MONTANA AEROSPACE STRENGTHENS INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP WITH AIRBUS ON NEXT-GENERATION AIRCRAFT PROGRAMME

News / Manufacturer

Asco, a subsidiary of Montana Aerospace AG, achieves significant technological milestone in the development of a hybrid multi-material Rear Secondary Structure for Airbus.

Montana Aerospace, a leading manufacturer and supplier of complex assemblies and system components for the aerospace industry, continues to broaden its expertise beyond its core wing structures business through sustained investment in research and innovation. Its Belgian subsidiary, Asco Industries, based in Zaventem, has reached an advanced stage in the development of a pioneering hybrid metallic-composite Rear Secondary Structure fairing for Airbus' next-generation single-aisle aircraft programme, reinforcing its position as a provider of sophisticated aerospace engineering solutions.

The programme recently achieved a major milestone with the successful unveiling of a full-scale prototype assembly to a wide group of Airbus stakeholders in Toulouse. Presented during a Final Review Meeting at Airbus, the demonstration validated the maturity of the technology and highlighted the significant progress made in bringing the innovative hybrid structure closer to

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industrial application.

A Technology Building Block for Montana Aerospace

Driven by growing demand across aviation, space, and emerging UAV and drone markets, the aerospace industry continues to seek lighter, more efficient, and higher-performing structures. For Montana Aerospace, the ability to seamlessly integrate advanced materials, manufacturing methods, and engineering technologies represents a natural evolution of its established expertise across these expanding sectors.

Development programmes such as the hybrid RSS initiative enable the Group to progress beyond the supply of individual components toward the creation of more advanced, integrated aerospace solutions. The knowledge and experience gained through the project in Zaventem can be leveraged across Montana Aerospace's global footprint, combining material science, engineering, and manufacturing expertise from multiple sites to transform a local innovation effort into a strategic technology platform for the wider Group.

The successful full-scale prototype demonstration therefore represents more than a milestone for Asco alone. It underscores Montana Aerospace's commitment to research and innovation and demonstrates how targeted technology investments across the Group strengthen its capabilities and competitiveness as a trusted partner for both current and next-generation aerospace programmes.

Paul Andreucci, Chief Commercial Officer of Montana Aerospace, commented: "This programme demonstrates the strategic value of research and innovation in continuously expanding the Group's technological capabilities. By combining expertise in materials, engineering and manufacturing across Montana Aerospace, we can develop solutions that complement our existing Aerostructures portfolio and create new opportunities for both existing and next-generation platforms."

Jérôme Morhet, CEO of Asco stated: "Reaching this high level of maturity on this programme is the result of years of engineering development by our teams in close collaboration with Airbus. It shows that Asco can take a structure from concept to a validated, production-ready design in a genuinely new material combination — and do so to the standards Airbus expects, on a component outside our historical wing scope."

As part of a long-term innovation partnership between Airbus and Asco, the project was launched in 2022 under a Collaborative Research Agreement between Airbus Airframe Propulsion in Toulouse and Asco. The programme encompasses the entire development process, from initial concept design and structural sizing through to the production of two full-scale prototype assemblies scheduled for 2026.

The resulting architecture integrates Carbon Fibre Reinforced Plastic (CFRP) skins produced using Resin Transfer Moulding (RTM) technology with aluminium and titanium interface structures, thermoplastic frames, and injection-moulded thermoplastic components. The design has been optimized to deliver the best combination of weight reduction, cost efficiency, and manufacturability for future high-rate production environments.

Compared with conventional solutions, the new RSS concept offers substantial performance and industrial advantages. Strategic use of advanced composite materials reduces structural weight, while a simplified installation process lowers overall programme costs by reducing final aircraft assembly time. The highly integrated, plug-and-play design also supports efficient high-volume

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manufacturing, complete component interchangeability, and streamlined maintenance throughout the aircraft's operational life.

Following the successful completion of Asco’s studies and full-scale prototype demonstrations, Airbus intends to advance the evaluation of the concept at the complete pylon level, including installation trials of the Asco demonstrator on a representative next-generation aircraft pylon structure.

Asco is strategically expanding into new aerospace platforms and product segments, with pylon structures and hybrid multi-material solutions representing key growth opportunities. Building on its longstanding expertise in complex structural components, the company aims to strengthen its position in the design and manufacture of advanced pylon parts and assemblies. At the same time, Asco is developing innovative metal-composite and multi-material structures that combine its established metallic capabilities with complementary advanced manufacturing technologies.

This latest achievement further reinforces Montana Aerospace’s position as a provider of next-generation multi-material aerostructures. Through Asco Belgium, the Group is broadening its involvement in future Airbus programmes and advanced aerostructure development, extending its capabilities beyond its traditional focus on wing structures and supporting a larger role within the evolving Airbus supply chain.

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