

MRO^{360°}



NO LONGER NEW – STILL FLYING

Component support for ageing aircraft

MYTHBUSTERS

Scheduled maintenance
prevents all failures?

IT ALL STARTED WITH ONE JT8D

The history of Willis Lease Finance Corp.

THE FUTURE HAS ARRIVED

AI in aircraft maintenance



Dear Industry Colleagues,

There is no doubt that delays in the delivery of new aircraft are creating a number of problems down the line. One in particular is the need for carriers to extend the life of their existing fleets. The knock-on effect here is the need for MROs to provide the necessary support for these aircraft as well as those new jets as they come off the production line. Our article *Component Support for Ageing Aircraft* takes a closer look at the challenges faced.

On a totally different tack, our second feature article, *AI in Aircraft Maintenance*, looks at the introduction of artificial intelligence in the MRO workspace and questions whether it is being introduced too quickly. Has it yet proven itself to be safe enough to involve it in certain aspects of an industry sector where there is zero room for error?

Our 'Mythbusters' article this month is *Scheduled Maintenance Prevents All Failures* where we debunk the myth, primarily because there will never be a time when all aircraft parts will never fail.

Finally, we have an excellent selection of features and contributions from our subscribers including a company interview with Aeras Aviation and a white paper entitled *A Revolution in Base Maintenance Intelligence for MROs* from MRO-PRO.

As always, I hope you enjoy this month's issue.

Torsten Tamm
Publisher

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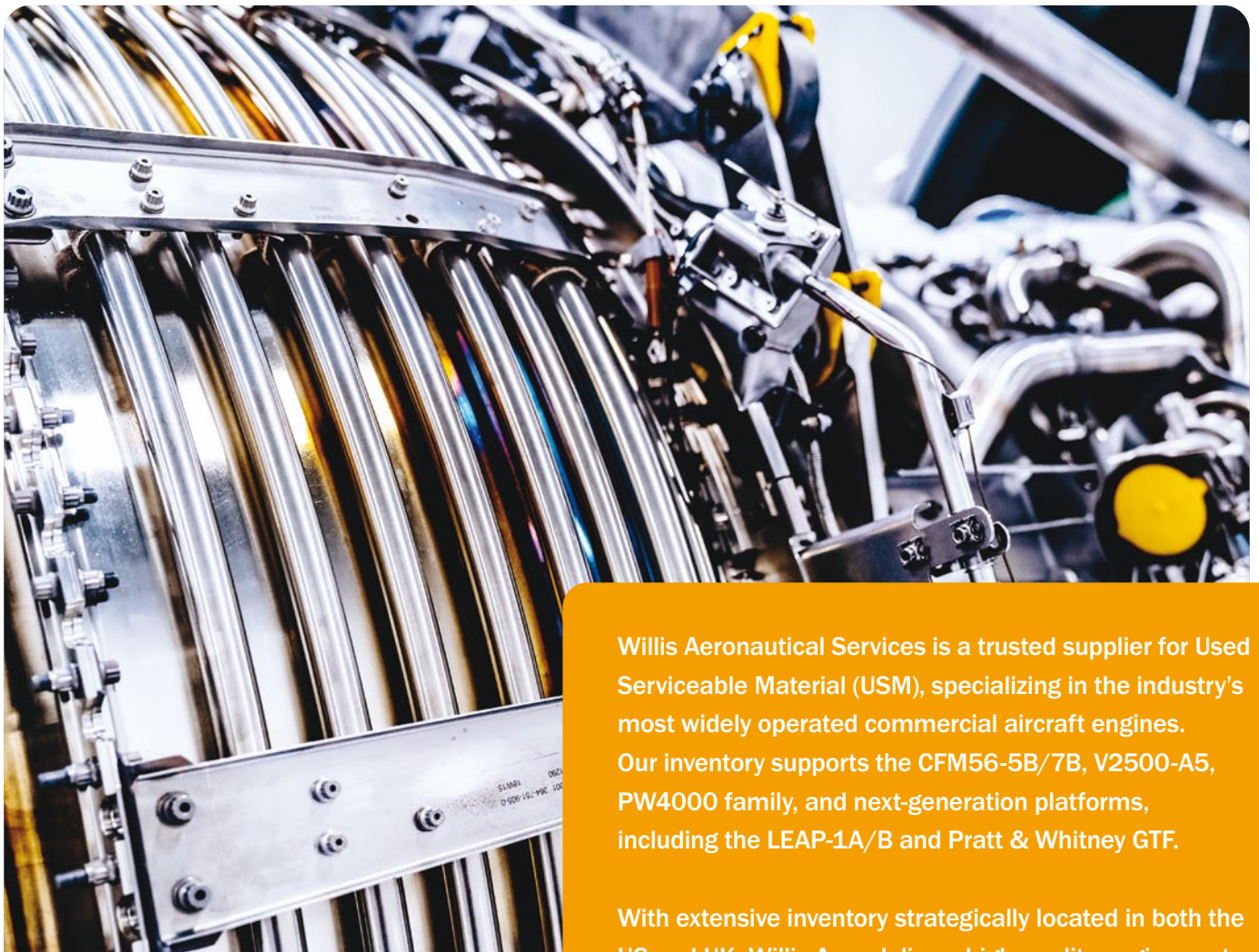




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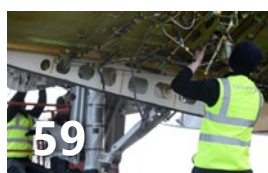
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Component Support for Ageing Aircraft



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StandardAero lands Precision Air PW127M MRO deal

StandardAero has secured an exclusive, multi-year contract from Tanzania's Precision Air to provide maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services for the Pratt & Whitney Canada PW127M engines powering the airline's ATR fleet. The agreement covers the PW127M turboprops installed across Precision Air's nine ATR 42-500/600 and ATR 72-500 aircraft, extending a long-standing partnership between the Tanzanian carrier and StandardAero. StandardAero will provide engine MRO services from its overhaul facilities in Summerside, Canada, and Gonesse, France, with additional support from its service centre in Nairobi, Kenya. The company is the world's largest independent Pratt & Whitney Canada-authorized PW100 Designated Overhaul Facility and has supported PW100 operators for more than 40 years.



StandardAero will provide MRO services for the PW127M turboprops powering ATR 42-500/600 and ATR 72-500 platforms
© Precision Air

It became the engine family's first independent MRO provider in 1984. Precision Air Head of Maintenance Christian Shirima said the renewed agreement builds on StandardAero's support across hot-section inspections, overhauls, leased engines and unscheduled shop visits. He added that Precision Air plans to further integrate StandardAero's engine programmes into its ATR maintenance planning and quality systems, including coordinated scheduling and technical data exchange. The carrier will also align engine maintenance activity and technical updates with its Approved Training Organization, helping ensure technicians and flight crews receive up-to-date instruction on engine systems, troubleshooting and safety procedures.

ST Engineering lifts H1 profit 27% as revenue hits SG\$6.57bn



© ST Engineering

ST Engineering has reported revenue of SG\$6.57bn for the first half (H1) of 2026, up 11% year-on-year from SG\$5.92bn, driven by growth across all three of its business segments. Earnings growth outpaced revenue growth across the group. EBIT increased 23% to SG\$738m from SG\$602m, while profit before tax rose 30% to SG\$651m from SG\$500m.

Net profit climbed 27% to SG\$512m from SG\$403m. On a rebased basis, group revenue and EBIT increased 14% and 27%, respectively. ST Engineering attributed the performance to a more favourable business mix and disciplined execution. Stronger earnings and favourable working capital movements also boosted cash generation, with

operating cash flow rising 26% to SG\$960m from SG\$761m. Commercial Aerospace revenue increased 15% to SG\$2.69bn from SG\$2.35bn in H1, driven by higher revenue from engine MRO, nacelles and spares sales. EBIT rose 29% to SG\$288m from SG\$223m, supported by higher revenue, a more favourable product mix and productivity savings. Defence & Public Security revenue grew 7% to SG\$2.82bn from SG\$2.65bn, with contributions from all sub-segments. EBIT increased 10% to SG\$404m from SG\$367m. On a rebased basis, revenue and EBIT grew 14% and 16%, respectively. Urban Solutions & Satcom revenue climbed 15% in H1 to SG\$1.06bn from SG\$921m, with Urban Solutions up 14% and Satcom up 18%. Segment EBIT rose to SG\$46m from SG\$12m a year earlier, reflecting higher revenue and an improved margin mix. ST Engineering said Satcom delivered stronger first-half revenue in line with guidance issued in February, while its cost initiatives remained on track.
(US\$1.00 = SG\$1.28 at time of publication)

GA-ATS adds TrakkaCam to Do228 NXT

General Atomics AeroTec Systems (GA-ATS) has partnered with Sweden's TRAKKA Systems to offer the TrakkaCam TC-375 imaging system as an integrated equipment option for the Do228 NXT. The agreement expands the sensor and mission equipment portfolio available for the German manufacturer's next-generation multi-purpose aircraft, which completed its first flight and made its public debut in June 2026. The gyro-stabilised TrakkaCam TC-375 is a multispectral imaging system designed for surveillance and reconnaissance missions. It provides full-HD imagery



The TrakkaCam is a multispectral imaging system designed for surveillance and reconnaissance missions

© GA-ATS

during day and night operations and supports real-time detection and identification of targets. The system can capture high-resolution imagery and video for applications requiring rapid in-mission decision-making. GA-ATS is positioning the Do228 NXT, the latest generation of the Dornier 228, for a range of special-mission applications. The TRAKKA partnership adds another sensor option as the manufacturer expands the aircraft's mission capabilities.

