Emission-free Volvocopter takes maiden flight

December 9 2013

Climate-KIC's volocopter start-up E-volo has raised €1.2 million in a recent crowdfunding campaign, surpassing the €500.000 mark after only two and a half hours.

E-volo's Volocopter – supported by Climate-KIC Germany – is safer, simpler, and cleaner than normal helicopters. After successfully completing its first test flight last month, it is has now raised enough funding to turn from prototype to production.

The Volocopter is an environmentally friendly and emission-free private helicopter. Instead of one combustion engine, eighteen electrically driven rotors propel it.

The Climate-KIC start-up ran its successful crowdfunding campaign on the German platform Seedmatch.

Maiden flight

The maiden flight and first test flights were conducted in the dm-arena in Karlsruhe with the prototype of the 2-person VC200 on 17 November 2013.

"There are already numerous requests for the Volocopter from around the world," said Alexander Zosel, managing director of E-volo.

The developing team of E-volo knew from the onset that the Volocopter was very easy to fly. Due to elaborate simulations at the StuttgartUniversity, they already knew that it was much more quiet than a helicopter. However, the pleasant low, rich sound and the lower-than-expected noise level caused great cheering among the E-volo team during the first flights.

Carbon lightweight design

People were eager to know whether there would be disturbing or even dangerous vibrations in the mechanic structure of the rotor plane.

"Such vibrations are a large problem for normal helicopters," stated E-volo managing director Stephan Wolf, adding that "there, the vibrations together with the deafening noise have lead to much discomfort on passenger flights in helicopters."

Due to the complex structure of the Volocopter in carbon lightweight design, it was not possible to simulate the expected vibrations in the laboratory.

"The result of the first flight created a euphoria among the entire project team." Wolf and Zosel further stated that "not even the HD video cameras secured to the exterior carbon ring of the rotor plane captured the least vibrations."

Provided by Climate-KIC

Citation: Emission-free Volvocopter takes maiden flight (2013, December 9) retrieved 26 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2013-12-emission-free-volvocopter-maiden-flight.html

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