

IABG tests the Pilatus PC-21 for stability and fatigue

Ottobrunn. At the beginning of the year, in the context of a European competition, IABG was awarded the tender for important structural test for the certification of the Pilatus PC-21. On completion of technical planning, the tests will shortly commence at the test unit of IABG in Ottobrunn.

The PC-21 airplane is a complete innovation. The single-engine low wing plane with two seats, one behind the other, for the student pilot and the instructor, is to be used to train pilots. The engine, designed to counter extreme operating conditions is to be used in training. It is equipped with state-of-the-art avionics and combines the economical operation of a turbo prop airplane with excellent performance. Thanks to numerous simulation options and ultra modern digital cockpit equipment, it can provide for the requirement profiles of a range of different airplane types. To operators this means a significant reduction of the fleet and thus of costs, as they need not provide different types of airplanes and it reduces the number of hours of training in the much more expensive jets. With the features of a jet, the PC-21 is considered the most "modern trainer" currently available in the world.

Like any other airplane, the PC-21 also needs to be approved before it can commence regular flight operations. IABG has taken over the major responsibility for this. The comprehensive planning of the structural tests commenced at the beginning of 2004. Currently work is underway to establish the test set-up for the static test with the wings ("Wing Static Test"). It is required for the approval of the airplane model and must have been completed by the end of 2004. In parallel, the qualification of the landing gear is executed through drop tests of the main and nose landing gear. Subsequently, in Spring 2005, the fatigue test is to be executed on a second airframe, which is to last approx. twelve months ("Full Scale Fatigue Test"). All tests will be carried

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out at the test and analysis centre of IABG, at their headquarters in Ottobrunn.

With the tests on the PC-21, IABG is continuing its successful cooperation with the Swiss airplane constructor Pilatus. Thus, as early as 1983, the entire airframe of the PC-7 was thoroughly tested under the management of IABG, as was the corporate travel and freight plane PC-12, in 1994/1995.

IABG enters its high competence and its longstanding experience in approval-related stress tests of entire airframes. With the imminent structural tests, IABG has created an excellent basis for retaining and further developing its leading competitive position.

About IABG

The leading European service provider IABG employs around 1,000 employees at 12 sites across Europe. With its Automotive, InfoCom, Transport & Environment, Aeronautics, Space and Defence business areas, it generates around €130 million per year. For more than 40 years, IABG has been supplying its customers from industry and the public sector with tailored, technically demanding experimental, analytical and system technology solutions.

About Pilatus Aircraft

Pilatus Aircraft, based in Stans, has a 65-year tradition of aircraft construction. The Swiss manufacturer is particularly renowned for its successful trainer aircraft family (PC-7 and PC-9), of which more than 700 units have been manufactured to date. The PC-6 (over 530 units) and PC-12 (approx. 450 units) designs round off the product portfolio with two pioneers in their class of universal commercial aircraft for General Aviation.