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Royal Jordanian picks Ramco for aviation software upgrade



Sandesh Bilagi, Chief Executive Officer, Ramco Systems (l) and Samer Majali, Vice Chairman/ CEO of Royal Jordanian Airlines (r), during the signing ceremony © Ramco Systems

Royal Jordanian Airlines has selected Ramco Systems (Ramco) to provide a new aviation software platform as the carrier modernises its fleet and expands its network. The Jordanian flag carrier chose Ramco's next-generation aviation software following an evaluation of competing global systems. The platform

will cover engineering and continuing airworthiness management (CAMO), line and hangar maintenance, shop operations, supply chain management, safety and compliance, and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) and parts sales. Ramco said the system will centralise technical documentation and

reporting while giving Royal Jordanian real-time visibility across maintenance and engineering operations. Digital task cards, mobile applications and dashboards will also support a shift towards paperless operations. The software will be integrated with Royal Jordanian's existing IT systems to allow data to flow across operational functions. Royal Jordanian Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Samer Majali said digital transformation was a key part of the airline's growth strategy as it modernises its fleet and expands its network. "We are committed to investing in advanced technologies that enhance operational performance, improve efficiency and support the highest standards of safety," Majali said. Ramco Systems Chief Executive Sandesh Bilagi said the platform would help Royal Jordanian simplify its maintenance and engineering operations as the airline grows. He added that Ramco's investment in technologies including artificial intelligence and agentic automation would support greater operational resilience.

AerFin, Lufthansa Technik strike component deal

AerFin and Lufthansa Technik have signed a new multi-platform component agreement aimed at improving material availability and providing greater flexibility across the aviation supply chain. Under the agreement, AerFin will provide Lufthansa Technik with access to serviceable material covering a range of Airbus and Boeing aircraft, including the A320ceo, A320neo and A330 families, as well as the Boeing 737NG, 737 MAX and 777. The partnership is designed to strengthen Lufthansa Technik's component support network as the aviation aftermarket continues to face supply chain and material availability pressures. Berit Plewinsky, Vice President Aircraft Component Services at Lufthansa Technik, said the company was seeking trusted partners to develop solutions that improve component availability and support seamless flight operations for customers.



AerFin and Lufthansa Technik signing the multi-platform component consignment agreement © AerFin

Setna iO acquires A320neo for teardown



Setna iO has acquired an Airbus A320neo airframe for teardown

© Setna iO

Setna iO has acquired a 2019-vintage Airbus A320neo airframe and two sets of Pratt & Whitney PW1100G quick engine change (QEC) components. The aircraft, which features latest-generation avionics, cockpit systems and flight control technology, will be dismantled at ecube Solutions' facility in Castellón, Spain. The QEC packages include two integrated drive generators (IDGs), two

IDG quick attach/detach units (QADs), two hydraulic pumps and a range of other line-replaceable units (LRUs). Components recovered from the aircraft will be distributed through Setna's network as used serviceable material or following repair, supplying airlines, lessors and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) providers worldwide. Setna founder and chief executive

David Chaimovitz said the acquisition would expand the company's inventory of material available to its global customers. "This acquisition represents an excellent opportunity to deliver valuable material to airlines, lessors and MROs around the world," Chaimovitz said.

AkzoNobel shareholders back Axalta merger

AkzoNobel shareholders have overwhelmingly approved all resolutions related to the proposed all-share merger with Axalta at an Extraordinary General Meeting, clearing a major milestone in the transaction. Shareholders endorsed the merger, changes to the Articles of Association, the share issuance linked to the deal, proposed board appointments and the remuneration policy. Axalta

shareholders also approved the merger at a separate meeting. With shareholder approvals secured, the transaction moves to the next phase. Completion remains subject to regulatory clearances and customary closing conditions, with the merger expected to be finalised by the end of 2026 or early 2027. AkzoNobel CEO Greg Poux-Guillaume said the vote provides a clear mandate

to create a stronger, more innovative global coatings leader. Supervisory Board Chair Ben Noteboom said the backing reflects shareholder confidence in the companies' growth ambitions and allows them to focus on completing the merger and unlocking its combined potential.

Avolon launches US\$1.5bn commercial paper programme

Avolon Holdings has established a US\$1.5 billion commercial paper programme through its wholly owned subsidiary, Avolon Aerospace Leasing Limited (AALL), to diversify its funding sources and strengthen access to short-term capital. Under the programme, AALL may issue unsecured commercial paper notes with a total outstanding principal amount of up to US\$1.5

billion. The notes will be fully and unconditionally guaranteed by Avolon and certain subsidiaries and will rank equally with the group's other unsecured and unsubordinated debt. Avolon said the programme will provide a flexible and cost-effective source of short-term funding alongside its existing revolving credit facilities. Proceeds may be used for general corporate

purposes, including aircraft acquisitions and the repayment of existing debt. The notes and related guarantees will not be registered under the US Securities Act and may only be offered or sold in the United States under an applicable exemption from registration requirements.

Universal wins Brazil approval for InSight



InSight

© Universal Avionics

Universal Avionics (Universal) has secured Brazilian certification for its InSight integrated flight display system, extending the avionics suite's global approval footprint. Brazil's National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC) issued a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) for the installation

of InSight on the Cessna Citation VII. The certification adds to existing approvals from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The Citation VII installation combines the InSight flight

display system, including engine indication, with Universal's flight management system (FMS). Universal said the Brazilian validation will help streamline flight deck upgrades for aircraft manufacturers and service centres supporting modernisation programmes worldwide.

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Honeywell Aerospace cuts 2026 outlook after spin-off on supply chain constraints

Honeywell Aerospace lowered its full-year 2026 guidance after reporting second-quarter results following its separation from Honeywell International, saying it had aligned its forecasts with the supply chain's demonstrated capabilities at the end of the second quarter despite continued strong customer demand. The company now expects full-year organic sales growth of 4%-5%, down from its previous forecast of 7%-9%. It also reduced its pro forma standalone adjusted EBIT guidance to US\$4.35 billion-US\$4.45 billion from US\$4.65 billion-US\$4.75 billion, implying flat to 3% year-on-year growth instead of the previously expected 7%-10%. Honeywell Aerospace initiated full-year pro forma standalone adjusted earnings per share guidance of US\$7.60-US\$7.90 and maintained its second-half free cash flow forecast of US\$1.0 billion-US\$1.5 billion. Chief Executive Jim Currier said the company's successful separation marked an important milestone and positioned Honeywell Aerospace to benefit from greater financial flexibility and operational improvements. While secular demand trends across its end markets remain strong, he said supply chain constraints continued to limit output growth during the quarter. Currier said the revised outlook reflected the supply chain's performance at the end of the second quarter, while the company was taking strategic and operational measures to accelerate growth and improve financial performance. He reaffirmed Honeywell Aerospace's commitment to meeting its 2030 targets. Second-quarter

sales rose 5% year on year on both a reported and organic basis. Order backlog increased 9% to US\$18.2 billion, while trailing 12-month orders climbed 8%, led by continued strength in Defence and Space. Adjusted EBIT fell 7%, including around US\$100 million of separation-related costs and inventory obsolescence charges. Commercial Aftermarket revenue rose 8% to US\$2.0 billion, supported by broad-based demand across the installed base, including higher business aviation flight hours. Commercial Original Equipment sales increased 6% to US\$700 million as commercial air transport shipments aligned with higher customer production schedules. Defence and Space revenue rose 3% to US\$1.8 billion, with stronger domestic demand partly offset by weaker international volumes due to supply constraints and the wind-down of a restricted government programme.



© Honeywell Aerospace

EirTrade wins three new global authorisations

EirTrade Aviation Maintenance (EirTrade) has secured operational authorisations from the Bailiwick of Guernsey (2-REG), the Civil Aviation Authority of the Cayman Islands (CAACI) and the Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA) for its expanding maintenance facility at Ireland West Airport Knock. The authorisations cover aircraft operations, transitions, parking and storage, enabling the company to support aircraft registered with the three overseas aviation authorities. The authorisations follow EirTrade's expansion of its EASA Part-145 capabilities in 2025 to include the Airbus A320neo powered by PW1100 engines and the Airbus A330. The company said the move responds to demand from airlines and lessors using

the Guernsey, Cayman Islands and Bermuda aircraft registers. To obtain the approvals, EirTrade prepared maintenance organisation manual supplements, updated documentation, trained staff and authorised certifying personnel before successfully completing desktop and on-site audits by the three regulators. "The potential opportunities were realised immediately," said Jim Maguinness, Quality Manager – EirTrade Aviation. "We welcomed two aircraft into parking and storage programmes - one is 2-REG and the second is Cayman Reg. Both are new customers for EirTrade Aviation Maintenance Limited."

Pratt & Whitney Canada invests CA\$275m in Quebec manufacturing hub



Aerial view of Pratt & Whitney Canada's global headquarters in Longueuil, Quebec

© RTX

Pratt & Whitney Canada will invest CA\$275 million to expand and modernise manufacturing operations at its Longueuil, Quebec, facility, strengthening

production capacity to meet growing global demand. The investment, announced today, will be funded by Pratt & Whitney Canada with support

from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Quebec's Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Energy. The programme will enhance capabilities at the company's largest manufacturing site, where nearly 4,500 employees produce engines for regional, business and general aviation aircraft, as well as rotorcraft. Upgrades will include new automated production lines, modernised machinery and advanced digital manufacturing processes aimed at improving efficiency and production precision. "This strategic investment in Longueuil strengthens our industrial capacity, enabling us to better support our customers and meet growing global demand," said Satheeshkumar Kumarasingam, President of Pratt & Whitney Canada.

