

PRESS RELEASE

Skylander: the production of the prototypes is underway

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A new step forward with the opening of the final assembly hangar for the prototypes

More than 400 people were present to inaugurate the assembly hangar of the 4 Skylander test aircraft at the Chambley base in Lorraine.

In the presence of the President of the Lorraine Region, Mr. Jean-Pierre Masseret, elected officials, institutions, industrial partners and journalists came to discover the assembly hangar with its first construction frames and took part in the presentation of the future series aircraft factory.

Parts and equipment provided by the Skylander's industrial business partners were on display. They were all able to measure the significant progress with the program since the arrival of Sky Aircraft in Lorraine in 2008.

The Skylander is entering its second phase, that of the production and final assembly of the four test aircraft: two of them are intended for flights and two for static tests and fatigue tests. The short- and medium-term objectives are now the delivery of the assembly factory for the series aircraft, 15,000 m² of infrastructures in the first quarter of 2013, and the type certification in the second semester of 2013, in order to deliver the first series to our customers as of 2014.

The Skylander: A confirmed commercial success

Since the last air show in Le Bourget, the pace of the signings with air transport operators has been picking up: there are a total of 151 sales agreements for the Skylander, including 10 orders, representing potential revenues of more than 700 M€.

The group is thus confirming its production objectives of 1500 aircraft between 2013 and 2030 and its ambition to play a major role on the world market for light turboprop aircraft, all the more so as the Skylander offers exceptional performances: it is modern, sturdy and simple. It can operate on short and very basic runways and can handle the most extreme environments. It is offered in multiple configurations, and the choice of the materials and the selection of the proven equipment and systems make it easy to use and reliable.

The Skylander is spacious and multi-purpose, with a cabin volume of 28 m³ which has no equivalent in its category. It can transport a payload of up to 2.7 tons, with a maximum mass at take-off of 8.6 tons. Its five doors give it great accessibility and operability. Its wide rear door allows for the loading of merchandise. In its passenger version, with a 1.83 m high cabin, and seats that are 51cm wide, the Skylander offers optimal traveling conditions. Lastly, the Skylander offers the best operational costs, with reduced fuel consumption, its speed and its single-pilot certification, and reduces maintenance costs with simple and reliable systems, all at a competitive purchase price.

A new industrial aeronautics sector in Lorraine

The Lorraine Region has renewed its support for the Skylander program and the creation of an industrial aeronautics sector in Lorraine.

The Skylander will contribute to the re-industrialization of the Lorraine Region: as a member of the Lorraine aeronautic cluster, Aériades, which includes 36 companies of the region, Sky Aircraft is now one of the driving forces for the development of the local industrial value chain.

Permanent, highly qualified jobs will be created by Sky Aircraft, both directly and also indirectly with its suppliers and sub-contractors. Thus far, some fifty companies have brought their contributions and know-how to the Skylander program: almost all of the aerostructures will be produced in France and Sky Aircraft signed a contract with two manufacturers in Lorraine, LEACH International and SLCA. Close collaboration with schools, universities and research laboratories in the region completes this network and promotes the development of a genuine aeronautical ecosystem.

In an economic situation which is particularly favorable for air transport, the Skylander is a French aircraft which will contribute to developing France's exports and its international influence.

About GECI International

For 30 years, GECI International has been established as a specialist in high technology engineering, with a preponderant presence in the world of aeronautics. Working in the four corners of the world, GECI International's 1,000 staff, engineers and researchers are constantly ready to meet today's and tomorrow's technological challenges.

GECI International combines excellence, passion to innovation to propose, on the one hand, via its GECI Engineering division an offer of expertise and global solutions in the fields of aeronautics, transport and infrastructures and, on the other, via its GECI Aviation a range of twin turboprop aircraft: the F406 and the Skylander SK-105.

The F406, produced by Reims Aviation Industries, is recognised by operators throughout the world as being an aircraft particularly suitable for surveillance missions. The Skylander SK-105, produced by Sky Aircraft, stands out due to its exceptional performances, its ability to operate in extreme environments and its very competitive purchase and maintenance costs.

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