



FIRST M-345 PRODUCTION AIRCRAFT PERFORMS ITS MAIDEN FLIGHT

News / Manufacturer



The first [M-345 HET](#) (High Efficiency Trainer) production basic/advanced trainer aircraft successfully performed its maiden flight at Venegono Superiore airport (Varese, Italy) today with pilots Quirino Bucci and Giacomo Iannelli onboard.

Quirino Bucci, Aircraft Division's Trainer Project Test Pilot, said: "The airplane performed excellently, perfectly meeting design parameters and expectations. The engine in particular showed exceptional response to power changes, a key factor for the role the M-345 will play, particularly for aerobatic flights. We've also tested the advanced on-board systems and I'm extremely happy with the excellent avionics integration and man-machine interface."

Lucio Valerio Cioffi, Leonardo Aircraft Division Managing Director, said: "I am extremely happy with what we've done so far and the short time it took to achieve such an excellent result. Thanks to its performance and the integrated training system the M-345, which has already generated interest among many air forces worldwide, will deliver a significant

enhancement in training effectiveness and operating cost reduction. It's an aircraft that is able to combine a jet's superior performance and effectiveness with the cost of a high power turboprop trainer."



The **Italian Air Force**, the launch customer, has a requirement for up to **45 M-345s** (designated the T-345A by ITAF) to progressively replace 137 MB-339s, which first entered service in 1982, and to become the Italian Air Force's new aerobatic team airplane. The customer has so far placed an order for five aircraft and the first will be delivered in early 2020. The new **M-345s** will integrate the [M-346s](#) used during the advanced training phase of the Italian Air Force's pilots. Through the **International Flight Training School** the Air Force will be able to strengthen its training school's growth and internationalization while increasing at the same time capabilities and services offered to customers.



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