Aircelle delivers its 7,000th thrust reverser for Airbus A320ceo jetliners, and tests the initial A320neo reverser

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Aircelle (Safran) has marked two key program milestones that underscore the company's capability to deliver on high-volume production commitments as well as meeting tight development challenges. These dual milestones – which occurred at Aircelle's Le Havre, France facility – are the delivery of its 7,000th thrust reverser for Airbus A320ceo (current engine option) jetliners powered by CFM International CFM-56-5A/5B jet engines, and performance of the first test cycles with the no. 1 thrust reverser for Airbus A320neo (new engine option) jetliners powered by the CFM International LEAP-1A.

Aircelle signed the A320ceo thrust reverser production contract 30 years ago, with the program becoming a cornerstone in the company's creation of an industrial system capable of high-quality, high-rate manufacturing for flight-critical systems.

This included an expansion of its global supply chain capacity, the more extensive use of "lean" production procedures such as the development of a step-type assembly line, and the involvement of Aircelle's full facility network in France, the United Kingdom, Morocco and China. The company's track record on A320ceo thrust reversers – with output over 500 in 2013 – contributed to its selection as the complete LEAP-1A engine nacelle provider on A320neo jetliners, for which a rapid ramp-up in output is targeted to meet program scheduling.

In its new role as the complete nacelle integrator for the A320neo's LEAP-1A engine, Aircelle also will be applying its significant expertise in lean processes. On the Airbus A320ceo family, Aircelle's reversers are used on A319s, A320s and A321s powered by CFM56 engines. For the NEO, Aircelle's complete nacelle – including the thrust reverser, air inlet, cowl doors and nozzle – will be used on A319, A320 and A321 aircraft equipped with LEAP-1A engines.