



Aurora's subsonic D8 X-Plane (XD8, top) and D8 commercial aircraft (bottom) concept.

NASA Funds Continued Development of D8 Airliner Concept

Manassas, VA, October 10, 2017 – Aurora Flight Sciences has been awarded a twelve-month contract from NASA for continued development of the company's subsonic D8 X-Plane (XD8). The XD8 is designed to demonstrate the key enabling technologies of the D8 commercial aircraft concept, which could yield substantial fuel, noise and operational efficiency improvements within the next decade.

The objective of the competitively awarded contract is to assist NASA in reducing the risk and cost of future X-Plane procurements through the design of critical building block tests that will precede the XD8 first flight. This contract will simultaneously mature the XD8 aircraft along three dimensions. First, XD8 aerodynamics will be further developed through the design of a transonic wind tunnel test. Second, the readiness of the Boundary Layer Ingesting (BLI) propulsion system will be advanced via the design of a transonic BLI fan test. Lastly, the complex propulsion-airframe structural integration will be matured through the design of a large-scale structural test article.

The D8 evolved from Aurora's early work on the NASA N+3 Program. In 2009, a combined team of Aurora, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Pratt & Whitney was awarded a contract to study technologies and designs for transport-class aircraft that could enter service during the 2030s. The D8 has since gone through two wind tunnel test campaigns, and the XD8 has completed both a System Requirements Review (SRR) and Concept Design Review (CoDR). Aurora will continue to work with this same team during the current program.

In 2016 NASA launched the "New Aviation Horizons X-Plane Initiative," one part of which is the "Ultra-Efficient Subsonic Flight Demonstrator" program. "New Aviation Horizons will demonstrate transformational configurations and technologies that will revolutionize flight and keep the U.S. at the forefront of aviation," said Associate Administrator for Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate Dr. Jaiwon Shin, discussing the program at the recent AIAA AVIATION 2017 conference.

"The recent first flight of the Chinese C919 shows other nations want to tap into the huge commercial airliner market," said Aurora Chairman and CEO John Langford. "The D8 is part of a sustained innovation initiative aimed at keeping world leadership here in the U.S."

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About Aurora Flight Sciences:

Aurora Flight Sciences is an innovative technology company which strives to create smarter aircraft through the development of versatile and intuitive autonomous systems. Operating at the intersection of technology and robotic aviation, Aurora leverages the power of autonomy to make manned and unmanned flight safer and more efficient. Headquartered in Manassas, Virginia, Aurora operates production plants in Bridgeport, West Virginia and Columbus, Mississippi, has Research and Development Centers in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dayton, Ohio and Mountain View, California, and a European office, Aurora Swiss Aerospace, located in Luzern, Switzerland. To view recent press releases and more about Aurora please visit our website at www.aurora.aero.

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