

14th July 2008
Farnborough International Air Show

Bell/Agusta BA609 Tiltrotor Makes Its First Appearance At Farnborough Air Show

The Bell/Agusta BA609 Tiltrotor is making its first ever appearance at the Farnborough International Air Show. The second prototype, aircraft #002, is showcased by the Bell/Agusta Aerospace Company having flown for the first time in November 2006 at AgustaWestland's Cameri facility in Northern Italy. The BA609 tiltrotor flew to Farnborough from Italy demonstrating excellent performance, unique aircraft flexibility and high reliability while exercising its envelope in both vertical lift and high cruise speed airplane mode.

The BA609 Tiltrotor is one of the most significant technological developments in the aeronautical world. This unique aircraft offers green and efficient extraordinary capabilities. The BA609 tiltrotor flight envelope includes an effective combination of helicopter's vertical take-off and landing capability together with the speed, range and comfort of typical turboprop airplanes. The 4-prototypes based programme has so far achieved more than 300 flight hours performed by the first two test aircraft (aircraft #001 in USA, #002 in Italy). Aircraft a/c #003 is being assembled at the AgustaWestland facilities (Italy). The flight test program has validated the BA609 unique flight envelope including altitudes up to 25,000 feet and speeds up to 310 knots, all at the maximum weight. The test program continues to check all the points of the flight envelope as required by both the FAA and EASA.

The BA609 is the most suitable, flexible, and versatile aircraft for many Homeland Security operations, surveillance and control of illegal traffic and immigration, search and rescue with the possibility to rescue people at more than 500 KM from the coast. When time, place, or mission sensitivity is essential, the BA609 will provide the most efficient and effective aerial transport means, for short to medium range operations.

In 2007, the FAA froze the airworthiness certification basis, for the BA609 Tiltrotor aircraft. Bell/Agusta and the FAA continue to work closely with EASA to achieve a dual FAA/EASA certification by 2011/early 2012. In addition to the certification basis, the Transport category design standards guiding the BA609 tiltrotor allow it to meet or exceed most of the stringent operational requirements requested by Government agencies for their missions.

More than 80 BA609 units have been ordered so far by approximately 40 customers (including Government agencies), in over 20 countries, providing worldwide customers an unprecedented, new level of safety as well as unparalleled long range and speed capabilities in a vertical flight commercial aircraft.

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