

Méaulte, Monday 27 April 2009



## **AEROLIA invests in Picardy**

### **Laying the foundation stone of the A350 XWB Composites Unit**

**With investments of €20 million and a major recruitment plan - already 100 new employees in 100 days - AEROLIA has been preparing for the future since its creation on January 1st 2009 and is establishing a reasoned development policy, despite an unsettled international context.**

#### **A STRATEGY**

This strategy is to make AEROLIA the best on the market in its category, through three essential values: Better, Faster, Greener. Continual improvement, flexibility and innovation while respecting the environment are the fundamentals on which the industrial and commercial success of AEROLIA will be based.

So AEROLIA, the French No. 1 in Aerostructures, is providing its Toulouse-based Design Office with the best teams and at the same time on its Saint-Nazaire site is ensuring the ramp-up of the world's most modern Panels Line.

Whilst in a few weeks, south of Tunis the earthworks of the future plant will start, at MEAULTE in Picardy AEROLIA is investing more than €20 million in the construction of a new Composites Unit, mainly dedicated to the new Airbus A350 XWB long range aircraft.

#### **THE FOUNDATION STONE**

On 27th April in MEAULTE, Christian CORNILLE Chief Executive of AEROLIA and Fabrice BREGIER, President of the Board of Administration of Aerolia and COO of Airbus, presided over the foundation stone ceremony.

« For our Customers, for our Airbus shareholder, fulfilling commitments is one of the important factors of our credibility on the highly coveted and exciting aerostructures market. We take great pride in this major investment, which will contribute to our future success» said Christian Cornille.

Accompanied by Monsieur le Préfet de la Région Picardie et de la Somme, the President of the Conseil Régional and the President of the Conseil Général, Fabrice Brégier said « this new investment dedicated to the A350 XWB programme represents another major step for Aerolia,

its teams and its customers. The Aerolia teams are working on the design and manufacture of nose fuselage subassemblies for the new Airbus A350 XWB with motivation and dynamism and Aerolia has now become one of the world's few major players in the field of composite aerostructures» he concluded.

## **A COMPETENCY**

In line with its core competency AEROLIA, and in particular Méaulte, are responsible for all the nose fuselage parts for the Airbus A350 XWB.

Located at the heart of the plant, this A350 XWB unit will cover an area of 18,000 m<sup>2</sup> and will contain three zones specific to composites, organised in flow lines and in compliance with all environmental aspects: a clean room for layup, a curing zone and a zone dedicated to ultrasonic non-destructive testing and panel equipping.

Among the most important investments, a fibre placement machine will perform delicate carbon tape laying operations and an autoclave 14 m long and with a diameter of 7 m will be used to cure the composite panels, which have been cut out and equipped with frames and stiffeners.

## **A FUTURE**

Develop, prepare and master new technologies through training, to enable the Méaulte workers and technicians to accompany these investments and train in their new specialities, in partnership with Airbus Nantes.

Assembly demonstrators also provide an understanding of the specificities of carbon. Barrel 1, the first fuselage cross-section demonstrator has been produced and delivered to Airbus and a second demonstrator for panel assembly is in production.

Even if the cockpit will have some very complex metal components produced by 5-axis high speed machining, the real innovation will be section 12, which will be completely made of carbon composite, as will the section 11-12 lower shell of the aircraft. The carbon composite panels will be integrally stiffened and manufactured in totality on the Méaulte site, signifying its change-over to the new composite technologies and thereby guaranteeing the future of the Picard site.

*Aerolia is a company of the EADS Group*

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