



AIRBUS HELICOPTERS REVEALS RACER HIGH-SPEED DEMONSTRATOR CONFIGURATION

News / Business aviation, Events / Festivals, Manufacturer



Project developed in the frame of Clean Sky 2 research programme

Airbus Helicopters has unveiled today at the Paris air show the aerodynamic configuration of the high speed demonstrator it is developing as part of the Clean Sky 2 European research programme. Codenamed Racer, for Rapid And Cost-Effective Rotorcraft, this demonstrator will incorporate a host of innovative features and will be optimised for a cruise speed of more than 400 km/h. It will aim at achieving the best trade-off between speed, cost-efficiency, sustainability and mission performance. Final assembly of the demonstrator is expected to start in 2019, with a first flight the next year.



“Today we unveil our bold vision for the future of high-speed rotorcraft,” said Guillaume Faury, Airbus Helicopters CEO. “This new project, pulling together the skills and know-how of dozens of European partners through the Clean Sky 2 initiative, aims to bring increased speed and range at the right cost, thanks to a simple, safe and proven aerodynamic formula. It will pave the way for new time-sensitive services for 2030 and beyond, setting new benchmarks for high-speed helicopter transportation. ”The Racemaster demonstrator will be built around a simple architecture, ensuring safety and cost-efficiency. An innovative “box-wing” design, optimised for aerodynamic efficiency, will provide lift in cruise mode while isolating passengers during ground operations from the “pusher” lateral rotors designed to generate thrust in forward flight.

Optimised for performance and low acoustic signature, these lateral rotors as well as the main rotor will be driven by two RTM322 engines. An “eco mode” will be tested by the engine manufacturer to demonstrate an electrically-powered “start and stop” of one engine in flight, thus generating fuel savings and increasing range. The Racemaster demonstrator will also benefit from a hybrid metallic-composite airframe, specifically designed for low weight and low recurring costs. It

will also be equipped with a new high voltage direct current electrical generation, which will significantly contribute to weight reduction.

Building upon the success of the self-funded X3 demonstrator, which validated the “compound” aerodynamic configuration – a combination of a traditional main rotor and innovative lateral rotors – the Racer project will bring this concept closer to an operational design and demonstrate its suitability for a wide spectrum of missions where increased speed and efficiency will bring significant added value for citizens and operators. This is especially the case for emergency medical services and search and rescue operations, as well as for public services, commercial air transport and private and business aviation.

Racer
Clean Sky2

Airbus Helicopters is one of the participants in the European Clean Sky 2 Programme, developing – with extensive European partnership – a demonstrator for a high-speed rotorcraft known as Racer.

Missions

PARAPUBLIC
• Improved cost efficiency by need for fewer bases
• Increased productivity

PASSENGER TRANSPORT
• Less time on-board for a given mission
• Avoids need for several transportation means for a medium distance
• Increased comfort

EMS/SAR
More lives saved:
• Time to target reduced
• Much greater area covered in the “golden hour” timeframe

Racer
(Rapid And Cost Efficient Rotorcraft)

Opportunity to bring greater levels of maturity to new technology, improving efficiency of both high speed concept and conventional rotorcraft

Affordable acquisition price & direct maintenance cost

Developed from proven X³ results

X³ demonstrator concept reused: Go fast at an affordable cost.
After 156 flight hours, the X³ has demonstrated the concept's performance through the use of current helicopter and general aviation technology

Source: Airbus © Infographic: beatrizantacruz.com, Airbus and Airbus Helicopters Design Studio - 2016 © Airbus Helicopters - Anthony Pecchi - 2013

High safety standards
No transition between hover and cruise
Very easy to fly
Full autorotation capability

Facts & Figures
 >50% faster than a conventional helicopter
 25% cost reduction per NM
 Lower sound footprint
 < 15% fuel consumed per NM at 180 kts compared with a helicopter at 130 kts
 2 times the area covered in 1 hour

AIRBUS

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