AIRBUS

Press Release

New technology hub to accelerate next generation Airbus wings

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Filton, 4 July 2023 - Airbus is investing further in its UK innovation capabilities, with the opening of a new Wing Technology Development Centre (WTDC) at its Filton site today. The facility, which will be used to build and test demonstrators for a range of programmes and research projects, was opened by Nusrat Ghani, UK Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade.

The new facility will help Airbus accelerate the design, build and testing of wings for next generation aircraft, by using the latest technology and world-leading demonstrators to further improve the performance of its wings.

Alongside engine optimisation, making wings longer, leaner and lighter is one of the biggest opportunities to improve fuel efficiency, reduce CO2 and ultimately work towards the aviation industry's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Airbus Head of Filton site and Wing of Tomorrow Programme Sue Partridge explains,

"The new Wing Technology Development Centre will help us to ground our research in practicality. A key element of how we deliver technology for next generation aircraft wings is through Wing of Tomorrow (WoT), our largest research and technology programme led by the team in the UK.

"Last week, we achieved a critical milestone in the programme when our second wing demonstrator was completed by the team in Broughton, Wales and delivered to the WTDC. Here it will be prepared for structural testing in our Aerospace Integrated Research and Technology Centre (AIRTeC)."

The WoT programme allows Airbus to explore new manufacturing and assembly technologies so future generations can continue to benefit from flying.

"It's about preparing our people, technology, industrial system, supply chain and digital and physical capabilities for next generation aircraft. We're leveraging industry partners and the very best digital tools and automation to identify potential technology bottlenecks that may slow us down in the future. The foundations we lay now will help us build better and faster when the time comes."

The WTDC adds to Airbus' existing research and technology footprint in the UK, including the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) in Broughton and both the ZEROe Development Centre and Aerospace Integrated Research & Test Centre (AIRTeC) at its Filton site.

Since 2014, Airbus has been awarded £117 million by the Aerospace Technology Institute for Wing of Tomorrow related research.

Notes to editors

About Airbus in Filton

Airbus in Filton is an aeronautical innovation haven, home to a number of state-of-the-art facilities including the £40 million Aerospace Integrated Research and Test Centre (AIRTeC) facility that opened in 2021.

The site employs more than 2,700 people across a variety of roles focussed on the development and test of wings, fuels systems and landing gears.

Half of the world's air passengers fly on Airbus wings designed in Filton, England and manufactured in Broughton, Wales.

Wing of Tomorrow Demonstrators

The three 17metre full scale wings demonstrators include:

- **Static wing demonstrator** - used to test structural capabilities of new designs and materials and to validate our analysis.
- **Fully-equipped demonstrator** - used to test installation technologies and novel approaches to equipping the next generation of wings with systems.
- **Run@rate demonstrator** - will test industrial capability and automation technologies to assess how we can build wings at the scale and speed we need to.

Folding wingtip technology

Airbus' folding wingtip technology looks at increasing the span of the wing to increase lift, reduce drag and to improve fuel efficiency without the need to alter existing airport infrastructure.

To find out more about **Airbus' wings projects** click here.

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