(US\$1.00 = CA\$ 1.39 at time of publication)

Willis Lease Q2 profit boosted by asset sales, expands AUM

Willis Lease Finance Corp. (WLFC) has reported its financial results for the second quarter (Q2) ended June 30, 2026, as the company continued expanding its asset management platform. Chief Executive Officer Austin C. Willis said the first half of 2026 focused on establishing Willis Aviation Capital, with assets under management (AUM) increasing 21% year over year. The company reported income from operations of US\$34.0 million, an increase of 20.2%, while lease rent revenue rose 6.7% to US\$77.1 million in the second quarter from US\$72.3 million a year earlier, driven by a larger

average lease portfolio. The company recognised US\$7.5 million in long-term maintenance revenue during the quarter, compared with US\$0.5 million a year earlier, reflecting the release of maintenance reserve liabilities at the end of lease terms. Gains on sales of leased equipment increased to US\$32.0 million from US\$27.6 million a year earlier. WLFC sold 21 engines and other parts and equipment during the quarter, compared with 14 engines, two airframes and other equipment in the prior-year period. In March 2026, the company's investment fund partnership with Liberty Mutual Investments commenced

operations, followed by the launch of its partnership with Blackstone Credit & Insurance in April. The book value of lease assets owned directly or through joint ventures, including operating lease equipment, maintenance rights, notes receivable and investments in sales-type leases, stood at US\$3.72 billion as of June 30, 2026. Assets under management, including on-balance-sheet assets, joint venture assets, third-party managed assets and managed fund portfolios, totalled US\$4.4 billion on June 30, 2026.

CADE clears American Airlines' Azul investment

Brazil's Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE) has unconditionally approved American Airlines' planned US\$100 million investment in Azul, clearing the US carrier to acquire a minority stake of around 8% in the Brazilian airline, according to The Rio Times. CADE's technical staff issued a favourable opinion on July 31, concluding that the transaction poses no competition concerns on routes

between Brazil and the US. The decision will become final if no commissioner challenges or reviews the ruling within 15 days of its publication in Brazil's official gazette, the Diário Oficial da União (DOU). The investment forms part of Azul's Chapter 11 restructuring. In February, the airline announced amended equity investment agreements under which both American Airlines and United Airlines separately committed US\$100

million, providing a combined US\$200 million in fresh capital. The arrangement will leave the two largest US airlines each holding an approximately 8% stake in Azul. According to The Rio Times, the approvals also indicate CADE's willingness to permit minority foreign investments in Brazilian airlines, provided they do not confer disproportionate governance rights or raise competition concerns.

TP Aerospace signs Ascend Airways Malaysia deal



TP Aerospace will provide integrated wheels and brakes support for Ascend Airways Malaysia's fleet

© Shutterstock

TP Aerospace has signed a long-term agreement with Ascend Airways Malaysia to provide integrated wheels and brakes support for the ACMI operator's fleet. Under the agreement, TP Aerospace will provide a full-service support programme covering exchange services, on-site stock

and pool support. The arrangement is designed to ensure parts availability while supporting Ascend Airways Malaysia's current operations and planned fleet growth. Ascend Airways Malaysia will also have access to TP Aerospace's global supply chain and local maintenance

capabilities, including its workshop in Kuala Lumpur. TP Aerospace said the agreement would provide the carrier with shorter turnaround times and more predictable maintenance costs, while further expanding its presence in the Asia-Pacific market.

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Lufthansa Technik expands Philippines MRO footprint

Lufthansa Technik Philippines has broken ground on a new wide-body MRO facility at Clark International Airport, marking a major expansion of its operations in the country. The new base maintenance centre will be built on a 157,000 m² site and will complement the company's existing facility at Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport, around 100km away. Backed by an investment worth hundreds of millions of US dollars, the facility is scheduled to enter service in 2028 and is expected to create around 1,200 skilled jobs. The Clark site will significantly increase the company's base maintenance capacity and will include a paint shop and non-destructive testing workshops. During construction and ramp-up, Lufthansa Technik Philippines will leverage the expertise and operational processes developed over more than 25 years at its Manila facility. The expansion is



Rendering of the new facility at Clark International Airport

© Lufthansa Technik Philippines

aimed at meeting growing global demand for widebody MRO services. Lufthansa Technik Philippines currently specialises in the maintenance of Airbus A330, A340 and

A380 aircraft, as well as the Boeing 777. The new facility will also add support for the Airbus A350 and Boeing 787.

ITOCHU to join ACG ownership in US\$1.95bn deal



© ACG

ITOCHU Corporation has agreed to acquire a stake in Aviation Capital Group (ACG), joining Tokyo Century in the ownership of one of the world's largest aircraft lessors through a new joint management structure. The Japanese trading house will acquire a 50% equity interest in TC Skyward Aviation U.S., Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Tokyo Century that holds its investment in ACG. The transaction, valued at approximately US\$1.95 billion, is subject to regulatory approvals and customary closing

conditions. As part of the transaction, ITOCHU will also subscribe for ¥10 billion (US\$63.3 million) in Bond-Type Class Shares to be issued by Tokyo Century, supporting the latter's financial position and strengthening the companies' long-term strategic partnership. The share subscription is expected to close during the second quarter of FY2026, while ITOCHU's investment in ACG is targeted for completion in the third quarter. ITOCHU said the investment reflects its expectation of sustained long-term

growth in the aircraft leasing market, driven by rising global passenger demand, and reinforces aerospace as one of its priority growth sectors. Founded in 1989, US-based ACG is one of the world's leading aircraft lessors, owning and managing a fleet centred on new-generation aircraft. The company ranks ninth globally by aircraft owned and managed and leases aircraft to 90 airlines across 50 countries.

Dviation wins Riyadh Air maintenance contract in Kuala Lumpur



Riyadh Air Boeing 787 Dreamliner

© Boeing

Dviation Technics has been appointed as the line maintenance provider for Riyadh Air at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, supporting the Saudi carrier's launch into Southeast Asia. The appointment coincides with Riyadh Air's inaugural service between Riyadh and Kuala Lumpur, which began on July 31,

with a three-times-weekly Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner operation powered by GEnx engines. Under the agreement, Dviation Technics will provide comprehensive line maintenance services to ensure the aircraft operates safely, reliably and efficiently. Kuala Lumpur is Riyadh Air's first destination in Southeast Asia. The

airline, backed by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF), is a key part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 strategy to establish Riyadh as a global aviation hub. It plans to serve more than 100 destinations worldwide as it builds its international network.

ORIX Aviation to acquire AerFin in aftermarket expansion



Orix Aviation has agreed to acquire AerFin

© Shutterstock

ORIX Aviation Systems Limited (ORIX Aviation) has agreed to acquire AerFin Limited, marking its entry into the aviation aftermarket sector. The transaction, which is subject to regulatory approvals, is expected to

complete by the end of 2026. The acquisition expands ORIX Aviation's capabilities beyond aircraft leasing and asset management into used serviceable material (USM), airframe and engine parts, strengthening its

presence across the full aircraft lifecycle. Founded in 1991, ORIX Aviation owns and manages aircraft while providing asset management services to Japanese and international investors through its full-service operating lease platform. The addition of AerFin will extend its offering from leasing and asset management to end-of-life aircraft part-out and aftermarket solutions. ORIX Aviation also expects the deal to support AerFin's continued growth by broadening its customer reach. Founded in 2010, UK-based AerFin specialises in aircraft and engine disassembly, component management, maintenance, and the sale and lease of serviceable parts. The company supports airlines, maintenance providers and lessors across six continents, drawing on expertise in aircraft acquisition, inspections, inventory management and parts supply.

FL Technics begins heavy maintenance operations in Punta Cana



The first aircraft arrives at FL Technics' Punta Cana hub

© FL Technics

The first Airbus A320neo has arrived at FL Technics' new MRO hub at Punta Cana International Airport (PUJ), marking the start of operations at its five-bay heavy maintenance hangar. The facility represents a US\$70 million joint investment by FL Technics and

Grupo Punta Cana and is the first heavy maintenance centre of its kind in the Dominican Republic. It is also FL Technics' first site in the Americas dedicated to heavy maintenance. Spanning more than 20,000 m², the hangar features five maintenance

bays and can support aircraft from the Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 families. Following the recent award of RAD-145 certification, the facility is approved by both the Dominican Civil Aviation Institute (IDAC) and the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The investment also adds to the Dominican Republic's growing portfolio of high-value infrastructure projects beyond its traditional tourism, energy and real estate sectors. The country's GDP is forecast to grow by 4.5% in 2026, placing it among the faster-growing economies in the Western Hemisphere. FL Technics is expanding its footprint in the Americas as demand for maintenance capacity increases among airlines and operators across North, Central and South America. The Punta Cana facility will provide certified heavy maintenance services for narrow-body aircraft, giving carriers in the region access to additional nearshore MRO capacity.

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Bird Aviation secures long-term easyJet MRO deal

Bird Aviation has signed a long-term agreement with easyJet to provide base maintenance services for the airline's Airbus A320-family fleet. The contract covers two maintenance lines at Bird Aviation's facility in Larnaca, Cyprus, for an initial seven-year term, with an option to extend the agreement by a further three years. The deal formalises and extends the longstanding relationship between the two companies, providing a long-term framework for heavy maintenance services while strengthening the role of Bird Aviation's Larnaca base in supporting easyJet's maintenance programme. Bird Aviation has operated since 2016 and provides EASA-certified maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services. The company employs more than 260 staff and supports several major airlines across Europe and the wider region.



Bird Aviation hangar with easyJet Airbus aircraft

© Bird Aviation

TrueNoord completes sale of majority stake to Arcus



© TrueNoord

Regional aircraft lessor TrueNoord has completed the sale of an approximately 74% stake to Arcus Infrastructure Partners (Arcus), while founding investor Freshstream has reinvested to retain the remaining shareholding. The transaction provides TrueNoord with long-term capital to support the next phase of its growth strategy, including expanding its portfolio of Embraer, ATR, Airbus and De Havilland Canada aircraft and strengthening support for regional airline customers. "It is with great pleasure that we welcome Arcus Infrastructure Partners as our new long-term shareholder," said Anne-Bart Tieleman, Chief Executive of TrueNoord. "The successful completion of this transaction is a significant milestone for TrueNoord and a strong endorsement of the business we have built over the past ten years. With Arcus' support and Freshstream's continued commitment, we further strengthen our standing as a leading specialist regional aircraft lessor and will continue to deliver effective fleet solutions in partnership with airline customers worldwide."

