



AIRBUS HELICOPTERS TO BEGIN ARRANO TESTS FOR H160 SHORTLY

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Airbus Helicopters will shortly begin trials on its Dynamic Helicopter Zero test rig of the first pair of Turbomeca Arrano engines destined for the **H160** programme.

Following recent delivery of the two 1,100-1,300shp (820-969kW) turboshafts to the airframer's Marignane facility in the south of France, they were briefly installed on the second H160 prototype for ground evaluations, says Aurélie Gensolen, marketing product manager for the new helicopter.

These are now being fitted to the Dynamic Helicopter Zero with trials to begin imminently.

The two flight-test engines will then arrive in mid-October, says Gensolen, enabling the maiden sortie of the second helicopter before year-end.

Due to a relatively last-minute decision to drop Pratt & Whitney Canada from the programme, first flight of the H160 was performed using its PW210 powerplants.

That aircraft has so far accumulated 30 flight hours since its mid-June maiden sortie, with 70h of testing amassed on the test rig.

Assembly of the second prototype is well under way, with the wiring and major systems being installed to the Donauwörth-built fuselage. Power on was in June, confirms Gensolen.

The third flight-test article will arrive later in 2016.

For its part, Turbomeca remains bullish on the progress of the Arrano. Describing it as a "major

achievement to be selected as the single source” chief executive Bruno Even says it is “on track” to meet its performance promises to the airframer. “It is quite in line with our commitment,” he says.

In addition, with Airbus Helicopters currently in a two-year concept study phase for its new X6 heavy rotorcraft, Turbomeca is working to wrap up tests on its Tech 3000 demonstrator engine this year.

Designed to “prepare and mature” the technologies to “allow us to propose an engine for this kind of application” in the 3,000shp-class, work on Tech 3,000 is progressing well, says Even.

A full-scale development programme will only be launched “the day we have a contract” he stresses, but points out that its ambition is to certificate any new engine by the end of decade and have it enter service around 2021-2022.

“We have to be able to demonstrate that it is not just a paper engine but a real engine” and that development work has “mitigated all the risk”.

However, Even stresses that talks with Airbus Helicopters over supplying an engine to the X6 programme are yet to take place. “At the end of the day it is their decision,” he says.

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