



Press release

Bordeaux—February 01, 2022

Extended towing soon to be tested in France

ECOTUG has officially partnered with the German airport equipment manufacturer TREPEL to test its extended towing concept, AETP (Aircraft Extended Towing Procedure), in Paris. This concept is part of the search for new sustainable practices that can be applied quickly at airports. It aims to increase efficiency on the ground by towing aircraft to and from the runway, saving them from using their own engines for taxi. Proof of concept (POC) testing should begin in the first quarter of 2022 once a feasibility study has been completed. The tests will aim to demonstrate the practicality of extended engine-off towing of heavy commercial aircrafts.

Ecotug is a group of independent consultants established in 2020 by Malik Chabi, a long-haul airline Captain with extensive experience on medium and large aircraft (B777, B787). As part of the development of the AETP, Ecotug has actively sought a suitable and motivated partner to test it. This month, German manufacturer TREPEL AIRPORT EQUIPMENT GmbH has joined the effort to carry out a POC. It will take place early this year, as soon as a partner airport and airline has been found. The ADP (Aéroports de Paris) group, itself committed to the search for sustainable practices, was approached and informed of the project. The use of one of its airport platforms is now being considered.

The AETP will be made possible thanks in part to the use of a developed type of towbarless tug, such as the CHARGER 380 from TREPEL. More powerful and benefiting from new technology, this model will be able to efficiently and safely handle most medium and large aircraft.

While Ecotug believes AETP is the future, it has yet to be demonstrated in the field to show its advantages and feasibility. This is the objective of the POC : Put theory into practice and collect

valuable data. To aid in concept launch, AETP could be implemented in a flexible way (applied to a percentage of flights for example), to better integrate into the complex ecosystem that is a major international airport. The operation must also assess the adequacy of airport infrastructure for the application.

At a time when the air transport sector has been challenged to embark on the road to decarbonization, at a time when higher energy costs threaten profit, and at a time when new energy sources (Expensive Bio Fuel like SAF, H2, EV etc.) will make pre-flight energy preservation more important, extended towing can provide a sustainable solution.

As a final step before the full-scale test, Ecotug is seeking one or more partner airlines (ideally freight and passengers) to participate in the POC. This is essential to launching the AETP—A concept which, if proven, could revolutionize aircraft ground movements and move us closer to being a carbon neutral industry.

Contact us.

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