Boeing selects Liebherr brake electronics for B777-8 Freighter

Boeing has selected Liebherr-Aerospace to supply the brake remote electronic unit (REU) for the B777-8 Freighter, expanding the companies' long-standing collaboration on commercial aircraft systems. The REU acts as a data concentrator within the aircraft's braking system, supporting the new active brake monitoring system while meeting EASA

and FAA requirements for latent failure detection. Liebherr began developing the technology in 2018, with the design intended for a range of monitoring, control and data management applications. In addition to the B777-8 Freighter programme, Liebherr supplies Boeing with the main landing gear steering control unit for the 777 and the

nose wheel steering unit for the B787. The brake REU is the second remote electronic unit the company is delivering to Boeing. The brake REU is developed and manufactured by Liebherr Aerospace Lindenberg in Germany in cooperation with CUONICS, while the steering control units are produced with Liebherr-Electronics and Drives.

Safran, Aura Aero advance ERA hybrid propulsion



ERA regional aircraft

© Aura Aero

Safran Helicopter Engines and Aura Aero have signed a development and integration agreement for the hybrid-electric propulsion system of the ERA regional aircraft, marking a key step towards the programme's first flight and certification. The agreement covers the integration of Safran's TG600 turbogenerators into the 19-seat hybrid-electric aircraft prototype and follows a memorandum of understanding signed in 2023. The propulsion system will feature eight electric motors powered by two 600kW turbogenerators, combining Safran's Arrano helicopter engine with electric generator technology from Safran Electrical & Power. The partners said the architecture has been designed to deliver the reliability, efficiency and performance required for commercial operations while supporting the decarbonisation of regional aviation. Aura Aero said the ERA programme has already secured around 700 pre-orders. Separately, Safran Electrical & Power has expanded its collaboration with the aircraft manufacturer to accelerate the development and certification of electric propulsion technologies, including the integration of ENGINEUS motors into the INTEGRAL E training aircraft.

RECARO integrates AAT Composites

RECARO Holding has rebranded South Africa-based AAT Composites as RECARO Composites, expanding its presence in lightweight composite technologies for seating solutions. Based in Cape Town, RECARO Composites brings more than 40 years of experience in the design, development and manufacture of composite components. The rebranding is intended to strengthen RECARO's capabilities in advanced lightweight materials as demand grows across the aviation sector. The company said integrating RECARO Composites into the group will support the development of next-generation seating products while positioning the business to address emerging markets, including electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. The move also supports innovation across RECARO's Aircraft Seating, Gaming and Rail businesses, with lightweight composite technologies expected to improve product performance, reduce emissions and enhance the passenger experience. "This transformation represents more than a name change – it's a clear signal of our ambition to elevate our composites capabilities for seating applications within the RECARO Group," said Mark Hiller, CEO and Shareholder of RECARO Aircraft Seating and CEO of RECARO Holding. "By aligning with the RECARO brand, we are reinforcing our commitment to innovation, quality, and engineering excellence across all markets we serve."



eVTOL seat

© RECARO Aircraft Seating

DAE completes US\$9bn Macquarie AirFinance takeover

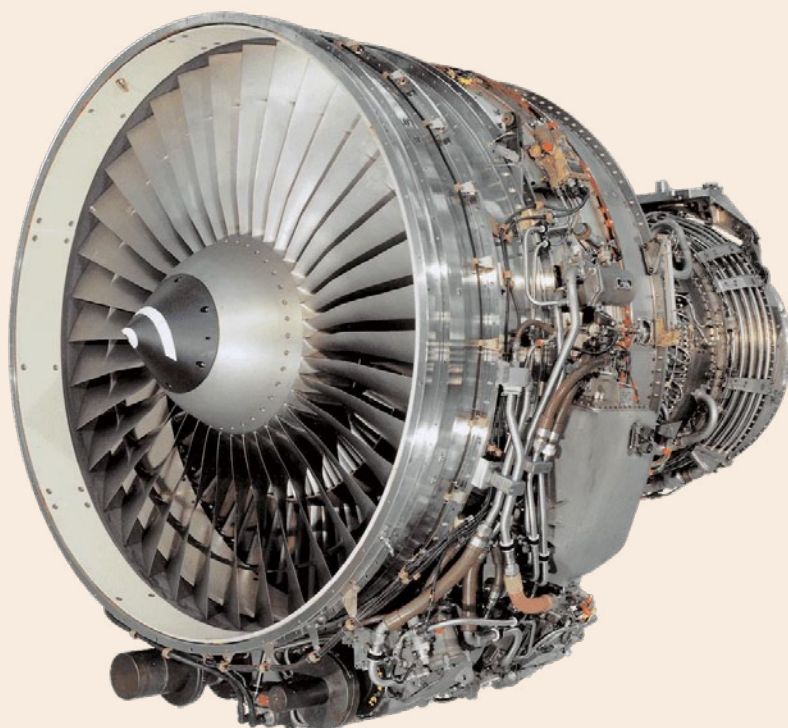
Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) has completed its previously announced acquisition of Macquarie AirFinance (MAF) in a transaction with an enterprise value of about US\$9 billion. The deal expands DAE's portfolio to around 1,000 owned, managed and committed aircraft, cementing its position as the world's

third-largest aircraft lessor by fleet value and number of owned and managed aircraft. The combined fleet serves more than 175 airlines across 75 countries, while DAE also has commitments for around 150 new aircraft from Boeing, Airbus, ATR and other suppliers. Chief Executive Firoz Tarapore said

the acquisition strengthens DAE's relationships with aircraft manufacturers, extends its orderbook into the 2030s and enhances its ability to support airline customers across fleet lifecycles. The transaction was first announced in February 2026.

Jordan Airmotive secures five-year Tunisair engine deal

Jordan Airmotive (JALCo) has signed an exclusive five-year agreement with Tunisair Technics covering MRO support for Tunisair's CFM56-5B engine fleet. The general terms agreement establishes a long-term framework for engine inductions, technical coordination and maintenance planning between the two companies. Jordan Airmotive Chief Executive Mahmoud Bashir said the agreement reflected confidence in the company's CFM56-5B capabilities and would provide a defined structure for supporting Tunisair's engine maintenance requirements. "We value our cooperation with Tunisair Technics and look forward to supporting Tunisair's engine requirements throughout the duration of the agreement," Bashir said. Tunisair Technics provides technical and maintenance support for the Tunisian flag carrier's fleet, while Jordan Airmotive specialises in engine repair and overhaul services. Jordan Airmotive holds certifications from EASA, the US Federal Aviation Administration and other regulatory authorities. Its current engine capabilities cover the CF6-80C2, CFM56-7B, CFM56-5B and CFM56-3, with LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B support planned for its portfolio.



CFM56 engine

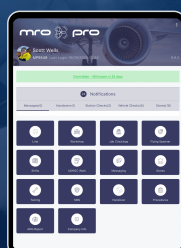
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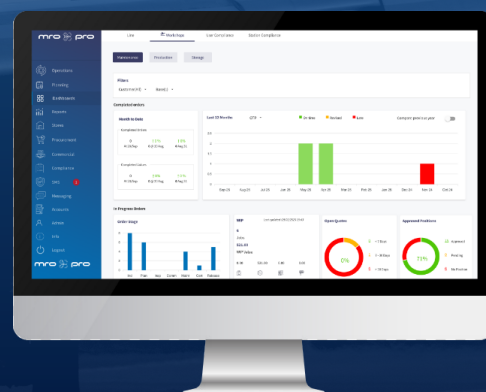
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Boeing Global Services has signed a memorandum of understanding with AI data optimisation specialist Pelico



A C-17 sits on the tarmac at sunset

© Boeing

Boeing Global Services has signed a memorandum of understanding with AI data optimisation specialist Pelico to explore new ways of modernising C-17A Globemaster III heavy maintenance planning and execution. The collaboration aims to shorten depot maintenance cycles, improve fleet availability and deliver more predictable aircraft turnaround times. Boeing and Pelico will assess whether AI-enabled scheduling, supply chain coordination and workflow automation can help maintenance teams respond more quickly to parts shortages and operational bottlenecks. Central to the evaluation is Pelico's Manufacturing Orchestration Platform, which brings together supply, engineering, planning and depot operations in a single digital workspace. The platform is designed to replace spreadsheet-based processes with a real-time view of material shortages, maintenance priorities and production constraints. The companies will also assess capabilities including predictive shortage management, dynamic maintenance prioritisation and agentic AI workflows to automate routine approvals and supplier communications. Boeing said an earlier deployment of Pelico's platform in its commercial spare parts operations successfully demonstrated the concept and has since been extended. The agreement establishes a framework for a phased evaluation, with the potential to expand the technology across other Boeing heavy maintenance programmes if the trial proves successful.

WLFC secures engine storage agreement with Pratt & Whitney



WLFC will support Pratt & Whitney's growing aftermarket storage requirements

© WLFC

Willis Lease Finance Corporation (WLFC) has secured a five-year agreement with Pratt & Whitney, an RTX business, to provide long-term storage and

lease return services for PW1100G-JM, PW1500G, PW1900G, PW4000 and IAE AG V2500 engines. Under the agreement, WLFC will support Pratt &

Whitney's expanding aftermarket storage requirements from its facilities in Coconut Creek, Florida, and Bridgend, Wales. The deal extends a decades-long relationship between the companies and follows quality reviews of WLFC subsidiary Willis Engine Repair Center (WERC), as well as recognition of its technical capabilities and maintenance and storage training initiatives. These capabilities are expected to support further expansion of WLFC's engine storage capacity. WLFC Chief Executive Officer Austin C. Willis said the agreement reflects Pratt & Whitney's confidence in the company's technical expertise, facilities and operational capabilities. He added that close collaboration over the past year had helped align operational requirements and strengthen the partnership. The agreement supports WLFC's strategy to expand its integrated aviation services business and strengthen its position as a single-source provider of aviation aftermarket solutions.

