

ALTIJET TO LAUNCH FRANCE'S FIRST TBM 900 CHARTER SERVICE

News / Business aviation



French business aircraft start-up **AltiJet** is preparing to **launch charter services** early next year with the country's first commercially-operated Daher **TBM 900**.

The Strasbourg-based company took delivery of the single-engined turboprop on 7 October and has applied to the French civil aviation authority, the DGAC, for an air operator's certificate (AOC).

"We hope to begin flying the TBM commercially within six months," says AltiJet pilot and safety manager Julien Bottenmuller. "It will be the first French-registered [TBM] 900 to be available for passenger charter," he adds.

Fellow French company Voldirect has been offering a TBM 850 – the previous iteration of the high-speed aircraft – for charter since 2013.

Until AltiJet's AOC is granted, the seven-seat single will be used by the company's private owners for corporate transportation. Its first such flight is scheduled for 17 October.

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AltiJet

Bottenmuller expects strong demand for its TBM from companies and private individuals in Strasbourg and the surrounding Alsace region. "The transportation links here are terrible," he says. "We will provide a much sought-after service, providing non-stop flights to over 3,000 destinations in Europe and the Mediterranean region."

The TBM will be joined in February 2016 by a larger Pilatus PC-12NG, which will be added to AltiJet's AOC in the third quarter.

France is one of a handful of European countries to permit commercial operations in instrument

meteorological conditions with a single-engined turbine aircraft. However, from the middle of next year, these operations could become increasingly widespread, as the European Aviation Safety Agency is expected to approve them.

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