

Premium AEROTEC starts its production for the largest Airbus A350 XWB version in Nordenham

Augsburg/Nordenham, 22 October 2014 – Premium AEROTEC has reached an important milestone in the A350 XWB programme: Today, the company has started its production for the A350-1000, the largest version of the new aircraft family mainly made from carbon-fibre reinforced plastic (CFRP). At the Nordenham plant, laying the first carbon fibre layers of a fuselage shell began. The production in Augsburg will follow soon as planned.

In the presence of more than 200 employees production has been started during a ceremony. A highly automated placement machine laid the first carbon fibre layers and after hardening in a special oven, these will form an aircraft fuselage shell. Such shells will be assembled to a fuselage section later.

The head of the A350 XWB programme at Premium AEROTEC, Joachim Nägele, said: "Today marks an important milestone in the A350 XWB programme that is so important to us. The successful initiation of production of the largest version of the A350 XWB shows that we are well on our way to successfully mastering the industrial ramp-up. A great achievement by the entire team that had worked on it and a testimonial to the great cooperation with our customer, Airbus!"

The director of the Nordenham plant, Cord Siefken, thanked his staff: "The manufacturing employees have been able to deliver excellent work. I have a great deal of respect for that, thank you! It is great to work with a highly motivated team on the most modern aircraft in the world. That makes me confident that we will be able to overcome the challenges ahead."

With the A350 XWB, for the very first time, Airbus offers an aircraft made to a large extent of CFRP – and Premium AEROTEC is one of the largest suppliers for the new CFRP fuselages. While the -900 version, which is almost 67 metres in length, has already been officially certified and will be delivered for the very first time, now, the production of the sister model -1000, which is around seven metres longer, shall commence.

At its plant in Nordenham, Premium AEROTEC produces the entire front fuselage section 13/14, that will afterwards be delivered to Airbus in Hamburg by sea. In Augsburg, Premium AEROTEC is producing the side shells of the rear fuselage (sections 16/18), the floor structure and the pressure bulkhead. The front and the rear fuselage section of the larger A350-1000 are over three metres longer than in the case of the -900. The static implications have made significant changes in construction necessary.

With the version -1000, for the two important innovations come to reality: For the first time ever in a commercial airliner, door surroundings made of CFRP are being used that have also been developed and manufactured at Premium AEROTEC. Furthermore, changes in the production process (laying process) have resulted in a significant shortening of production time.

The CFRP outer shell of the fuselage of the A350 XWB is distinguished due its low weight and its non-corrosiveness. Manufacturing of the highly complex fuselage structure as a light-weight construction for the A350 XWB comprises automated manufacturing of the outer shell with a fibre placement system as well as the hardening in the autoclave. In Nordenham, these work processes and the further assembly steps take place in three production halls that were exclusively built for this very purpose with an area of 30.000 square metres.

Premium AEROTEC generated revenues of around 1.6 billion euros in 2013. The company's core business lies in the development and production of metal and carbon fibre composite aircraft structures, as well as the associated equipment and production systems. The company has manufacturing sites in Augsburg, Bremen, Nordenham and Varel in Germany, as well as in Braşov in Romania. Further information available at www.premium-aerotec.com.

Contact:

Dr. Jens Krüger, +49 (0) 821 801 63770