Widerøe expands Dash 8 life extension deal



Widerøe expands commitment to De Havilland Canada's ESP+ agreement

© De Havilland Canada

De Havilland Canada has expanded its Extended Service Program PLUS (ESP+) agreement with Widerøe after the Norwegian carrier added four more Dash 8-100 aircraft to the programme.

Widerøe became the launch customer for ESP+ in 2022, initially enrolling ten aircraft with options for a further ten. The latest agreement brings the airline's total commitment to 14 aircraft.

The ESP+ programme extends the Dash 8-100's service life from 120,000 to 160,000 flight cycles, giving the turboprop the highest certified flight-cycle life of any commercial aircraft. Widerøe has operated the Dash 8 family for decades, providing regional connectivity across Norway's challenging operating environment. The airline said the programme offers a practical and cost-effective way to extend the operational life of its Dash 8-100 fleet while maintaining safety, reliability and performance. Alongside ESP+, Widerøe also participates in De Havilland Component Solutions, the manufacturer's component support programme. The expanded agreement underlines De Havilland Canada's continued investment in aftermarket services aimed at extending aircraft life, lowering ownership costs and supporting the long-term operation of the Dash 8 fleet.

TAT wins global Honeywell APU parts deal

TAT Technologies (TAT) has expanded its longstanding partnership with Honeywell Aerospace, becoming the sole global authorised distributor of spare parts for the GTCP 331-200/250 auxiliary power unit (APU) platform. The agreement also extends TAT's maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) licences for the platform until 2036 and includes the acquisition of three Honeywell 131-9A APUs to support the company's trading and leasing business. The expanded partnership gives operators, lessors and MRO providers a single source for both parts and maintenance services, simplifying support and helping reduce aircraft turnaround times. TAT said the agreement strengthens its relationship with Honeywell while broadening its reach across the global operator community. "Our relationship with Honeywell Aerospace has been one of the most important partnerships in TAT's history," said Igal Zamir, President and CEO of TAT Technologies. "This agreement reflects the continued strength and trust we've built together over the past several years and is a meaningful vote of confidence in our team and our track record." If this is for an aviation news digest, it could be tightened further to around 120 words.



TAT Technologies is now the sole global distributor for GTCP 331-200/250 APU spare parts

© TAT

LHT begins flight tests of next-generation AeroSHARK

Lufthansa Technik (LHT) has launched flight trials of the next-generation of its AeroSHARK drag-reducing technology on a Lufthansa City Airlines Airbus A319, the first aircraft to test the new material in commercial service. Developed with partner Surventis (formerly BASF Coatings), the programme involves around 70 transparent film patches, each measuring 20 × 20 cm, applied to selected areas of the fuselage and the inside and outside of the engine cowlings. The material will be evaluated during regular flights between Munich and Hamburg through February 2027. The tests are designed to assess the



AeroSHARK drag-reducing technology is being tested on a Lufthansa City Airlines Airbus A319

© LHT

durability, application, cleaning and removal of different material and layer combinations under real operating conditions. Lufthansa Technik will inspect the samples during scheduled ground time in Hamburg. AeroSHARK is already certified for use on the fuselage and engine cowlings of long-haul aircraft, where it reduces aerodynamic drag and fuel consumption. The latest research aims to develop a more advanced version that could also be applied to wings and horizontal and vertical stabilisers, which are subject to higher aerodynamic loads. The programme is intended to support the wider deployment of AeroSHARK technology, enabling further fuel savings and emissions reductions while improving the sustainability of airline operations.



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GetJet unit expands MRO footprint at Vilnius



Rendering of Airhub's new hangar at Vilnius International Airport

© GetJet

GetJet Group's Airhub Aviation (Airhub) has secured a site at Vilnius International Airport to expand its aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) operations. The company won the right to lease an 11,200 m² plot for 40 years through a land lease auction organised by Lithuanian Airports. Airhub plans to invest about €25 million to build an MRO hangar, which is expected to create more than 100 jobs once operational. The new facility forms part of GetJet Group's strategy to expand its in-house MRO capabilities, aiming to strengthen technical independence, improve operational flexibility and broaden services for airline customers. The site is adjacent to a 4,700 m² plot that GetJet Group previously secured under a long-term lease. The group is investing about €10 million between 2025 and 2029 to construct another hangar at that location. (€1.00 = US\$1.15 at time of publication).

ACC Aviation strengthens aviation finance offering

ACC Aviation has completed a major independent aircraft asset monitoring assignment for a leading international aviation finance institution. The consultancy provided ongoing technical oversight of a portfolio of next-generation commercial aircraft, delivering independent assessments of aircraft condition, maintenance activity, operational status and emerging technical risks. The mandate included physical aircraft inspections, technical records reviews, maintenance oversight, operator engagement and regular reporting to support the client's credit and risk management decisions. Unlike a traditional pre-purchase inspection,

the assignment focused on protecting collateral value throughout the financing lifecycle. ACC Aviation combined technical expertise with commercial asset management to provide independent oversight of maintenance events, operational developments and asset condition, helping the financier identify risks early and safeguard long-term asset value. Demand for independent technical monitoring is increasing as lenders, lessors and institutional investors seek greater visibility over financed assets and stronger collateral management. ACC Aviation said its asset management platform supports clients across the full asset lifecycle, from acquisition due

diligence and technical inspections to portfolio monitoring, lease transitions, remarketing and disposal. Tristan Brouard, Associate Director at ACC Aviation, said: "Independent technical oversight has become an increasingly important component of aviation finance. Our role is to provide clients with objective, commercially focused advice that enables them to understand the technical condition of their assets, identify emerging risks early and protect long-term collateral value. This assignment reflects the confidence that aviation financiers continue to place in ACC Aviation's technical and asset management capabilities."



AerFin Delivers: Confidence, Reliability and Progression for the Aviation Aftermarket

AerFin is the aviation asset specialist that buys, sells, leases and repairs aircraft, engines and parts. In a market shaped by supply chain pressure, material shortages and rising demand for flexible support, AerFin is delivering the assets, inventory and technical capability customers need to keep fleets moving.

Company Profile

Headquartered in the UK and supporting more than 600 customers worldwide, AerFin partners with airlines, lessors, MROs, investors and asset owners to maximise value, extend the life of aviation material and provide reliable, cost-effective aftermarket solutions.

Founded in 2010, AerFin has grown from a specialist aircraft trading business into a trusted global partner across the aviation aftermarket. In August 2026, AerFin announced that ORIX Aviation had agreed

to acquire the business from CataCap, subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals. The agreement marks the next chapter in AerFin's growth journey and brings together ORIX Aviation's global aircraft leasing, asset management and investment platform with AerFin's proven aftermarket capability, technical expertise and established customer base.

AerFin's delivery is shaped by three core pillars: confidence, reliability, and progression. Confidence comes from the trust asset owners place in AerFin to manage complex aircraft and engine transactions. In 2026, the company acquired its 450th major asset, a milestone that reflects both the scale of the business and its proven ability to execute. From single-asset deals to multi-aircraft programmes, AerFin combines technical, commercial and operational expertise with a commitment to follow through.

Reliability is reflected in the way AerFin

is strengthening material availability for customers. In a supply-constrained market, access to serviceable material is critical. AerFin has brought 737 MAX material to market at a time when operators are expanding their fleets and demand for next-generation components is building. The company has also continued to place inventory in the regions where it is needed most, including A330 material supporting customers across the Americas, EMEA and APAC, and Boeing 777 inventory positioned to support operators in the Americas while maintaining wider global coverage.

This regional approach is increasingly important. For airlines and MROs, availability is not only about whether material exists. It is about where it is located, how quickly it can move, and how confidently it can support operational needs. With locations including Newport, Gatwick, Miami and Singapore, AerFin has built a global platform designed to respond at pace.



Progression is demonstrated through continued investment in capability. AerFin is expanding engine support, including growing V2500 capability in 2026, alongside wider services across established engine platforms. Its Newport headquarters and engine shop support technical work including inspections, module swaps, repairs and quick-turn activity, helping customers access more joined-up solutions across the asset lifecycle.

Sustainability remains embedded in AerFin's model. By reusing, repairing and returning material to service, the business supports a more circular aviation aftermarket, reducing waste while helping customers access lower-cost alternatives to new production.

Behind all of this is AerFin's people. Great Place to Work recognition reflects the strength of the company's culture and the importance it places in supporting, developing and retaining its teams. For AerFin, delivery starts with people - their expertise, commitment and care underpin every customer relationship and every successful transaction.

With ORIX Aviation's backing, AerFin is well positioned to continue investing in inventory, capability, partnerships and people. In a market where customers need certainty, speed and practical support, the business remains focused on delivering the way ahead - helping airlines, lessors, MROs and asset owners keep fleets flying with confidence.

Talking to Simon Goodson, Chief Executive Officer, AerFin

Since his appointment as CEO in 2021, Simon Goodson has led AerFin through a period of significant growth and transformation. The business has expanded its global footprint, strengthened its technical capability, acquired its 450th major asset, and continued to build deeper partnerships with customers across the aviation aftermarket.

In this interview, Simon discusses how AerFin is turning growth into delivery, why regional inventory positioning matters, and

how the business is continuing to invest in its people, partnerships and capability.

Interview with Simon Goodson, CEO, AerFin

AviTrader MRO: AerFin has just announced that ORIX Aviation is to acquire the business. What does this mean for AerFin and its customers?

Simon Goodson: This is a defining moment in AerFin's story and the beginning of an exciting new chapter. ORIX Aviation is a business that understands aviation assets, takes a long-term view and shares our belief in trusted partnerships, flexible solutions and helping customers find the way ahead.

For AerFin, the agreement gives us the backing, confidence and platform to keep building on the strengths that have brought us to this point. We will continue to operate with the same customer focus, the same practical approach and the same commitment to keeping fleets flying.

