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Dassault Falcon 8X Takes to Skies

Ultra-long range trijet on track for service entry in second half of 2016.

Dassault Aviation on February 6 announced that the company's new flagship, the ultra-long range Falcon 8X, successfully completed its first flight a little more than one month after rollout.

With test pilots Eric Gérard and Hervé Laverne at the controls, aircraft 8X s/n 01 lifted off from Dassault Aviation's Mérignac plant near Bordeaux at 02:00 p.m.. The aircraft levelled off at 5,000 ft (1,500 metres) and raised its landing gear before beginning flight handling manoeuvres and system tests at 15,000 ft (4,500 metres). It later climbed to FL400 (12,000 metres) accelerating to Mach 0.80. The aircraft subsequently descended to 5,000 ft for approach and landing at 03:45 p.m.

"Throughout the flight, the Falcon 8X demonstrated excellent handling qualities, the hallmark of all Dassault Aviation aircraft," said Gérard. "We reached each of the performance objectives set for the first mission and, in a few cases, surpassed target goals. I am confident that the remainder of the flight test programme will proceed just as smoothly and feel extremely honoured to fly such a handsome and well-engineered aircraft."

"Today we reached a key milestone in the Falcon 8X programme, and are right on target for mid-2016 certification and second half 2016 deliveries," said Dassault Aviation Chairman/CEO Eric Trappier. "The new Falcon has been well received in the marketplace and already shows every sign of being a commercial and technical success. This early achievement reflects Dassault Aviation's half century of experience in the business aviation industry. Dassault Aviation's state-of-the-art military aircraft know-how enables us to design and build business jets that combine exceptional reliability, flight handling and technical capabilities with unmatched cabin comfort and operating economics. I congratulate the pilots, engineers, technicians and line workers, both at Dassault Aviation and at our numerous industrial partners and subcontractors facilities for their contributions in getting the 8X off to such a great start."

Falcon 8X s/n 02 and 03 are scheduled to take to the air in the coming months. Each will take part in the flight test programme that is expected to last around 500 flight hours. Serial number three will leave mid-year for the Dassault Aviation completion facility in Little Rock, Arkansas, where it will be fitted with a complete interior and undergo a stringent system test campaign.

FALCON AT BENGALURU

Dassault Aviation will display this year two very long-range triple Falcon 7X, that flies non-stop up to 14 passengers from India to London City Airport, and a wide-body twin Falcon 2000LXS, the most popular cabin in the industry. At the show Dassault will also pitch for the reputable Falcon 900LX, the entry-level Falcon 2000S, the very new Falcon 5X offering the widest and highest cabin in the industry, and the new Falcon 8X which has more cabin space and more range than the superb and efficient Falcon 7X. •