



# ASCENDANCE FLIGHT TECHNOLOGIES REACHES NEW MILESTONE

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**Ascendance Flight Technologies has opted for hybridization for its cutting-edge propulsion system and vertical takeoff and landing aircraft (VTOL). An ambitious model, developed by this “Cleantech” gem that aspires to the rapid decarbonization of aviation. The Toulouse-based startup is announcing the constitution of a high-level board made up of Jean-Paul Herteman, Jean-Christophe Kugler and Agne’s Plagneux- Bertrand. This is a strategic step for Ascendance Flight Technologies, which is taking on Robert Lafontan, a world reference in aeronautics, as its special consultant. Last but not least: a multi-year agreement has been signed with Capgemini.**

“Our ambition is clear: to become a key player in the global aviation of tomorrow. A carbon-neutral future that is determined now, with disruptive technologies like ours— technologies that are hybrid, modular and safe”. AFT’s CEO Jean-Christophe Lambert is unhesitating when rolling out the road map of Ascendance, a young firm built on its founders’ boldness and know-how. The firm’s strategy and assets have convinced new partners known for their high standards.

Jean-Paul Herteman – The former CEO of Safran, the leading equipment manufacturer specialized in aerospace engines and equipment and Defense, Herteman loves technology and contributed for over 30 years to the group’s greatest successes. “I’m guiding Ascendance because its hybrid-electric VTOL project is clearly one of the most accomplished and realistic ones,” says

Herteman. “The idea of developing a business of hybrid elements and energy systems for the aeronautics sector in general at the same time is very promising. Lastly, added to the team’s enthusiasm is their extraordinary professionalism and serious mindedness, which guarantee their success.”

Jean-Christophe Kugler – The former Europe Region Chairman at Renault, Kugler had first-hand experience in Renault’s hybrid electric program. This experience convinced him of the potential of carbon- neutral mobility and steered him towards projects related to energy transition. “Hybridization is going to play a decisive role in decarbonization of aeronautics, just as it did in the automotive sector,” says Kugler.

“Ascendance’s team has got way ahead in the field by developing proprietary hybrid technologies that have a vast field of application and are compatible with multiple energy sources. Their VTOL aircraft will be able to carry out all kind of missions with no constraint of endurance. It reminds me of the impact Toyota made with the Prius 20 years ago in the automotive sector; they have now sold more than 15 million hybrid vehicles world- wide.”

Agnes Plagneux-Bertrand – The former chairwoman of the global competitiveness cluster Aerospace Valley, Plagneux-Bertrand headed Airbus subsidiary VoltAir between 2013 and 2017, and managed the Airbus E-Fan electric aircraft program, which saw the talents of Ascendance founders emerge.

“I am firmly convinced of this team’s human, technical and professional qualities, as well as of their ability to make Ascendance a major player in a more resilient aviation,” she says. “They’re young and tenacious, and they have the means to achieve their ambitions!”

### **The road to industrialization and certification with Robert Lafontan**

Robert Lafontan has unmatched experience in aeronautics development and certification. The former Senior Vice President of Engineering at Airbus, in charge of Aircraft Architecture and Integration and Chief Engineers, and Ascendance’s new Executive Technical Advisor is an authority on aeronautics safety and compliance. With multiple certified planes to his credit, including the iconic A380, Lafontan’s expertise will be a powerful asset in optimizing the ATEA development timetable. “Robert Lafontan will provide an expert perspective on design and on our technological choices,” says Jean-Christophe Lambert. “His experience can help us avoid many pitfalls and delays and will guarantee us optimal compliance with safety and certification requirements. We are pleased and proud to be able to count on his guidance.”

This collaboration will enable Ascendance to validate the technical, industrial and regulatory stages prior to commissioning in 2025.

### **Collaboration agreement with Capgemini Engineering**

This multi-year agreement is devoted to the development of ATEA and STERNA. Capgemini Engineering engineers, working alongside Ascendance, will contribute to the development of full-scale prototypes, aiming for the first public demonstration flight, expected to be made in Paris on the 2024 Olympic Games. This collaboration also concerns research and innovation with a unique combination of expertise and technological building blocks in the fields of acoustics, aerodynamics and energy management.

“We are delighted about the collaboration with Ascendance: it illustrates the attractiveness of our model and our ability to provide a start-up that has an exciting, ambitious project with the

sophisticated expertise required to accomplish it,” says William Roze?, Executive Director of Capgemini Engineering and a member of the Capgemini Group Executive Board. “The Toulouse-based Technology Engineering Center\* brings cutting-edge competencies to this collaboration, which testifies to our engineers’ advanced technical level. It proves TEC’s ability to offer high value-added solutions and opens up new horizons for developing innovative technologies and enabling the emergence of new models, particularly in sustainable aviation. ”

“These resources will be invaluable to us for accelerating our development, and we’re counting on the integrated teams to share knowledge and increase their skills in order to make this collaboration a beneficial experience for everyone”, concludes Jean-Christophe Lambert.



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