The strategic fit is strong. ORIX Aviation brings global scale, aircraft leasing and asset management expertise, and



Simon Goodson, Chief Executive Officer, AerFin



the wider strength of the ORIX Group. AerFin brings proven aftermarket capability, technical expertise and deep relationships across airlines, lessors, MROs and asset owners. Together, that creates a broader platform across the aircraft lifecycle, from leasing and asset management through to end-of-life part-out, material supply and aftermarket services.

For customers, the message is clear: our focus remains unchanged. We will keep delivering the material, technical capability and support they need, while gaining the backing to invest further in our people, global platform and long-term growth. The best of AerFin is still to come.

What does this focus mean in practice?

It means focusing on what our customers need from us every day: confidence, reliability, and progression.

Confidence means asset owners trust us to manage aircraft, engines and material properly, even when transactions are

complex. Reliability means operators and MROs can access the material and support they need when availability is tight. Progression means we are continually investing in our capability, our people, our partnerships, and our global platform.

It is not about making big claims. It is about proving what we can do through action. Whether that is bringing 737 MAX and A320neo material to market, supporting A330 and 777 customers in-region, or expanding engine support capability, the focus is always the same: delivering practical solutions that help customers keep moving.

Supply chain pressure remains one of the biggest challenges facing the aftermarket. How is AerFin responding?

We are still operating in a supply-constrained market. Airlines and MROs continue to face pressure around material availability, engine maintenance capacity, and rising costs. In that environment, access to reliable, used

serviceable material is critical.

AerFin's role is to create supply where customers need it most. That starts with originating assets, but it does not stop there. We have to process them efficiently, manage the records and technical work appropriately, repair and return components to service, and make sure the material is available through the right channels and in the right locations.

The 737 MAX is a good example. It is a platform where demand is building quickly, and customers are looking for dependable access to material as fleets continue to grow. By being the first to bring 737 MAX inventory to market, AerFin is helping operators and MROs get ahead of that demand rather than waiting for wider supply to catch up.

You have spoken about the importance of placing material in the regions where it is needed most. Why is that so important?

In this market, availability is only part of the answer. Location matters. If material is on the wrong side of the world, it can

still create delays, cost, and uncertainty for the customer.

That is why we are focused on regional inventory positioning. We want to place metal closer to demand so customers can access the right material faster. Our A330 inventory is a strong example, with material positioned to support customers across the Americas, EMEA, and APAC. We have also strengthened our Boeing 777 inventory, including material positioned in the USA to support customers across the Americas, while maintaining wider coverage for EMEA and APAC.

This is about being more predictive and more responsive. We look at fleet trends, customer demand and market pressure, then position inventory where it can make the greatest difference. That gives customers greater confidence and helps reduce the impact of supply chain disruption.

How is AerFin expanding its engine support capability?

We are continuing to build capability across key engine platforms, including V2500 support. That sits alongside our wider engine trading, leasing, green-time and used serviceable material activity. We are also investing in our technical capability through our Newport operation, supporting work such as inspections, module swaps, repairs, and quick-turn activity.

The value for customers is that we can look at the whole problem, not just one part of it. Sometimes the right answer is material. Sometimes it is a lease solution. Sometimes it is technical support. Often, it is a combination of those things. That integrated approach is becoming more important as engine maintenance remains a major pressure point for the industry.

What role do partnerships play in AerFin's next phase?

The aviation aftermarket works best when businesses collaborate, and that is especially true in a constrained market.

We work closely with airlines, lessors, investors, MROs, disassembly partners,



© AerFin

logistics providers and repair specialists. Those relationships help us access assets, position inventory, manage technical work, and support customers across different regions.

For us, partnership is not just a commercial term. It is about follow-through. Customers and partners need to know we will do what we say we are going to do. That reliability is one of the reasons we have been able to build long-term relationships across the world.

AerFin has also been recognised as a Great Place to Work. How important is culture to business performance?

It is fundamental. Everything starts with people. We can have the right strategy, the right assets, and the right infrastructure, but delivery depends on the quality, commitment, and confidence of our teams.

Our commitment to our people is called The AerFin Promise. It is our way of describing how we work and how we support each other. We want people to feel they belong; feel they can contribute and feel they are developing. That matters because confident, supported people deliver better outcomes for customers.

Great Place to Work recognition is important because it reflects the culture

we are building. But it is not something we take for granted. As we grow, we have to keep investing in our people, our leaders and the environment we create.

Looking ahead, what should customers expect from AerFin in the second half of 2026 and beyond?

Customers should expect us to keep delivering. The market will remain challenging, particularly around supply, engines, and material availability. That creates pressure, but it also creates opportunities for businesses that can respond quickly and reliably.

We have some major projects coming in the second half of the year, and while we cannot say too much at this stage, they will show the continued direction of the business. We are investing in inventory, capability, and partnerships that directly support customer needs.

The aftermarket is going to remain strong, but customers will need partners who can give them confidence. That is where AerFin is focused. We will continue to bring material to market, position it where it is needed, expand our technical capability and support customers with practical solutions that keep fleets flying.

We Are ONE VSE

VSE Aviation unites specialized companies, talented people, and decades of technical expertise to deliver industry-leading aftermarket solutions worldwide as ONE VSE. From parts distribution and rotatable exchanges, to tailored MRO services and technical support, our solutions keep our customers flying with confidence.

Together, we are shaping the future of the aviation aftermarket.

Together, we are VSE Aviation.

VISIT US AT MRO ASIA-PACIFIC #2320



WE ARE VSE AVIATION





Component Support for Ageing Aircraft

Dealing with the knock-on effects of next-gen aircraft delivery delays

By David Dundas

Those involved in the maintenance, repair or overhaul of ageing aircraft face a raft of different challenges when compared to those for current- and next-generation aircraft. The older an aircraft becomes and the closer it gets to retirement age, the more complex the decision-making process comes in relation to replacement parts. Is the aircraft likely to remain in service for six months or two years? Does it make better financial sense to utilise used serviceable material (USM) as opposed to brand-new original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or parts manufacturer approval (PMA) parts? Is it less costly to repair as opposed to replace a part? What does the previous MRO history look like and when the aircraft is finally retired, what will happen to it? Will it still have an intrinsic value for breakdown if inroads have been made into the backlog of new aircraft deliveries and there is a glut of older aircraft ready to flood the market with parts?

You then have the operating challenges of having to manage inventories for both ageing and new aircraft, those challenges not just being a case of finding the space but also finding the money as we all know aircraft parts are frighteningly costly. That then begs the question as to whether component pooling is a financially

astute option and where else you can find opportunities for cost savings for component support. We had many more questions we wanted answers to from our group of industry professionals, including how to avoid tying up excessive capital in spare parts and one we were very keen to read the answers to: "If you could redesign the component support model for ageing aircraft from scratch, what would you change to make it both more resilient and more cost-effective?"

Many commercial aircraft are remaining in service longer than originally planned. How is this changing the way operators approach component support?

Extended fleet lives have shifted component support from a reactive necessity to a strategic priority. Companies are still seeing production constraints on new aircraft and delayed deliveries, so operators are keeping their legacy platforms such as the A320ceo and B737NG flying well beyond their originally planned service lives. An ageing fleet drives increased levels of removals which in turn impacts supply and demand, vendor performance, increases

repair costs, and increases the level of inventory required to support the operation. Simon Merriott, SVP Customer Service, AJW Group further explains: "Operators are no longer able to hold sufficient stock, either because demand outweighs available supply or because they lack the balance sheet capacity to fund additional inventory. Instead, they are turning to partnerships with companies like AJW who offer component support agreements. The airlines are focusing on financial liquidity and controlling maintenance costs while still delivering a reliable service to their customers. Integrated solutions such as AJW's Power-By-the-Hour (PBH) programmes are increasingly attractive, giving operators predictable cost structures and guaranteed access to component support without the capital burden of extensive inventory."

Which component categories are becoming the most difficult—or most expensive—to source?

One of the problems with older aircraft remaining in service is the knock-on effect of a reduction in teardowns – in other words, a potential shortage of



Simon Merriott, SVP Customer Service, AJW Group

spare parts. While certain mitigating strategies can alleviate this problem, it can't cover all eventualities, especially if a part that requires replacement was not part of a scheduled maintenance programme. Simon Merriott tells us that: "The greatest pressure sits with a relatively small number of critical, high-demand parts rather than across the board. In our experience, it's a concentrated group of components, the ones in genuine market shortage, that command the highest prices and the longest lead times, while the broader inventory pool remains comparatively accessible." He then further expands: "Rotables and components tied to constrained engine programmes are among the hardest to source. Compounded by increased spares pricing this has complicated repair cycles and affected Beyond Economic Repair (BER) ratios. As legacy fleets are worked harder for longer, demand for these critical parts continues to outstrip supply, which is why strategic inventory placement and forecasting have become so important."

Where do you see the greatest opportunities for cost savings in component support for ageing aircraft?

In such a financially competitive environment, cost (not corner) cutting and potential to make savings are high up on everyone's agenda. With the digitalisation of many aspects of this industry sector helping to reduce costs, it could be tempting to enjoy the fiscal benefits, but there will always be room for further improvement. The opinion of Phoebe Stone, Director - Sales & Product Lines, APOC Aviation suggests that: "The greatest opportunities for cost savings in component support for ageing aircraft lie in offering operators a reliable exchange service. By exchanging an unserviceable part for a serviceable one, airlines reduce their need to purchase outright replacements, while a single asset can be rotated across multiple customers to maximise return on investment for the supplier. Beyond exchanges, APOC is able to support meaningful savings through close review of a customer's ageing fleet to identify components with high removal rates, as well as those with low repair costs and low scrap fees to proactively repair ahead of time, reduce the likelihood of any high-cost AOG events and keep overall spend down." Meanwhile, Simon Merriott has his eyes firmly fixed on USM and smart strategic thinking as a major source of cost saving. "The biggest opportunities come from advanced inventory management and the strategic use of USM. Holding the right stock, rather than simply more stock, is where real value is unlocked, because capital tied up in slow-moving inventory quickly erodes margins. USM and selective use of PMA/DER where appropriate, are central to this as they offer an immediate, cost-effective alternative to the struggling OEM supply. They can reduce AOG

“Rotables and components tied to constrained engine programmes are among the hardest to source. Compounded by increased spares pricing this has complicated repair cycles and affected Beyond Economic Repair (BER) ratios.”

