

Double celebration for Airbus

Feature by Paul Tomlin

November was a notable month for Airbus Industrie and Manchester Airport.

JMC Airlines, which is headquartered at the airport, took delivery of their first Airbus A330-200 twin-engined, wide-bodied, long-haul airliner on November 9, followed five days later by the first visit of Airbus Industrie's largest and longest aircraft, the four-engined A340-600.

FIRST FOR JMC

Powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 700 engines, JMC Airlines' Airbus A330-200 arrived at Manchester Airport where it was based for a period of intensive crew training, prior to operating the airline's first A330 revenue service on November 16, from Gatwick to Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic.

Part of the Thomas Cook group, JMC Airlines is no stranger to Airbus Industrie products. The Manchester-based carrier's fleet of 29 aircraft already includes 10 of the highly popular 180-seat single-aisle, twin-engined Airbus A320 airliners, which fly holidaymakers to a wide choice of European destinations.

The A330-200 offers the most spacious cabin of any widebody jet in its class. In JMC service passengers will be offered the choice of both premium and economy class seats in a comfortable two-class layout.

Wider seats and wider aisles create a more enjoyable seating arrangement for passengers, while state-of-the-art cabin systems provide a comfortable atmosphere that reflects the commitment to passenger comfort which has become the hallmark of Airbus Industrie.

JMC Airlines will take delivery of a second A330-200 aircraft next February, which will be based at Manchester, operating to holiday destinations in the Caribbean and the US east coast.

LARGEST & LONGEST

Airbus Industrie's largest and latest airliner, the A340-600, took off from Manchester Airport shortly after noon on Wednesday, November 14, for a 15-hour non-stop proving flight as part of the aircraft's on-going certification programme. On board were 270 passengers

• The giant Airbus A340-600 takes off from Manchester Airport on November 14.

from the various divisions of BAE Systems which manufacture many of the aircraft's components, including the wings, together with Rolls-Royce employees who provided the RR Trent engines.

Departing from Manchester's second runway the aircraft headed east, crossing over Denmark and Sweden to Helsinki in Finland, here it turned north crossing the Arctic Circle to Tromsø, at the top of Norway. The aircraft then followed the Norwegian coastline down for a short distance before setting course over the North Atlantic as far as Iceland. A further course change saw the A340-600 heading south across Ireland, then Portugal, as far as Cadiz, before turning east again over Spain to Ibiza. Then it was back north again, flying over Paris and London on its way back to Manchester where it touched down in the early hours of Thursday morning.

For such a long flight the aircraft carried a double complement of Airbus Industrie pilots including Peter Chandler (captain), Patrick Baudry, Jean-Michel Proust and Nagi Absi, along with two cabin co-ordinators and a cabin crew of 14.

The aircraft, which first flew in



Photo : Paul Tomlin

line flight profile, the flights were made to examine the functioning and comfort of the cabin systems, such as air-conditioning, galleys and toilets.

The other flights in the A340-600 maturity programme featured four non-stop flights of five, seven, 10 and 14 hours duration, departing from Toulouse, Madrid and Hamburg, again all carrying Airbus employees. The lucky ones on the sixth flight on November 19 had a stopover in Mauritius, following a 15-hour flight from Toulouse, with the aircraft flying over Dakar (Senegal) and Accra

from 10 to 18 hours. Consequently the new A340 cabin has been designed to provide passengers with greater physical space via a raised ceiling and reshaped cabin contours, giving more space at shoulder and head height for passengers in the window seat, and more room below the overhead stowage bins.

Great care is also taken to ensure the quality of air more than meets the standards in terms of temperature, pressure and cleanliness. Airbus aircraft are fitted with highly efficient air filters so that air quality is high-

sengers and crew reached by a staircase from the main cabin, such as passenger lounges, under floor toilets, and crew rest areas – already in widespread A340 use. The A340-600 can be equipped with up to six lower deck lavatories and a self-contained galley complex.

ULTRA LONG RANGE

The new A340s were launched in December 1997 and will enter into airline service worldwide in mid-2002. The first A340-600 made its maiden flight on April 23, 2001, and the first flight of the 500 is sched-

• Manchester-based JMC Airlines took delivery of their first wide-bodied, long-haul A330-200 on November 9.

Whereas the A340-600 carries the most passengers, the 24ft 3ins shorter ultra-long range A340-500 is capable of transporting 313 passengers in a three-class cabin over a non-stop range of 8,650 nautical miles – farther than any other commercial jetliner in service.

The A340-600, is now approaching the halfway mark in its flight development programme, with the three participating aircraft having flown more than 700 hours in over 225 flights.

CARGO BONUS

The A340-600 is seen by Airbus Industrie as the ideal economic replacement for first-generation 400-seat aircraft. This 20-frame (over the A340-300) super-stretched A340 provides a passenger capacity similar to a 747 but with twice the under-floor cargo pallet capability, and at incomparably lower trip and seat costs.

Containerised or palletised cargo can be accommodated in both the front and rear under-floor holds as standard. This is possible due to the volume efficiency of the 222-inch fuselage cross-section that is the trademark of Airbus Industrie's wide-body design.

After allowing for full passenger baggage in containers, the A330-200 offers space for five underfloor freight pallets, more than in its two nearest competitors. This increases to eight pallets in the A330/A340-300, again beating the nearest competitor, and 10 pallets in the A340-600 – which is twice the capacity of the 747-400.



• Manchester Airport managing director John Spooner (right) welcomes Airbus director of new product communications Bob Lange (left) with Manchester Airport's general manager of airfield operations Peter Hampson in front of the giant Airbus A340-600.

September and is the third production A340-600, has been equipped with a full passenger cabin and facilities. The Manchester flight was one of a series of long range proving flights which took place last month as part of the Airbus A340-600 development programme.

Operating to a standard air-

(Ghana) on Africa's west coast, before crossing the African continent on its way for a touch-down on the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius.

CABIN COMFORT

Passenger comfort, always a prime concern for Airbus, is of particular importance on long and ultra-long haul flights lasting

er in the cabin than that specified for intensive care units.

The enhanced comfort standards of the A340-500 and 600 extend well beyond the bounds of the main cabin, thanks to the A330/A340 family's unmatched capability of using lower-deck space. The A340-500 and 600 can be equipped with innovative under floor amenities for pas-

sengers and crew reached by a staircase from the main cabin, such as passenger lounges, under floor toilets, and crew rest areas – already in widespread A340 use. The A340-600 can be equipped with up to six lower deck lavatories and a self-contained galley complex.

The high-capacity A340-600, is the longest and largest airliner built by Airbus to date, and typically carries 380 passengers in a three-class cabin layout, over a distance of up to 7,500 nautical miles. A two-class layout will accommodate a maximum of 419 passengers.



Photo : Paul Tomlin

A340-600 STATISTICS

Overall Length	246ft 11in
Cabin Length	200ft 1in
Fuselage Diameter	18ft 6in
Max. Cabin Width	17ft 4in
Height	56ft 9in
Wheelbase	107ft 11in
Track	35ft 1in
Wing Span (geometric)	208ft 2in
Max. Ramp Weight	366.2 tonnes
Max. Take-off Weight	365.0 tonnes
Max. Zero Fuel Weight	240.0 tonnes
Max. Fuel Capacity	194,880 litres
Typical Operating Weight Empty	177 tonnes
Typical Volumetric Payload	55.6 tonnes