

PRESS RELEASE

Nouméa, 10 July 2026

First AIRCALIN A350-900 enters final assembly at Airbus in Toulouse: its vertical tail now wears the airline's new colours

AIRCALIN reaches another major milestone in strengthening its long-haul fleet. The first of its two Airbus A350-900s has entered the Final Assembly Line (FAL) at Airbus' Toulouse-Blagnac site. In a highly visible and symbolic first, its vertical tail already carries AIRCALIN's new livery, featuring the new hibiscus flower, the airline's emblem.



The vertical tail of AIRCALIN's first A350-900, painted in the airline's new colours, at station 40 of the Airbus FAL in Toulouse-Blagnac. © Airbus / AIRCALIN

"The delivery of our first Airbus A350-900 next December marks a historic moment for Aircalin and a tremendous opportunity for New Caledonia. Now recognized as the global benchmark for long-haul air travel, the A350 is one of the most sought-after aircraft among airlines. Its reliability, performance, fuel efficiency, and passenger comfort make it an exceptional aircraft. An airline ordering it today would have to wait nearly ten years before delivery. Having a delivery slot as early as this year therefore represents an exceptional strategic opportunity. Thanks to this proven aircraft, Aircalin is strengthening its competitiveness, enhancing the passenger experience, and expanding its carrying capacity — particularly in cargo — for the benefit of New Caledonia's economy. More than an investment in a modern, high-performing fleet, the A350 is an investment in the future of New Caledonia, in its openness to the world, its attractiveness, and its economic development." **Georges Selefen, CEO and Chariman of the Board Aircalin**

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A350-900: assembly milestones

Assembly of the AIRCALIN A350 is the result of a pan-European industrial chain: the fuselage, tail, wings and flight systems, as well as seats and cabin equipment, have converged in recent weeks at the manufacturer's Final Assembly Line (FAL) in Toulouse.

The vertical tail fin was painted beforehand in AIRCALIN's new colours, then installed by Airbus teams at station 40.

Assembly is now following a precise schedule, leading to delivery of the aircraft in December 2026:

L'assemblage de l'A350 AIRCALIN est le fruit d'une chaîne industrielle européenne : fuselage,

- June : Assembly of the tail and wings onto the fuselage.
- July : Installation of landing gear doors, cabin fit-out, ground tests.
- August : Full aircraft painting and engine installation.
- September : Continued cabin fit-out, followed by the first flight tests.
- October — Flight tests.
- December 2026 — Delivery.

Delivery of the aircraft is scheduled for December 2026, ahead of a gradual entry into commercial service on the airline's routes.

An industrial asset serving New Caledonia

The arrival of the A350-900 represents a major industrial asset for AIRCALIN, supporting its flagship Nouméa-Paris route currently operated with the A330neo, as well as a driver of economic development for New Caledonia.

- **An investment with no impact on public finances** : the acquisition of this first aircraft involves no financing from New Caledonia's budget, whether through direct funding, subsidy, surety or bank guarantee.
- **Range and connectivity** : the A350-900 will improve the operation of extra-long-haul flights and strengthen the network, particularly on the routes to Bangkok and Paris.
- **Economic competitiveness** : more fuel-efficient, it reduces operating costs while improving environmental performance. It also offers a gain of +15% in cargo capacity and +12% in passenger capacity, supporting import-export activity and tourism flows.
- **Value creation** : the A350 project will create 150 local jobs by 2028, in addition to purchases from local suppliers across the value chain.

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A technological and capacity leap for the AIRCALIN fleet

The A350-900 will be the first aircraft of its type to join the AIRCALIN fleet, currently made up of two A330neos and two A320neos, and will deliver performance particularly well suited to the Paris route.

A350 performance at a glance :

	Seats by class	32 Hibiscus (Business) 24 Premium 269 Economy
<i>Total passenger capacity</i>		325
<i>Cargo capacity</i>		15 tonnes
<i>Range</i>		15000 km
<i>Flight endurance</i>		16 hours
<i>Fuel consumption reduction</i>		Up to 25% (vs A330neo)
<i>CO2 emissions</i>		-25% per seat
<i>Engines</i>		Rolls Royce Trent XWB

Purpose-built for long-haul routes, this aircraft is made of advanced materials (including composites), combined with advanced aerodynamics and next-generation engines. This combination delivers a significant reduction in fuel consumption and emissions.

It also offers enhanced comfort for passengers and crew alike, with reduced noise levels and one of the quietest cabins in its category, thanks to improved cabin pressurisation and air quality. On the flight deck, the cockpit is fully digitalised, offering improved readability of flight data through touchscreens and more powerful decision-support systems.

An airline in full preparation mode

The arrival of an aircraft of this scale involves a thorough preparation phase within AIRCALIN, already under way since 2025:

- **Crew training** : cabin crew and pilots are following dedicated programmes, including A350 simulator sessions, theoretical training and training flights, notably in partnership with French airline French Bee.
- **Upskilling technical teams** : maintenance and ground operations teams are being trained on the aircraft's specific features, its engines (in cooperation with Airbus) and its onboard systems.

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- **New technological tools :** AIRCALIN is also adapting its operations, planning and fleet management tools to integrate this new aircraft into its daily operations.
- **Reimagined passenger experience :** cabins, seats and onboard services are being redesigned to offer a new inflight experience in line with long-haul standards.

Designed to operate the extra-long-haul Nouméa-Paris route, the A350-900 is the industrial asset that will allow AIRCALIN to fully play its role in support of the territory's economy and of connectivity across the Pacific.

About AIRCALIN

AIRCALIN is New Caledonia's international airline. With 10 routes operated in its own name and a network of 100 destinations, it connects New Caledonia to Asia, the Pacific and mainland France. An IATA member and IOSA certified, Aircalin operates a fleet of two Airbus A330neo and two Airbus A320neo aircraft, soon to be joined by two A350-900s. Founded in 1983 and employing 500 staff, Aircalin is the only French airline connecting all of France's Pacific overseas territories, while also offering them a direct link to Asia and Europe.

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