

VISION SYSTEMS PARTNERS AIRBUS HELICOPTERS TO DEVELOP RACER

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Vision Systems takes part in *Clean Sky 2* European research programme in partnership with Airbus Helicopters, to develop Rapid And Cost-Effective Rotorcraft. Since its creation in 2005, Vision Systems has been producing different composite products for the aircraft industry using RTM and thermocompression processes (helicopter cyclic sticks, sun visor casings, window stiffeners, tubes and shells for shading systems). In response to the growing need of the aviation and helicopter markets for products integrating composite, but also to meet the new expectations of the marine industry in terms of weight, robustness and complex shapes, Vision Systems established in 2015 a new production plant dedicated to high-end composite solutions, Fibertech. This production know-how, in addition to that of mechanics and electronics, enables Vision Systems to offer complete functional built-to-spec systems with breakthrough features.

Vision Systems' competence and capacity to innovate were part of its main assets for the selection of partners for the RACER project developed in the frame of the *Clean Sky 2* European research programme.

The RACER high-speed demonstrator will incorporate a host of innovative features and will be optimized for a cruise speed of more than 400 km/h. It will aim at achieving the best trade-off between speed, cost-efficiency, sustainability and mission performance. Final assembly of the demonstrator is expected to start late 2019, with a first flight in 2020. This new rotorcraft is designed to find applications as an alternative to business jets, as an air taxi, or as a new generation of military, oil & gas and rescue helicopters.

Vision Systems is developing two composite jettisonable window frames for the cockpit, and one for the cabin, all three windows equipped with Vision Systems' X-Lite composite glass, as well as a composite electric footstep. This motorized footstep can fold down and up, back into the structure of the rotorcraft, in flight, a world first!

These innovative solutions based on the company's expertise in composite and mechatronics, are fully in line with the *Clean Sky 2* approach, particularly in terms of optical and acoustic quality, strength, lightness, operational efficiency and safety.

Vision Systems invested 3M€ in its composite unit Fibertech. With a surface area of 3500 m², the group has recently integrated new skills with dedicated production means (laser machines, cutting table, heating chamber, autoclave, numerical center) to continue to improve Fibertech's industrial performance. Its production capacity tripled since 2014 to allow for serial production of helicopters' composite window frames and aircraft window casings, but also for serial production of large composite frames addressed to the marine market. New hires are planned, 15 by the end of 2020, mainly in technical positions, and yearly sales perspectives for 2022 should exceed 6M€.

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