THE A321LR “GOES LONG” WITH RECORD-BREAKING FLIGHT

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This variant of Airbus’ A321, which will enter service in 2018, has the longest range of any single-aisle jetliner

The A321LR variant of Airbus’ A321 jetliner underscored its impressive range with a record-breaking flight from Mahé in the Seychelles islands to Toulouse, France – covering a total distance of 4,750 nautical miles in 11 hours.

This milestone was reached in late March as part of the A321LR’s 100-hour flight test and certification programme. To make flight conditions as realistic as possible while evaluating cabin systems, the A321LR carried 162 human heat-replicating dummy passengers in addition to its 16-member test crew.

According to flight test engineer Jim Fawcett, the A321LR’s flight characteristics and fuel consumption were as expected throughout the lengthy trip. He added: “The A321LR has completed 15 test flights. It is an excellent aircraft that keeps its promises in terms of flight

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behaviour, passenger comfort and fuel consumption."

Outfitted for superior long-range performance

The A321LR has the longest range of any single-aisle jetliner, with an increased maximum take-off weight of 97 tonnes (compared to 93.5 tonnes for the A321), plus the addition of a third auxiliary centre fuel tank. The jetliner is ideally suited to transatlantic routes, allowing airlines to tap into new long-haul markets that were not previously accessible with current single-aisle aircraft.

The A321LR – which is on track for a 2018 service entry – also features a new door configuration that enables up to 240 passengers to be accommodated in the widest single-aisle fuselage in the sky.

The record-breaking flight followed A321LR hot weather testing performed at Sharjah International Airport in the United Arab Emirates, which was selected by Airbus due to the optimal weather conditions and this location's excellent facilities.

Air Seychelles, which operates Airbus aircraft on its international services, hosted a senior delegation from the company during the A321LR's visit

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