SIKORSKY - PZL MIELEC PREPARES MULTIROLE M28 AIRPLANE FOR TRANSATLANTIC LEG OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN TOUR

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Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company and its affiliate PZL Mielec are finalizing an M28 short takeoff and landing airplane for its transatlantic flight from southeast Poland to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Once in the region, the 7,500 kg (16,500 lb.) twin turboprop airplane will demonstrate to interested militaries and commercial transport its ability to move people and cargo into short, unpaved or underdeveloped airstrips. The tour begins in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago on March 17, 2017 before visiting 12 other cities through mid-May across Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama and Mexico.

Engineers at PZL Mielec have given the newly built airplane — serial number AJE00347 — its final coat of paint, and the necessary equipment that will showcase the plane's quick conversion to passenger configuration, paratroop, cargo transport or casualty evacuation.

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PZL pilots and aircrew will fly the aircraft from Mielec, Poland, on February 24 to Denmark, then begin the maritime leg to Scotland and Iceland. The aircraft arrives in Kulusuk, Greenland on February 28 after 2,164 nm and approximately 10 hours of transatlantic flying.

"The westward transatlantic crossing in mid-winter is just one example of extreme weather flying for this rugged and reliable M28 airplane," said Mariusz Kubryn, M28 chief designer. "By the end of the demonstration tour in Latin America this spring, the aircraft will have flown 14,500 km over mountain ranges and oceans, taken off and landed on jungle and island airstrips, and shown its ability to perform under hot and icing conditions."

The M28 aircraft is certified by Brazil's ANAC, and by EASA and the FAA to perform in minus 50°C to 50°C temperatures. The airframe's ice protection system is certified for flight into known icing conditions.

A high-lift wing, two 1,100 shp (820 kW) Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6-65B turboprop engines, and thrust-reversing propellers give the airplane unique short takeoff and landing capabilities. With a maximum payload of 2,300 kg (5,000 lb), the M28 can take off and land on rough airstrips just 548 meters (1,800 ft.) long.

"When you combine the maneuverability of the M28 with its large cabin and clamshell rear doors, this airplane has the power and payload to fly very different mission profiles," noted Adam Schierholz, Sikorsky's regional executive for Latin America. "Militaries and commercial airlines across Latin America and the Caribbean have expressed tremendous interest in the diverse and unique capabilities of this exceptional airplane."

To learn more about the M28 aircraft and the Caribbean and Latin America tour, please link to www.m28aircraft.com.

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