



AIRBUS, PRATT ANALYZING LATEST A320NEO ENGINE SNAG

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Airbus confirmed Wednesday that a **Pratt & Whitney** PW1100G turbofan on one its **A320neo** flight-test aircraft suffered “minor damage” following hot-weather trials in Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates. The company stressed, however, that the incident would not affect certification schedules and plans to deliver the first Pratt-powered airplane to Qatar Airways by the end of the year.

“The Pratt & Whitney-powered A320neo flight-test aircraft MSN 6101 has completed the hot weather campaign successfully,” said Airbus in a written statement to AIN. “However after the last flight we had findings in the engine. We are currently analyzing the situation in close cooperation with our partner, Pratt & Whitney.

“We are confident with our partner Pratt & Whitney to resume flight tests of MSN 6101 soon. Our target to start the A320neo delivery stream in 2015 remains unchanged.”

Asked for comment on the status of the engine, Pratt & Whitney deferred to Airbus.

News of the latest incident comes some two months after MSN6101 returned to the air following discovery of a manufacturing defect in a 10-inch-diameter retaining ring in the powerplant's combustor section. The three-month "pause" in flying forced the manufacturer to revise testing dates and modify the A320neo flight-test program to accommodate the changes. For example, an A320neo powered with alternative CFM International Leap-1A engines had to undertake additional work previously earmarked for the GTF-powered A320neos and unrelated to engine systems.

Before this latest finding, five A320neo flight-test airplanes, two of which the CFM engines power, had accumulated some 850 hours during more than 280 flights.

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