



BELUGAXL IS READIED FOR ELECTRICAL POWER-UP AS INTEGRATION OF THE NO. 1 GIANT AIRLIFTER CONTINUES

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This new-generation specialised transport aircraft will make its maiden flight next summer

The first of five Airbus BelugaXL super transporters is well advanced in the build-up process. The project is on schedule for power-on process start at the end of this year.

During activity at Toulouse-Blagnac in southwestern France – home to Airbus' primary industrial facility – three-quarters of the no. 1 BelugaXL's structural assembly has been performed for the outsized aircraft.

Eric Belloc, who heads the BelugaXL final assembly activity, said all elements for the aircraft's specially-designed tail section have now been received. These are due to be integrated on the no. 1 airframe once systems, mechanical and electrical integration – which currently is underway – is completed.

The next major step will be assembly of the front main deck cargo door, which is scheduled for the beginning of December

Bigger and more capable than the current Beluga transporters

The first BelugaXL's first take-off is scheduled for next summer, ahead of a 10-month flight test certification campaign. The second aircraft will start final assembly process in December, and the remaining three airlifters will be produced at a rate of one per year.

"While challenging, this really is a great project," Belloc noted. "The Beluga is a very special aircraft – a symbol of Airbus – and we're proud to be working on the next-generation version."

The BelugaXL was launched in November 2014 to address the transport and ramp-up capacity requirements for Airbus beyond 2019. Derived from the freighter version of Airbus' A330-200 jetliner, the BelugaXL is six metres longer, one metre wider and has a payload lifting capacity six tonnes greater than the current Beluga A300-600ST.

When operational, the fleet of five BelugaXLs will take over transporting complete sections of Airbus aircraft among the company's production sites around Europe and to final assembly lines in France, Germany and Spain. BelugaXL is due to enter service in 2019.



The first of five Airbus BelugaXL super transporters is well advanced in the build-up process, shown here being readied for its electrical power-up milestone.



Delivery of the front main deck cargo door will enable its integration on the no. 1 BelugaXL super transporter aircraft, which is being assembled at Toulouse-Blagnac in southwestern France.

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