

A400M: Airbus supports German Air Force transformation to sustainable aviation fuel

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Berlin, 21 June 2022 – Airbus is supporting the German Air Force in their long-term transformation to increase sustainability of its aircraft fleet. Airbus is working with the German Air Force towards providing the Luftwaffe with a technical allowance to commence national A400M flight trials with loads of up to 50 percent Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) in the near-term. SAF is a proven alternative fuel that can reduce life cycle CO2 emissions by up to 85 percent compared to conventional fuel.

By that, Germany, which has a total of 53 units on order, is becoming the first customer nation to launch a gradual transformation to SAF for their operational A400M fleet.

“The Luftwaffe’s objective is to launch a transformation towards sustainability of their fleet. Their mission is ours. We are gladly supporting these important efforts, not only for the A400M but their entire fleet of Airbus aircraft, ranging from VIP transport to fighter jets,” said Mike Schoellhorn, Chief Executive Officer of Airbus Defence and Space.

“Moving towards a more sustainable future is the fundamental duty of everybody. Switching from petroleum-based kerosene to sustainable fuels plays a big part in aviation’s efforts to cut CO2 emissions. Our government aircraft are already cleared for SAF. Working closely with the industry we are eager to finally certify the A400M as well. Looking into the future we are supporting all activities to introduce SAF for our entire fleet including fast jet aircraft”, said Lt.Gen. Ingo Gerhartz, Chief of the German Air Force.

Besides supporting national customer activities, Airbus has embarked on a long-term roadmap towards achieving 100 percent SAF readiness and certification for the A400M.

As a first step, in 2022, Airbus plans a test flight of an A400M aircraft with a fuel load of up to 50 percent SAF. This initial test flight will be conducted with one engine to better assess the aircraft’s overall behaviour. Upon successful completion of this one-engine flight, Airbus is expecting to continue with four engine trials in 2023.

Once testing activities are completed on the basis of four engines, the A400M platform will formally be allowed for customers with access to 50 percent SAF.

Furthermore, Airbus, OCCAR and the A400M Nations are engaged in initial discussions to develop the roadmap towards the certification and operational use of 100 percent SAF.

This is clearly something that will not happen overnight. This type of fuel first needs to be assessed technically by the engine manufacturer before we can commence with flight tests to certify the TP 400M engines for 100 percent SAF. Today, this type of fuel is not yet fully standardised nor tested. We are in the preliminary stages for an initial feasibility check”, said Schoellhorn. “This engine-level plan would be integrated with the required flight test activities at Airbus level for final A400M certification.”

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Earlier in 2022, Airbus Defence and Space performed the first flight of its C295 Flight Test Bed, a Research & Development project of the European Clean Sky 2, which aims at the use of new technologies and materials to achieve noise, CO2 and NOx reductions. With the C295, Airbus also aims to conduct a test campaign for flights with 50 percent SAF in 2022 and 100 percent SAF in 2023.

For more information about SAF, please visit our [website](#).

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