Simon Merriott, SVP Customer Service, AJW Group

risk while helping operators manage maintenance budgets and carry the added benefit of supporting sustainability goals. Beyond that, PBH-style support programmes convert unpredictable capital expenditure into manageable operating costs, and data-driven forecasting, through tools such as AJW's in-house optimisation platform, Apollo, enables us to pre-position parts ahead of known requirements thereby helping operators drive down the cost of supporting ageing aircraft," he tells us.

How has the business case for repair versus replacement changed in recent years?

Repair or replacement is a constantly asked question when referring to aircraft part, with such factors as cost comparison, structural limits, availability, regulatory rules, lease agreement terms, the relevance of LLPs and history of reliability. Add in the age of an aircraft and likely lifespan, and that question becomes even more difficult to effectively answer. When one then adds a lack of consistency – an aircraft part can be in short supply one month and therefore likely more expensive, then three months later that shortage could disappear. We



Phoebe Stone, Director - Sales & Product Lines, APOC Aviation

“The greatest opportunities for cost savings in component support for ageing aircraft lie in offering operators a reliable exchange service.”

Phoebe Stone, Director - Sales & Product Lines, APOC Aviation

wanted to know if there had been any longer-term identifiable trends connected to this debate in recent years.

Simon Merriott and Phoebe Stone are of like mind on this topic. "The economics have shifted considerably. With new piece parts subject to extended lead times and ongoing production bottlenecks, repair has become an even more appealing option. The rise in piece part pricing during the post-pandemic recovery has impacted BER ratios. Sustainability efforts have also come into play. Repairing and reusing components reduces waste and lowers the environmental footprint associated with manufacturing new material. The result is that repair-versus-replacement is no longer a purely cost-driven decision; it's a balance of cost, lead time, availability, and sustainability," says Merriott. Stone backs this up with her own take on the question. "The business case for repair over replacement has shifted considerably in recent years. With many commercial aircraft remaining in service far longer than originally planned, the components on older fleets require increased maintenance, driving higher demand for repairable and used serviceable material (USM), a trend we at APOC continue to see across our customer base. Repairing these components carries lower costs and extends their life cycle, improving the overall return on investment for the asset. There is also a clear sustainability benefit, as reusing and conserving material reduces waste and extracts the fullest possible value from each part. Perhaps most significantly, replacement components now face lengthy lead times from OEMs, and discontinued

parts can cause further delays for operators. Having repaired rotatable components readily available for our customers reduces downtime and has become a key driver in resolving AOG situations," she explains.

What factors determine whether a component should be repaired, overhauled, exchanged, or replaced?

Whether you are dealing with ageing or relatively new components, the decision shouldn't be driven by repair cost alone - you must look at the total value over the remaining life of the aircraft. That means considering technical condition, reliability, turnaround time, future supportability and, increasingly, the risk of obsolescence. Andre op't Hof, Commercial Director - North America MRO Operations, Ontic MRO then tells us more: Therefore, a lower-cost repair today isn't necessarily the right decision if it creates uncertainty tomorrow. At Ontic, we look at every decision through the lens of 'a lifetime of flight.' Our role is to help ensure that critical components remain available and supportable for as long as the aircraft continues to operate."

According to Kevin Rimmer, Director of Operations, NEACO, a Jet Parts Engineering company, "The objective is not simply to return a component to service, but to maximise on-wing reliability and minimise future removals." He then goes on to say that: "The decision should be driven by reliability and lifecycle value, not just the immediate discrepancy. Key considerations include:

- **Operating Environment:** Exposure to heat, vibration, moisture, contamination, or harsh operating conditions can significantly impact reliability.
- **Time-in-Service:** Components nearing major maintenance thresholds may justify an opportunistic overhaul rather than a limited repair.
- **Historical Reliability:** Removal trends, repeat failures, and fleet data often provide a better indicator than a single inspection.

• **Rogue Unit Management:** Chronic-failure units should be evaluated for upgrades, DER repairs, PMA alternatives, or replacement rather than repeated repairs.

• **Supply Chain & Material Availability:** For aging fleets, repair turnaround time and parts availability are often just as important as technical condition."

For Andre op't Hof, Commercial Director - North America MRO Operations, Ontic MRO, it's all about balance and confidence. "No operator wants capital sitting on a shelf, but equally no one wants an aircraft grounded because a critical component isn't available. The answer is finding the right balance between inventory ownership and confidence in the support network behind it. That confidence comes from knowing there is a long-term commitment to maintaining repair capability, manufacturing where required and managing product availability throughout the life of the platform. Ultimately, operators invest less in contingency inventory when they trust that the supply chain will continue to support their fleets throughout the operational lifecycle," he concludes. Marko Niffka, Director Marketing and Sales EMEA & Asia, StandardAero looks at the situation from a different perspective, advising that: "Factors determining how a component is handled include the customer's own maintenance policy, for example whether the operator requires the use of OEM repairs only, or whether designated engineering representative (DER) solutions are allowed; the condition of the part; the question of whether replacement parts are available; and the comparative costs of the repair, overhaul, exchange and replacement options. The customer's fleet planning outlook for the associated powerplant, including whether the engine is causing an AOG event, will also be a driver."

At Vallair Group, Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer Pascal Parant feels that the question covers several topics. He explains: "First, why does a part enter this process at all? Simply because it has been



Kevin Rimmer, Director of Operations, NEACO, a Jet Parts Engineering company

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AJW Technique Inspector

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removed from the aircraft. The reasons for removal may include failure, reaching its hard time limit, or an anticipated removal to avoid a much more expensive repair later on. The next consideration is whether the part is BER (Beyond Economical Repair). In other words, is there a cheaper solution than repairing or overhauling it? This may be because of special agreements with the OEM offering discounts that make purchasing a new part more economical than repairing the existing one, or because equivalent USM is readily available on the market at a lower cost. Repair or overhaul? Not every component needs a full overhaul. Sometimes a repair is sufficient, or only certain sub-assemblies need to be overhauled, making the overall shop visit much more economical. Engines are probably the best example. It is common to perform a core overhaul while the fan module or the LPT does not require a full overhaul. Optimising a shop visit, which can be extremely expensive, requires deep knowledge of both the engine and its components to select the most appropriate and cost-effective solution. Exchange is another option when the airline does not have the part in its own inventory or does not want to tie up cash in a very

expensive component. It is an excellent solution provided both parties clearly agree on the core return timeline, the BER threshold, the compensation mechanism if BER is declared, and the acceptance of the eventual overhaul quotation. Finally, a component may simply need to be replaced because of an Airworthiness Directive (AD), a Service Bulletin (SB), or obsolescence requiring installation of a newer standard."

Jelani Cain, Director of Repairs, Werner Aero LLC sees this as a case of having to consider multiple economic and operational factors. "An operator needs to consider the destination of the part to make an informed decision. If a part is going to be installed on a system with known reliability issues and a history of failing, the operator might request the component to be overhauled, even if the CMM only requires test or repair. If the operator has a time sensitive requirement and no additional stock, an exchange might be the preferred choice as they can quickly get the part they need while not having to wait for their original unit to go through the repair process. While they might pay more for the exchange unit than their core, exchanges help reduce delays and keep flights on time," he tells us. Meanwhile, Christopher Olds, Vice President, Materials

Group & Acquisitions at AerSale, Inc views the problem from the economics and time perspective. "How many cycles or hours does the part have left, what does repair actually cost versus buying a serviceable exchange unit, and how badly do we need the aircraft flying tomorrow rather than next week? On rotatables like landing gear, APUs, and nacelles, exchange usually wins — you're not gambling on a shop's schedule when a pooled or consigned unit is sitting ready. Reliability trend matters more than people give it credit for. MTBUR degrades as aircraft age, and a part that's being removed more often than it used to be is telling you something. At that point, another repair cycle is often just delaying the inevitable — exchange or replacement is the better economic call, even if the part is technically still airworthy. Shop backlogs and DER/PMA approval timelines factor in too, but those first two questions — cost and downtime risk — drive almost every decision we make," he says.

How can operators avoid tying up excessive capital in spare parts while maintaining high fleet availability?

The balancing act between holding enough inventory to be effective and efficient, but not so much as to create financial instability is a permanent challenge. The fact that OAG incidents are costly to carriers is an incentive to carry robust inventory, but not if you rather than the carrier shoulder all the financial risk. So what are the options available to MROs where tying up excessive capital is a current problem?

“An operator needs to consider the destination of the part to make an informed decision. If a part is going to be installed on a system with known reliability issues and a history of failing, the operator might request the component to be overhauled, even if the CMM only requires test or repair.”

