



Media Release

Biofuel flight a step towards carbon neutral growth

GENEVA, 30 December 2008 – In another example of the aviation industry's commitment to a sustainable future, an Air New Zealand aircraft took off today, powered in part by a second-generation biofuel. The Boeing 747 test flight was intended to investigate how the new fuel, made from the Jatropha plant, stands up to use at the high altitudes and extreme operating conditions required by aviation.

The flight, which lasted for two hours, is another in a series of trials taking place at airlines around the world, testing different types of biofuel to determine the viability of using the sustainable alternative to the Jet-A1 fuel currently used by commercial aviation.

Paul Steele, the executive director of the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG), a representative of organisations from across the aviation industry, said that the flight was a significant step towards the industry vision of carbon neutral growth, "Earlier this year, the leaders of the aviation industry gathered in Geneva to sign a Declaration on Climate Change, committing the industry to a pathway towards carbon neutral growth.

"The efforts taking place in New Zealand today and other industry projects are designed to make progress towards that goal, providing the aviation industry with a reduced-carbon form of energy and allowing the sustainable future of air transport which is a key generator of economic growth."

A major part of the industry's future carbon emissions reductions rely on the ability for aircraft to shift towards biofuels. The aviation industry has said it is committed to pursuing sustainable, second-generation biofuel sources such as jatropha and algae, which don't compete with food supplies for land or water.

"Significantly, the trial today shows the cooperation that is occurring between industry partners, in this case Air New Zealand, Boeing, Rolls-Royce and Honeywell UOP. Such coordinated efforts are vital for environmental progress.



www.enviro.aero is an ATAG initiative funded by: Airbus | Airports Council International (ACI) | Association of European Airlines (AEA) | Boeing | CFM International | Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) | GE Aviation | International Air Transport Association (IATA) | Pratt & Whitney | Rolls-Royce



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“Unlike many sectors, the aviation industry is undertaking work across each of its component parts – airports, airlines, air navigation service providers, engine and aircraft manufacturers – often with the different players coordinating efforts to help each other reduce emissions.”

Globally, aviation produces two percent of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions, but it is a growing sector. Through technology and operational performance improvements, the sector has managed to decouple the growth in carbon emissions to around half the rate of the growth in passengers. The industry has also established a website to chart the progress of many projects underway across the world to reduce emissions from aviation even further. The site, www.enviro.aero, is a resource centre for anyone interested in aviation’s environmental impact.

Steele said, “This flight and the other environmental projects underway at Air New Zealand provide leadership to others in the aviation industry and, importantly, other parts of the economy.”

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Notes for media:

- The Air Transport Action Group is the only aviation industry body that comprises the whole commercial air transport sector and counts among its members the large aircraft and engine manufacturers as well as the global associations representing airlines, airports and air traffic control organisations. Its mandate shifts to encompass the pressing needs of the sector, with a focus on ensuring the future growth of air transport is sustainable and highlighting the economic benefits that aviation brings to society. Currently, it is ensuring the industry has a coordinated approach to tackling its climate change impacts.
- Images of the Geneva Declaration signing are available, as well as screen grabs and graphic elements from the website. A special page has been established about the biofuel trials occurring around the world: www.enviro.aero/biofuels.aspx
- The next global Aviation & Environment Summit will take place in Geneva on 31 March and 1 April 2009. Further details can be found through www.enviro.aero/summit. Media information can be obtained through the contact details below.
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