

## Dornier Seastar 'New Generation' Completes First Flight

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*The Dornier Seastar CD2 prototype made its first flight on March 28.*

Dornier's prototype (SN1003) of its New Generation Seastar CD2 turboprop amphibious aircraft achieved its first flight on March 28 at the company's headquarters at Oberpfaffenhofen Airport, Germany. The aircraft received approval to start test flights on March 19 from EASA and Germany's LBA, almost a year behind its original schedule.

The flight was performed by a Dornier Seawings test crew and took 31 minutes, the company reported. "The first flight was completed successfully and confirmed the nice handling qualities of the Seastar," said chief test pilot Wolfram Cornelius. "All systems functioned correctly. The advanced avionic system reflects the state-of-the-art in cockpit design and is a good baseline for future development."

According to Dornier, the Seastar is being targeted at operators who wish to "enhance short to medium-haul trips with lower cost and flight time but higher safety and capacity, efficiently connecting land and sea through the sky." Certification is targeted by year-end, followed by service entry next year.

Dornier noted that the New Generation Seastar is "significantly improved from the original Seastar, which was designed and developed by Claudius Dornier Jr. in the 1980s." It made its first flight on August 17, 1984, but no examples were delivered. The current Seastar design has a Honeywell Primus Epic 2.0 glass cockpit (with four 10-inch LCD displays), two in-line PT6A-135A engines delivering 650-shp each (flat rated) driving two MT-Propeller propellers, resulting in a maximum cruise speed of 180 ktas and maximum range of 900 nm. The takeoff distance on land is 2,244 feet, and stall speed 66 knots in landing configuration (on land). The aircraft's mtow is 11,240 pounds (5,100 kg), and it can carry up to 397 pounds of baggage.

The Seastar has a composite airframe (ideal for operations at sea to minimise corrosion) supplied by Diamond Aircraft from its Canadian plant. The wing is a single continuous structure with three-spar fail-safe design.

With the one pilot that is required, the cabin can be arranged in a nine-seat corporate configuration that is upgradeable to 12 seats using a triple seat bench. A seven-seat VIP configuration is also available.

In addition, the Seastar is being aimed at multi-mission markets, including "coastal surveillance, patrolling, environmental control, fisheries protection, emergency medical services, search and rescue, drug interdiction, and disaster relief, to name a few," according to Dornier.

Getting this far has been possible, to a great degree, due to new Chinese investors coming on board in 2013. Dornier Seawings Germany is owned by the Dornier family (15 per cent) and Dornier Seawings China (85 per cent). In turn, Dornier Seawings China is owned by the Dornier family (35 per cent); Wuxi Industry Development Group (20 per cent); and Wuxi Communications Industry Group (45 per cent).