



“Bye Bye Lynx, Welcome Wildcat”

After forty years of operation with the Royal Navy, the Westland Lynx is now set to be replaced in frontline operational service by the AgustaWestland AW 159 Wildcat. Joan le Poole and Sander Meijering visited the last operational Royal Navy Lynx unit before the type was retired.

It is cold on the tarmac of 815 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) at Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Yeovilton in Somerset. Flight crews and engineers are working together to get their helicopters airborne. On left of the tarmac, two Wildcats are running while a third is starting up. On the right are two Lynx helicopters being prepared for flight. Operating two helicopters types at the same time is quite a challenge for the 250 men and women from 815 NAS. As CO Cdr Philip Richardson explains: “We’ve got seven Lynx aircraft and seven Wildcat aircraft at the moment. With the end of Lynx in sight we are replacing Lynx aircraft with Wildcat aircraft and transition at the same time. We are changing the qualifications of our Lynx maintainers into

