MITSUBISHI REGIONAL JET TO RESUME FLIGHT TEST PROGRAM

News / Manufacturer

Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation says says its Regional Jet program has resumed flight tests.

The test flight conducted on Wednesday afternoon is the fourth test flight of the MRJ. The first flight took place on November 12.

“Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation today resumed flight tests of the FTA-1 for the MRJ (Mitsubishi Regional Jet),” the company said in a statement on Wednesday.

“During about 1.5-hour flight test off the Pacific coast, we confirmed the upgrades carried out on the aircraft.”

The flight test program was suspended in November after three test flights due to the need to complete some structure work and software upgrades on the airframe.

In December, Mitsubishi delayed first delivery of the MRJ – Japan’s first locally-produced commercial passenger aircraft since the country stopped making the YS-11 in 1974 – by a year to the second quarter of 2018.

“The first flight and the subsequent flight tests have confirmed the basic characteristics to be satisfactory,” Mitsubishi said in a statement on December 24.

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“However, we also have recognized several issues as we attempt to accelerate our development. In order to tackle these issues and address the perspectives below, we have reviewed and revised our overall schedule.

“Specifically, in the progress of our engineering work together with experts in the United States, we have made additions to and revisions of test items in order to complete a better-integrated aircraft.”

The aircraft, with its distinctive pointed nose, is powered by Pratt & Whitney PW1200 geared turbofan engines and available in either the the 90-seat MRJ90 or 70-seat MRJ70 models.

To date, the MRJ has received 223 firm orders, 160 options and 24 purchase rights for the aircraft from the likes of ANA, which is the launch customer, Japan Airlines, Eastern Air Lines Group, US-based Skywest, Trans States Holdings and Air Mandalay. The program is about three years behind schedule.

The MRJ competes with Bombardier’s CSeries and Embraer’s E-jet family in the less-than-100-seats market.

The MRJ has completed four test flights. (Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation)

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