Aircraft test of

ATR72-500

Aircraft created by Flight1

The ATR-72, built by the French-Italian aircraft manufacturer ATR, is a twin-engine turboprop short-haul regional airliner operated by a two-pilot crew. It seats up to 78 passengers, and is built in Toulouse, France, where it shares resources and technology with Airbus.

To increase seating capacity from the 42-version, ATR developed the 72-version, where the fuselage was stretched by 4,5 meter (15ft). Also the wingspan was increased and ATR configured the aircraft with more powerful engines that has a better fuel consumption and finally increased the fuel capacity with app. 10%.

Specs:

Manufacturer	_ATR_
First Flight	_27 October 1988_
Introduction	_27 October 1989 (Finnair)_
Role	_Regional Airliner_
Status	_In revenue service_
Primary user	_American Eagle_
	TRIP Linhas Aéreas
	Kingfisher Airliner
	Jet Airways
	Binter Canarias
	Vietnam Airlines
Number Built	_508_
Unit Cost	_US$ 16,5 – 20 million_
	(average 2008 dollars)

I purchased this add-on at the Flight1 website. The purchase and download was without any issues. Installation was no problem either – just follow the installation wizard. It took some time due to the file size, but I didn't have any problems at all.

The exterior model is very well made with many fine details. It features a lot of animations and effects as e.g. moving control surfaces, prop (including reverse thrust effect), doors, gear + suspension and much more.

When going to the interior, you have a full animated cabin, where you can also choose a passengers wing view. Here is also animated the shutter for the window. Of cause you cannot enjoy your view out the window if the shutter is down, but anyway it is an extra feature. Nice.

The Flight1 ATR-72 has both a full 2D cockpit, but also a complete virtual cockpit. Both are extremely detailed and complex. You have the possibility to fly both from the captain's seat, but also the first officer's seat. You can also select weather you want the brown cockpit version or the light blue cockpit version. You also get a lot of

mini-panels that you can select in the 2D cockpit, simply just by clicking the icon. This will help you control all features included in the ATR. There are animated and programmed I think 98% of all systems that would be in the real ATR, and to find out how to e.g. start-up the ATR from cold-dark, you defiantly need to go through the manual.

The procedures are made very realistic, and it is a pleasure to go through a complete start-up from cold dark. This can be selected in a menu before starting the FS9/FSX.

The soundset is very good, and you can especially hear the change in engine-sound when using the reverse thrust. The engines spools as in real life – it is indeed a turbo prop = behavior is similar to jet, with a delay from throttling up to that the engines are increasing the power. This is simulated and animated very well, and it means that you have to plan ahead to avoid any issues e.g. regarding landing. This helps create more realism in the add-on.

In both the 2D and the virtual cockpit, you will also find a fully working overhead panel. This is a very cool feature, but to be able to use all panels optimal, you do need to find the manual, and go step by step. The complexity of the systems here, are really realistic and very well made.

Together with the model from Flight1, you also get a selection manager, where you can select passenger seating, fuel load, cargo load, type of cockpit (blue/brown), to start at cold/dark, or with power on or with engines up and running, ready for taxi and much more.

Also included in the download is an install wizard for liveries. There are not many liveries in the pack, but you can find them all over the internet – normally free of charge, and the install wizard will do all the work for you. You just give it some input, and press install. This is very helpful if you don't like to do it your self, or are uncertain if you are doing it the right way.

I really enjoy flying the ATR-72, and have now simmed it for more hours then I can count. This is really a high quality add-on and it is worth all the money. You get a very realistic and well build model, with numerous active and professional made systems including manual, loading configuration manager, the possibility to start on 3 different levels and the livery installation wizard.

My first test was a short flight from Karup Airport, Denmark (EKKA) to Kastrup Airport, Denmark (EKCH). I started out with the configuration, engines running and ready for taxi. In this flight I tested the flight dynamics and the overall of all cockpit systems – here both 2D and VC.

This ATR-72 is not that difficult to fly, and you catch on very quickly. Only problem I had, was actually to understand the autopilot correctly – this took me quite some time, but when you finally understand how it works, then it is a very nice tool to use, though I would prefer the 737 or 747 autopilot versions.

My second test flight was to get more familiar with the aircraft. I made several take-offs and landings including taxi to and from parking/gates and runways. I did this at Billund Airport, Denmark (EKBI) for more then 1½ hours and really got a nice feeling with the ATR.

My third test flight was from Princess Juliana Airport on St. Maarten (TNCM) to Port-Au-Prince, Haiti (MTPP). This flight I used to try out the different seating and loading configurations. What I discovered was, that there were not a big difference, but it did seem like the aircraft was lighter on landing when using the configuration of empty versus full of passengers and cargo.

My fourth third test flight was a test flight where I wanted to make it as real as possible, so I chose to start with the cold and dark version, and then go through all start-up procedures. I flew from Papeete (Faa'a), Tahiti (NTAA)

to Motu Mute, Bora Bora (NTTB) and followed all procedures from start-up, to taxiing, take-off, after take-off check to in flight – here both climbing and descending and to approach, landing, taxi to gate and the complete shutdown. This was a shot flight, but it took a long time, because all systems are so well modeled. You really need to be ahead and study the check list and procedures very closely.

On my fifth test flight I wanted to check how the ATR was to fly during the night. Here I found absolutely no issues, and the animated lights on this bird are also very nice. No problem with the interior lighting of instruments, and no problem with exterior lightings such as the landing and taxi lights.

I believe that simmers on all levels will be able to fly this bird. If you don't like all the procedures and to go through a check list, then just start with the engine running, ready for taxi, and then everyone can use it. The flight dynamics are as I think you could expect. A little slow on the ailerons, but then quite quick on the elevator.

There is only one downside in my opinion, and that is that the quality is so high, that it will have an impact on your frames. To fly this bird with all settings at max and fair scenery, you need to have as minimum a medium end computer, otherwise you will have a "hacking" experience, because the computer (GPU and CPU) will not have sufficient power.

I rate this add-on 5/5-Star because it is simply superb, and the complexity of the cockpit is so realistic. All this combined with a high quality model, high quality textures and a very realistic soundset, contributes to give the simmer an exceptional experience.

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