

SNECMA C450 Coléoptère

The Coléoptère was one of a number of experiments conducted into vertical take off and landing aeroplanes during the 1950s. Like most other experiments in this field, it failed.

SNECMA (the Société National d'Etude et de Construction de Moteurs d'Aviation) became interested in jet engines for vertical take off and landing flight in the 1950s. It produced a series of test models including a small test vehicle and a vertically mounted jet engine. Following these experiments SNECMA designed a full scale test vehicle with a revolutionary annular wing. The airframe was constructed by Nord. The complete aeroplane made its first hovering flight on 17 April 1959. On 25 July, during a flight in which the aeroplane was to attempt a partial transition to horizontal flight, it went out of control and crashed. The pilot ejected safely but that was the end of that.

This model represents the only Coléoptère in 1959.

Data: Experimental vertical takeoff aircraft. *Engine* one SNECMA Atar 101 turbojet engine of 3700kg (8156lb) thrust. *Wing span* an annular wing of 3.20m (10ft 6in) external diameter. *Length* 8.02m (22ft). *Maximum take-off weight* 3000kg (6614lb). Crew 1.

Mach 2 1/72 kit. Completed in July 2004.



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