

Autoclave for production of the new Airbus A350 XWB arrives at Premium AEROTEC's plant in Nordenham

Nordenham, 23 August 2009 – Premium AEROTEC in Nordenham today took delivery of the 27 meter long autoclave, eight meters high in diameter, for production of the forward fuselage sections for the new Airbus A350 XWB. Once installed in the A350 hall currently under construction, the autoclave's first cure cycle is planned for the turn of the year. It is expected to be fully available for production from the spring of 2010.

Premium AEROTEC is the largest aerostructures supplier for the new Airbus A350 XWB. The company between 2009 and 2011 is investing some 360 million Euros for the production infrastructures of this new aircraft.

The autoclave with a transport weight of 320 metric tonnes was loaded for shipment by its manufacturer Aeroform/SFA in Masan, South Korea, in July. Its total length is 27 meters and its external diameter is eight meters. The new autoclave has a usable length of 21 meters and a usable diameter of over seven meters. The producer price of this autoclave is around six million Euros net.

Today's biggest autoclave at Nordenham plant has a usable length of 15 meters and an internal diameter of 4.5 meters for the production of GLARE shells for the Airbus A380. The fuselage shells to be cured in the new autoclave for the Airbus A350 XWB are up to 17.8 meters long by 5.6 meters wide.

From 2010 on, the two side shells plus the upper and lower shells will be manufactured in Nordenham for each forward fuselage section (section 13/14) of the new A350 family. These shells then will be integrated into complete fuselage sections, including floor beams, also at Nordenham. The production of the highly complex light-weight fuselage demands state-of-the-art CFRP-technologies, both for the production of the carbon fiber reinforced skin using a fiber placement system as well as for curing in an autoclave.

The new fiber placement machine is expected to be set up in the first quarter of 2010. Another fiber placement system is already available at the Nordenham plant and was used to produce the demonstrator fuselage shells for the Airbus A350 XWB. The new machines will be installed in the new, approximately 28,000 square meters big A350 production hall of Premium AEROTEC's Nordenham plant.

The new autoclave will be moved to the new A350 production hall until Monday. It is to be assembled there on its own foundations over the next few days. Before that the "Colossus" will be slowly manoeuvred to the new location on a route that takes its huge size into account, from the Rhenus Midgard pier on the Weser across the entire length of the factory site and will reach its destination via a ramp. After that, the work of installing the autoclave will last until December.

Plant manager Helmut Färber is delighted with the arrival of the autoclave: "Today we are Number One in the production of metal shells for Airbus. With the investment to be effected here in Nordenham over the next two years we are doing our utmost to attain a similar position in the area of carbon fiber production as well. The arrival of the autoclave is an important milestone in achieving this. And at the same time we rely not only in technology but first and foremost in our highly skilled and motivated workforce."

Dieter Meiners, COO of Premium AEROTEC, underlines: "This day sets the tone for our investment in the future, for our trust in our employees and for our goal of securing and strengthening our leading position in the aerostructures business."

The new autoclave is expected to be used for its first cure cycle by the turn of the year and then will be available for the production of the CFRP shells for sections 13/14 (forward fuselage sections) of the Airbus A350 XWB from spring 2010 on.

Premium AEROTEC has more than 6,000 employees and expects to generate revenues of about one billion Euros for 2009. Premium AEROTEC's core business is the development and manufacturing of metal and carbon composite aerostructures and the corresponding production systems. The company has plants in Augsburg, Nordenham and VareL.

Photos of the autoclave and of the new A350 production hall currently under construction in Nordenham can be found on the Premium AEROTEC website under "Media" / "News 23-08-2009":

www.premium-aerotec.com

Contact:

Manfred Knappe, +49 (0)821 801 63009 or +49 (0)171 372 3196