



AIR ZERMATT SIGNS AS LAUNCH CUSTOMER FOR MARENCO SKYE SH09

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Marenco Swisshelicopter has secured a launch customer for its developmental SKYe SH09 light single, with Swiss firm Air Zermatt placing a firm order for a single example of the 2.6t rotorcraft.

Delivery to the operator is due begin in 2017, on the back of European Aviation Safety Agency certification, says Marenco chief executive Martin Stucki.

Although initially only for one aircraft, Stucki says the acquisition is "the start point for their next-generation single-engined helicopter, so there could be more."

The deal with Air Zermatt adds to around 80 tentative commitments for theHoneywell HTS900-powered SH09, which Stucki hopes to begin converting into firm orders.

Marenco on 26 February performed the maiden sortie of its second SH09 prototype, with a 30min flight from its Mollis air field facility.

This, says Stucki, validated the design changes incorporated from the initial flight-test aircraft, mainly focused on the main rotor head and control rods.

"It performed very well during first flight," says Stucki "it shows that we are on the right track and that the engine really delivers what was promised."

A further flight is due next week, he says, and "then we would like to have a stream of flying". This will be bolstered by the arrival later this year of a third prototype which will be closer to the eventual production specification.

Construction is due to begin this year on its Mollis production site, following delays in 2015, he adds. "We wanted to start in November last year but we missed our target."

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