The "come-back" of the Alouette II's.

Brussels, Belgium, July 21, 2005. Absent of Brussels sky for the last two years during the traditional flyby that takes place to celebrate the National Day, the COMOPSAIR's Alouette II's took part of the 2005 *défilé*.

Three Alouette II's of Bierset based Heli Wing's Liaison Flight immediately followed the Alpha Jets that led the flyby with their black, yellow and red smokes.

They were themselves followed by two of the three Marine Flight's Alouette III's of Koksijde that were preceeding six Agusta A109's and three Westland Sea Kings. Then came the fixed wing aircraft to fly over the Royal stand with four Fouga Magisters among them, airplanes that are contemporary with the Alouettes and that took part to the flyby for the last time.

It is worth noting that only two participation possibilities are remaining for the Alouette II's to take part to the flyby as they should be phased out by the end of 2007 or early 2008. Several helicopters of this type that have expired components are already stored in Zutendaal Depot, which is located in Limburg Province.

On the other hand, base of Brasschaat that is home of the Light Aviation School, which still operates about ten Alouette II's, will close during 2006 after the completion of the last training promotion on these helicopters. Then both theoretical and practical trainings of Belgian military helicopter pilots will occur in a Belgo-French school in Dax, France.

Nothing is well defined as for the Marine Flight's Alouette III's succession. Government has announced some new acquisitions for the Defence the previous day : new vehicles and two frigates. A budgetary surplus was released as well and could be used to buy ten new single-type helicopters to replace ageeing Westland Sea Kings and to form a new tactical transport capability for the Heli Wing. But, even if it was foreseen in previous plans to also replace the three Alouette III's with two single-type helicopters, nothing is confirmed today.

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