NORWAY TAKES NEXT STEP AS AN INTERNATIONAL TEST ARENA WITH BRISTOW GROUP AND ELECTRA

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Bristow Group , Electra, Avinor, and the Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority announced the launch and contract signing of a second international test project for zero? and low?emission aviation. The project builds on Norway's established international test arena and aims to generate operational, regulatory and market knowledge supporting the introduction of electric and hybrid?electric aircraft. The contract signing was held at Trondheim Airport, Værnes, which represents one of the environments under consideration for future test activities.

Norwegian Minister of Transport, Jon-Ivar Nygård commented: "This project marks a new step in the further development of Norway's international test arena for zero? and low?emission aviation. The test arena is an important instrument in preparing aviation for new technologies. The government's role is to support this work by providing clear frameworks and long?term predictability.In a long and sparsely populated country like Norway, where aviation is essential for regional mobility and accessibility, it is particularly important to gain knowledge about how new solutions can be introduced in a safe and responsible manner when the technology is mature."

Dave Stepanek, Bristow Executive Vice President, Chief Transformation Officer stated: "With over 75 years of operating experience, Bristow knows what it takes to turn promising technology into

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practical operations. That's what makes our work with Electra so important. The aircraft's ultra-short takeoff and landing capability creates exciting possibilities, and our role is to help validate how that aircraft can perform safely and effectively in real-world conditions."

Diana Siegel, Vice President of Commercial Programs at Electra said: "Electra's hybrid-electric Ultra Short aircraft opens the door to lowering emissions and new connectivity beyond the limits of traditional aircraft. Realizing that potential requires the right ecosystem. Partnering with Bristow, Avinor, and the Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority brings together operations, infrastructure and regulation to demonstrate novel operations at both existing airfields and new access points."

"With this project, we are taking a further step in preparing aviation infrastructure for the introduction of zero? and low?emission aircraft," said Karianne Helland Strand, EVP Sustainability and Infrastructure at Avinor. "As the owner and operator of airports and airspace infrastructure, Avinor's role is to facilitate real?world testing – both in the air and on the ground – so new aircraft and operational concepts can be assessed safely and efficiently."

"With this technological platform, new parts of the regulatory framework will be tested and assessed. A key task for CAA Norway will be to obtain the necessary approvals for these trials to be conducted within our established regulatory sandbox," said Director General, Lars Kobberstad. "We will be able to further improve our safety model for managing risks in an innovation setting. Furthermore, the project gives us a chance to develop our competence and contribute to a more efficient introduction of new technologies."

The challenge with regional mobility

In countries like Norway, geography can make regional travel time-consuming and inefficient. Electra's breakthrough design is built to overcome these challenges, creating new opportunities for sustainable aviation that connect remote communities with regional centers.

Electra's hybrid-electric airplane operates from ultra-short access points, the size of a football pitch/soccer field, and dramatically reduces travel times by flying directly across terrain and waterways that make surface transportation frustrating and slow.

From prototype to system-level learning

Under the agreement, Electra and Bristow will conduct demonstrations involving Electra's hybrid-electric Ultra Short aircraft. The goal is to examine the possibilities of novel aircraft operations to transform regional mobility networks, unlocking capabilities not possible with a conventional aircraft or even a helicopter.

The demonstration flights will focus on several use cases, including integration of ultra?short operations at existing short runways, the use of novel access points like parking lots, drone pads or fields to support unserved or underserved communities, and the ability to feed services into major hub airports without adding congestion.

Each demonstration will provide insight into emissions reductions, novel operational concepts, and the scalability of regional air mobility services. Structured testing under Norway's regulatory sandbox will also give regulators practical insight into how these operations can be evaluated and supported.

Phased test programme

Testing will be carried out in phases, progressing from operations at smaller airports in Northern

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Norway, to testing from novel or adapted access points, and finally, to operations feeding into a major Norwegian aviation hub. Exact test locations will be defined during the preparation phase and concluded within approximately six months, with the aim of commencing test operations mid-2027.

Next step for Norway as an international test arena

Building on experience from the first international test project, the programme moves beyond route?specific testing to broader exploration of operational, infrastructural and regulatory aspects. In doing so, it strengthens the test arena as a platform for systematic learning and represents a further step toward the phased introduction of zero? and low?emission aviation technologies.

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