ASCENT AEROSPACE PRODUCES LAY-UP TOOLS FOR A350 XWB COMPOSITE WING SKINS

News / Manufacturer

Coast Composites LLC, an **Ascent Aerospace** company, has been contracted to produce a sixth set of wing skin molds for the Airbus **A350 XWB**. Following Coast Composites' delivery of the first set for the A350-1000 in May, Airbus announced the completion of the first production wings in August.

Ascent Tooling Group, comprised of Coast Composites and sister companies Odyssey Industries and Global Tooling Systems, also produced tooling for segments of the fuselage and nacelles – in total, more than 70% of the A350 XWB's outer surface – as well as the center wingbox and 100% of the stringers and frame.

According to Klaus Koester, Vice President and General Manager of Coast Composites, "Ascent's modular tool building system makes it possible to efficiently deliver the largest, highest quality tools in the industry to anywhere in the world." Coast Composites has developed a unique system for building extra-large Invar tools, based on the company's patented "deep penetration" laser welding technology.

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Wing skin tool segments for the A350 XWB are manufactured of Invar and shipped to Airbus facilities in Spain and Germany, then assembled onsite. Ascent's traveling laser-welding robot minimizes the heat-affected zone and does not introduce high thermal loads into the structure. This eliminates distortion, shrinkage and, most importantly, the requirement for post-heat treating. The 32-meter finished tool can be joined in a vacuum tight weld in a matter of hours.

Coast Composites' core competencies center on metallic and composite lay-up molds and cure tools to produce flight-critical structures of legacy and next generation airframes. For more information, visit http://aipaerospace.com/coastcompositeshome.

20 OCTOBER 2015

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