FALCON 5X TIMING STILL UNCLEAR, AS NEW ENGINE ISSUE SURFACES

News / Manufacturer

During a meeting today with AJPAE, the French association of aerospace journalists, Dassault Aviation CEO Eric Trappier said he is “still waiting for a new calendar from Snecma,” regarding delays with the **Falcon 5X**'s engines.“Snecma is facing some difficulties with the Silvercrest engine, which will delay the 5X’s certification even if the configuration doesn’t change, he told reporters.

When the **5X** rolled out in June its first flight was pegged for September, but the new twinjet has yet to fly. Trappier declined to announce a new date for the maiden flight “until we have a new calendar from Snecma.” Asked about possible financial penalties, Trappier said, “There’s a contract and this contract will be applied.”The engine delay has also prompted Dassault to slow 5X production.

The Silvercrest test program has faced two different obstacles. The first one, which occurred early last year, centered on difficulties in adapting the engine to the Gulfstream II flying testbed. “That problem is now solved,” a Snecma spokesperson told AIN.

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A second problem that has only now been made public involves slight deformation of the engine casing during high-temperature testing. The deformation could cause the engine to fall short of performance guarantee made to Dassault. Snecma plans to make modifications to address the deformation, hence the delay.

“This problem has no consequence on the integrity of the engine or on our capacity to certify the Silvercrest,” Snecma said in a written statement. “During the six last months, we achieved a campaign of ground and flight tests with more than 3,200 hours, including 310 flight hours, and the engine has shown good performance.” Snecma insists that it still expects to earn certification for the engine in the middle of 2016.

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