

PRESS RELEASE

Safran and ONERA start wind tunnel tests of future Open Fan

Modane, France, January 19, 2024

Safran Aircraft Engines and France's national aerospace research agency ONERA have begun first wind tunnel tests with the ECOENGINÉ, a 1:5 scale demonstrator of the future Open Fan. The trials are at ONERA's wind tunnel facility in Modane, France. This disruptive architecture, a key pillar of the CFM RISE technology demonstration program,¹ is currently the most promising in terms of reducing the environmental footprint of aviation. The Open Fan aims to reduce fuel burn and CO₂ emissions by 20% — and up to 80% when combined with SAFs or sustainable aviation fuels — for the next generation of single-aisle commercial jets by 2035.

To support the process of bringing the Open Fan's aerodynamics and acoustics to maturity, Safran Aircraft Engines and ONERA recently signed a framework agreement for an ambitious test plan from 2024 to 2028, building on previous trials with the ECOENGINÉ.

Tests on the ECOENGINÉ backed by the French Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC) as part of the CORAC² plan aim to demonstrate the aerodynamic and acoustic performance of the fan module by simulating real-world airspeeds in a wind tunnel and validate the design of the fan blades. The blades play a key role in the engine's overall efficiency. In total, over 200 hours of testing will be performed during this campaign, followed by simulation tests with the engine mounted on a demonstrator plane wing section. For these tests, Safran Aircraft Engines benefits from the knowledge and expertise of the ONERA teams and use of the world's largest sonic wind tunnel. The S1MA tunnel is a unique test facility in terms of size — 8 meters across or over 26 ft — and airflow speed, making it possible to test engines in isolation or mounted on a wing structure. It therefore plays a crucial role in the development of new propulsion systems for the next generation of planes.

"As scientific experts in aerospace, ONERA is a key player in efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of aviation," said Marie-José Martinez, Wind Tunnels Director for ONERA. "The partnership we've set up with Safran reflects our shared drive to support the development of cleaner, greener aircraft. ONERA is proud to be making available our exceptional facilities, funded by the French government, and our world-renowned engineers and technicians."

"This series of wind tunnel tests is a major milestone in our Research & Technology roadmap, which aims to develop the technological building blocks for the next breed of commercial jet engines," said Pierre Cottenceau, VP Engineering and R&T for Safran Aircraft Engines. "With the RISE program, Safran Aircraft Engines is contributing our long-standing expertise to the development of the fan module to demonstrate the benefits of an unshrouded engine architecture on the ground and in flight by mid-decade."

¹ The RISE program is being developed by CFM International, a 50/50 joint venture between Safran Aircraft Engines and GE Aerospace.

² The Council for French Civil Aerospace Research (CORAC), created in 2008, is the State-Industry consultation body dedicated to the implementation of the national research program for the aerospace industry.

The company is coordinating demonstration of the Clean Aviation³ OFELIA project (Open Fan for Environmental Low Impact of Aviation), which involves 26 European partners, including ONERA. Safran is also working on a number of other major technological building blocks in conjunction with the Open Fan architecture, such as hybrid propulsion.

A wide-ranging test program is being rolled out across Safran sites to further the maturity of these technologies, which are key to helping air transport achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. For example, our Villaroche center in France has already completed ingestion tests on Open Fan blades and is currently building a new test stand facility. Operational in 2025, it will boast an 8-meter-wide (26 ft) chamber and will be used to carry out development and certification tests for the RISE program.

Safran is a leading international high-technology group and Tier 1 supplier of systems and equipment for aerospace (propulsion and equipment), defense and security. Operating worldwide, Safran has 83,000 employees and generated sales of €19 billion in 2022. Safran is listed on the Euronext Paris stock exchange and is part of the CAC 40 and Euro Stoxx 50 indices.

Safran Aircraft Engines designs, produces and markets, alone or in partnership, commercial and military aircraft engines offering world-class performance and reliability. Through CFM International,* Safran Aircraft Engines is the world's leading supplier of engines for single-aisle commercial jets.

*CFM International is a 50/50 joint venture between Safran Aircraft Engines and General Electric.

For more information: www.safran-group.com and www.safran-aircraft-engines.com / Follow us: @Safran and @SafranEngines on X.

ONERA, the French aerospace research center

ONERA is the French national laboratory for aeronautics and space R&T, staffed by 2000 people. Under the supervision of the French Ministry of Armed Forces, ONERA has an annual budget of 289 million euros (2023), over half of which comes from study, research and testing contracts. As the French expert in aerospace technologies, ONERA prepares tomorrow's defenses, meets the aerospace challenges of the future, and contributes to the competitiveness of the European aerospace industry. ONERA masters all the disciplines and technologies in its aerospace fields.

All major civil and military aerospace programs in France and Europe contain "DNA" from ONERA: Ariane, Airbus, Falcon, Rafale, missiles, helicopters, engines, radars, etc.

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³ The Clean Aviation Joint Undertaking is the European Union's leading research and innovation program for transforming aviation toward a sustainable and climate neutral future.