

## **STÉPHANE VIALA APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING & PROGRAM AT ASCENDANCE FLIGHT TECHNOLOGIES**



**Ascendance Flight Technologies, the French start-up specializing in aviation decarbonization, announced the appointment of Stéphane Viala as Director of Engineering & Program. As of February 1, 2023, he will oversee the technical management of the young aircraft manufacturer's two flagship programs: the STERNA modular hybrid propulsion system and the hybrid-electric VTOL aircraft ATEA.**

This aeronautical engineer from ISAE-ENSMA also holds a PhD in turbulence modelling from SUPAERO/ONERA. He was previously SVP Engineering and Head Of Design Organization of French-Italian aircraft manufacturer ATR, which he joined in 2015.

Before being appointed by ATR, he had been in various leading positions at Airbus for 16 years. He first headed the Aerodynamic Methods and A350 Flight Dynamics teams before leading the A30X Flight Physics and Flight Dynamics integrated team. He also defined products evolution, multidisciplinary methods and technology in R&T Programs during 4 years, as head of Overall aircraft Design, encompassing flight physics, engine, Flight Test Bed and Methods and Tools perimeter. He was the A320 incremental development chief Engineer before joining ATR. He holds several patents in the aerospace field and has published several technical articles.

His technical knowledge, 360° integration skills and wide experience in all segments of aviation, paired with his comprehensive understanding of the aeronautical market will be key to the development and promotion of Ascendance Flight Technologies' sustainable flight solutions.



**Stéphane Viala - Director of Engineering & Program:** *"I am excited to be part of such an innovative and differentiating project. My commitment to bringing clean aircraft to the skies and my growing interest in the potential of hybrid propulsion have led me to closely follow Ascendance's progress. I am impressed with what the team has achieved so far. The project is sound and credible in terms of segment and purpose, and the growing number of LOIs reflects that. The team is highly skilled, and I share their vision that hybridization is key to a fast and efficient transition towards green aviation. I am delighted to spearhead the technical development of both STERNA and ATEA, and look forward to meeting our next goals: to make aeronautical industry benefit from our STERNA hybridization technology, and to fly, certify and industrialize our ATEA aircraft."*

Ascendance's vision and achievements have steadily attracted high profile professionals with extensive experience in the aeronautical industry. Viala's appointment follows the recent arrival of François Caudron, ex-Senior Vice President Marketing and CMO of Airbus as Special Advisor Business. Robert Lafontan, former Senior Vice President of Engineering at Airbus joined the team in 2021 as Executive Technical Advisor.

**Jean-Christophe Lambert, CEO:** *"We are thrilled to welcome Stéphane Viala. He is a consummate professional who performed in all the development & lifecycle phases of an aircraft, from the advanced projects and fly tests to the production and global fleet management. His experience in the field of innovative aviation, as well as his aircraft architect view, will be essential in leading our technical development. We are committed to rapidly deliver the best decarbonization solutions to the aerospace industry and having Stéphane on board is an incredible value to the team and a major step towards our goals."*

## > ABOUT ASCENDANCE FLIGHT TECHNOLOGIES

Founded in 2018 by Jean-Christophe Lambert, Thibault Baldivia, Clément Dinel and Benoît Ferran, Ascendance Flight Technologies is a start-up that has set itself the mission of decarbonizing aviation. Established in 2020 in the heart of Toulouse, the European aeronautics capital, it is developing two products: an innovative hybrid propulsion system called STERNA and a vertical take-off and landing aircraft (VTOL) fitted with this technology, called ATEA.

STERNA is the future of regional aviation and will be the first aircraft equipped with STERNA. With a capacity of 4 to 5 seats, this vertical take-off and landing aircraft is designed as a low-carbon, quiet and efficient alternative to the helicopter. With its 400-km endurance and reduced noise emissions, it perfectly addresses a regional & decentralized use: in passenger transportation, tourism, medical emergencies, logistics and surveillance.

ATEA is the hybrid propulsion technology which unlocks cleaner aviation. STERNA's innovative electric architecture and embedded intelligence allow for simultaneous use of several energy sources. STERNA is modular and scalable, so it can accommodate a thermal module or new hydrogen solutions, helping drive energy transformation in the aviation industry. The company has filed several patents on these technologies.

[www.ascendance-ft.com](http://www.ascendance-ft.com)



## > PRESS CONTACT

Amélie Jolivet  
a.jolivet@giesbert-mandin.fr  
+33(0)7 85 53 50 05