

Premium AEROTEC's Augsburg plant starts its A350-1000 production

Augsburg, 30 January 2015 – At aerostructures supplier Premium AEROTEC production for the largest A350 XWB version is now running for all of the company's work packages: At its Augsburg plant, laying the first carbon fibre layers of a rear fuselage shell began as scheduled. In October 2014, Premium AEROTEC had launched production for its first A350-1000 work package at its plant in Nordenham.

In the presence of more than 200 employees production in Augsburg 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. The entire rear fuselage section of the aircraft will later be assembled at Airbus in Hamburg merging the contributions from Augsburg – both side shells, the rear pressure bulkhead and the floor grid – and further fuselage components.

The head of programmes at Premium AEROTEC, Joachim Nägele, said: "From today on, the A350-1000 is in production at Premium AEROTEC in full scope. As planned, our contributions to the rear fuselage section entered production three months after the front section. Thanks to a great achievement by the entire team and the great cooperation with our customer Airbus, we are well on our way to successfully mastering the industrial ramp-up. That's what we are fully focussed on."

Premium AEROTEC's head of A350 XWB production, Andreas Fehring, thanked his staff: "It is great to work with a highly motivated team on the most modern aircraft in the world. I have a great deal of respect for that, thank you! The excellent work of our employees preparing this production launch 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 carbon-fibre reinforced plastic (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, is already in commercial service, now, the production of the sister model -1000, which is around seven metres longer, is ramping up.

At its plant in Augsburg, Premium AEROTEC is producing the side shells of the rear fuselage (sections 16/18), the floor structure and the pressure bulkhead. In Nordenham, Premium AEROTEC produces the entire front fuselage section 13/14. Both the front and the rear fuselage section of the larger A350-1000 are over three metres longer than in the case of the -900. Static implications required significant changes in construction.

With the version -1000, important innovations come to reality: For the highly complex door surrounding area a new CFRP technology solution has been developed in collaboration with Airbus contributing to significant weight & cost savings. 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 Augsburg, these work processes take place in a production hall that was exclusively built for this very purpose with an area of 25.000 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.

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