HYBRID AND ELECTRIC AIRCRAFT RESEARCH AGREEMENT BETWEEN AIRBUS AND SAS SCANDINAVIAN AIRLINES

News / Airlines, Manufacturer

Airbus has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SAS Scandinavian Airlines for hybrid and electric aircraft eco-system and infrastructure requirements research.

The MoU was signed by Grazia Vittadini, Chief Technology Officer, Airbus and Göran Jansson, Deputy President EVP Strategy & Ventures, Scandinavian Airlines. Collaboration will start in June 2019 and will continue until the end of 2020.

Under the MoU, Airbus and SAS Scandinavian Airlines will cooperate on a joint research project to enhance understanding of the operational and infrastructure opportunities and challenges involved with the large-scale introduction of hybrid and full electric aircraft to airlines modus operandi. The project scope includes five work packages, which focus on analysing the impact of ground infrastructure and charging on range, resources, time and availability at airports.

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The collaboration also includes a plan to involve a renewable energy supplier to ensure genuine zero CO2 emissions operations are assessed. This multidisciplinary approach—from energy to infrastructure—aims to address the entire aircraft operations ecosystem in order to better support the aviation industry's transition to sustainable energy.

Aircraft are roughly 80% more fuel efficient per passenger kilometer than they were 50 years ago. However, with air traffic growth estimated to more than double over the next 20 years, reducing aviation's impact on the environment remains the aim of the industry.

To overcome this challenge, the Global Aviation Industry (ATAG) including Airbus and SAS Scandinavian Airlines have committed to achieving carbon-neutral growth for the aviation industry as a whole from 2020 onwards, cutting aviation net emissions by 50% by 2050 (compared to 2005).

This agreement further strengthens Airbus' position in a field where it is already investing in and focusing its research efforts on developing hybrid-electric and electric propulsion technologies that promise significant environmental benefits. Airbus has already started to build a portfolio of technology demonstrators and is currently testing innovative hybrid propulsion systems, subsystems and components in order to address long-term efficiency goals for building and operating electric aircraft.

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