Beat: Technology

Airbus´ New Wing Technology to Save Fuel

Up to 5% reduction in CO2

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USPA NEWS - The European aircraft manufacturer, Airbus, has recently announced that they have successfully completed the first in-flight tests of a new wing design on the Airbus BLADE aircraft. The BLADE demonstrator is an A340-300 that has been fitted with this technology to determine how it could be applied in commercial aviation. The BLADE aircraft is fitted with a pair of transonic laminar wings attached to its structural wings, and it is the first aircraft in the world to do so.

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The objective of this wing design is to reduce up to half of the wing friction resulting in up to five percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. According to the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG), the aviation industry emits 781 million tons of carbon dioxide per year, accounting for 12% of emissions from the entire transportation industry. Reducing emissions by 5% each year by using transonic laminar wings will help improve the environment significantly.

The ATAG also suggested another way of reducing the aviation industry´s carbon dioxide footprint - using biofuels. If up to 6% of all aviation fuels were biofuels, the overall carbon emissions of the entire industry will drop by 5%. Fuel costs have risen significantly since the turn of the century. Fuel costs now represents a third of all costs to operate commercial flights, if this trend continues, the industry will focus on fuel efficiency. Airbus will help make this goal a reality by testing the BLADE aircraft for around 150 hours in the coming period with hopes to introduce it to commercial aviation soon.

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Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jonathan Got

Editorial program service of General News Agency:
United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com