted to turbine (420 HP) against Piston engine Lycoming TVO-435 (260 HP)