Jelani Cain, Director of Repairs, Werner Aero LLC



Jelani Cain, Director of Repairs, Werner Aero LLC



Christopher Olds, Vice President,
Materials Group & Acquisitions, AerSale, Inc

"Stop buying what you can access instead," suggests Christopher Olds. He goes on to say that: "That's the whole shift. Exchange, pooling, and consignment give operators the material they need without the balance-sheet drag of owning it — which is exactly why we structured AerSale's USM business the way we did, with enough breadth across mainline platforms that customers can lean on our stock instead of their own. Leasing high-value rotatables works the same way: it turns a capital expense into an operating one. Operators still underuse: matching spares strategy to fleet ownership structure. An owned aircraft and a leased one three years from return shouldn't be managed on the same inventory policy. If you know the return conditions, plan the material spend against the lease term — don't overhaul a part that's going back to the lessor before it ever needs that overhaul. Discipline saves real money. Location still matters. Assuming 24-to-48-hour shipping solved the geography problem — it didn't, not fully. For a true AOG, proximity still wins, and VAT and tariff exposure can quietly add cost and delay depending on where the part is coming from and what border it's crossing. The operators doing this well are thinking about part value, lease horizon, and geography together, not in isolation." Where Marlene Gonzalez, Managing Director, Cima Aviation, a Jet Parts Engineering company, is concerned, "The goal is to keep capital fluid without risking grounding the fleet. Operators can achieve this through a few key strategies:

- **Predictive Maintenance & Data:**

Instead of stockpiling "just in case" spares, use reliability data to predict failure rates. If

“That's the whole shift. Exchange, pooling, and consignment give operators the material they need without the balance-sheet drag of owning it — which is exactly why we structured AerSale's USM business the way we did, with enough breadth across mainline platforms that customers can lean on our stock instead of their own.”

*Christopher Olds, Vice President,
Materials Group & Acquisitions, AerSale, Inc*

you know a specific actuator typically fails around 8,000 flight hours, you can time your inventory acquisition right before that window opens.

- **Cross-Platform Component**

Applicability: Operators can reduce inventory investment by strategically aligning aircraft and engine platforms that utilize common components. By maximizing component applicability across multiple fleets, operators can support a broader portion of their operation from a shared inventory pool, increasing asset utilization and reducing capital tied up in spare assets.

- **DER & PMA Solutions:** Approved alternative repairs and parts can extend component life, improve availability, and reduce dependence on costly replacement assets.

- **Tiered Provisioning:** Classify inventory into three categories: Move critical, high-failure "No-Go" items close to the main hubs; place medium-risk items in regional centers; and rely on vendor-managed inventory or pools for low-failure, high-cost items."

Andre op't Hof mentions the balance between inventory ownership and confidence in the network behind it. "No operator wants capital sitting on a shelf, but equally no one wants an aircraft grounded because a critical component isn't available," he comments, adding: "That confidence comes from knowing there is a long-term commitment to maintaining repair capability, manufacturing where required and managing product availability throughout the life of the platform. Ultimately, operators invest less in contingency inventory when they trust that the supply chain will continue to support their fleets throughout the operational lifecycle." Marko Niffka also provides some useful options. "Partnering with a capable, large MRO with good technical capabilities and proven repair performance will help reduce customers to reduce their

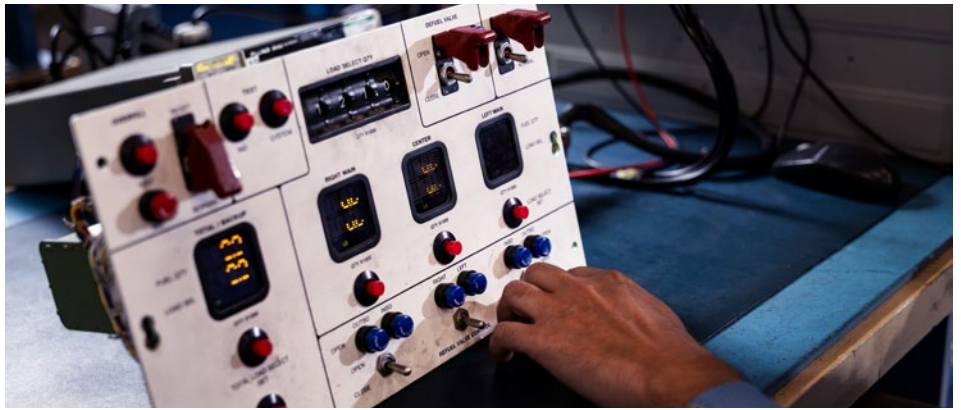
spare parts inventory. Obtaining access to used serviceable material (USM) and other material sources can also be helpful, whether via an MRO partner with in-house asset management capabilities or through other means," he advises. On the other hand, Pascal Parant is convinced that the solution lies in power-by-the-hour (PBH) programmes, though the actual strategy depends heavily on the maturity of the aircraft type and the size of the fleet. He further explains: "For new-generation aircraft, PBH is almost a no-brainer. These programmes generally include access to a shared component pool. Pooling is an excellent way to reduce capital expenditure by mutualising inventory across several operators. Pool access and PBH can be separated, although most providers prefer offering a complete package. For mature aircraft, the strategy may be very different. Vallair observes that some airlines deliberately choose to build their own inventory opportunistically, purchasing parts whenever attractive opportunities arise, knowing that many components are widely available on the market. They then focus their investment on the relatively few parts that remain scarce but are operationally critical."

Jelani Cain thinks along the same lines as Pascal Parant as he tells us that: "There are a few ways operators can maintain high fleet availability while avoiding excessive capital in spare parts. Many companies offer pooling, exchange, and power-by-the-hour programs as alternative to operators buying stock of expensive rotatables to support their fleet. A power-by-the-hour program, or PBH for short, is where the operator has a contract where they agree to pay a predetermined rate based off the PN supported and the hours flown by the covered fleet. This helps operators several ways. One, they don't have to worry about administering the component repair with shop and focus their time on

other needs of the operation. This includes negotiating with shops, replacing per units, and making sure all AD/SB are complied with. PBH allows more predictable expenses for operators while eliminating the heavy investment of stock for all PN covered.” And to conclude this section, Christopher Olds has one simple solution: “Stop buying what you can access instead”. He then tells us in more detail: “That’s the whole shift. Exchange, pooling, and consignment give operators the material they need without the balance-sheet drag of owning it — which is exactly why we structured AerSale’s USM business the way we did, with enough breadth across mainline platforms that customers can lean on our stock instead of their own. Leasing high-value rotatables works the same way: it turns a capital expense into an operating one. Operators still underuse: matching spares strategy to fleet ownership structure. An owned aircraft and a leased one three years from return shouldn’t be managed on the same inventory policy. If you know the return conditions, plan the material spend against the lease term — don’t overhaul a part that’s going back to the lessor before it ever needs that overhaul. Discipline saves real money. Location still matters. Assuming 24-to-48-hour shipping solved the geography problem — it didn’t, not fully. For a true AOG, proximity still wins, and VAT and tariff exposure can quietly add cost and delay depending on where the part is coming from and what border it’s crossing. The operators doing this well are thinking about part value, lease horizon, and geography together, not in isolation.”



Marlene Gonzalez, Managing Director, Cima Aviation, a Jet Parts Engineering company



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What role does component pooling play in reducing costs?

“Component pooling is often one of the most cost-effective ways to maintain availability while minimizing cost however it can occasionally expose an operator to lower-standard units if the pool’s baseline reliability isn’t strictly governed.” Marlene Gonzalez goes on to explain further: “NEACO effectively mitigates this liability by establishing an elevated standard technical baseline regardless of operator. At the repair station level, implementing enhanced, reliability-gear work scopes and strict minimum part requirements across the board ensures that every asset cycling through the pool adheres to NEACO’s elevated standard.

Component Pooling Highlights:

- **Reduced Capital Investment:** Converts large inventory purchases into predictable operating expenses.
- **Immediate AOG Support:** Provides rapid access to serviceable assets during unscheduled removals and AOG events.
- **MRO-Backed Exchange Programs:** Delivers immediate asset availability while repairs are completed in parallel.
- **Inventory Optimization:** Gives operators access to inventory only when needed, reducing ownership costs.”

As can be seen previously, component pooling has been identified as a cost-saving

exercise in terms of providing access to sufficient inventory, primarily because it shares the cost of investment and repairs. Jelani Cain further tells us that: “Pooling programmes can be setup various ways to best support the pooling partners. Some are by location, i.e., they support a list of PN any time an operator flies into a specific station. This is especially advantageous for airlines that operate out of a lot of stations infrequently; they receive part support in case they need a component AOG or to clear a MEL while not having to invest in inventory at all of those locations. Some pooling agreements are even set up to minimise risk, i.e., if a contracted part isn’t available at allocation and an operator needs it AOG, the pooling agreement will cover the expense of a loan. Many operators find the benefits of being members of a good pool outweigh the cost and risk. As far as Christopher Olds is concerned, “Pooling works because it lets operators share risk that none of them wants to carry alone. One provider, serving multiple customers, needs far less total inventory than each of those customers would need individually — and that shows up directly in lower carrying costs and faster AOG turnaround. The decision operators face is exclusive versus general access. Exclusive pooling ensures priority when an AOG hits but with a cost for the priority, because it ties up capacity that would otherwise serve other operators. General access has reduced costs but comes

“Component pooling is often one of the most cost-effective ways to maintain availability while minimizing cost however it can occasionally expose an operator to lower-standard units if the pool’s baseline reliability isn’t strictly governed.”

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“The biggest savings don’t always come from buying cheaper parts - they come from extending the useful life of the assets you already have.”

Andre op't Hof, Commercial Director - North America MRO Operations, Ontic MRO

with less certainty at the exact moment of need. We're also seeing a real shift away from nose-to-tail thinking. Operators are targeting pooling and exchange support at the specific ATA chapters — landing gear, APU's, hydraulics — that actually drive their removal activity, scheduled and unscheduled alike. That's not a coincidence; it tracks directly with where MTBUR erosion shows up first on aging fleets.”

Now here is a different perspective. “The biggest savings don’t always come from buying cheaper parts - they come from extending the useful life of the assets you already have.” Those are the sage words of Andre op't Hof. “Effective component support reduces unnecessary replacement, mitigates obsolescence and allows operators to continue flying aircraft safely and economically long after original production has ended.

Supporting components throughout their operational life isn't just good engineering; it's a more sustainable and cost-effective approach to fleet management,” he concludes, while Marko Niffka briefly states that: “Component pooling can help to address inventory costs for high-value items, albeit with the customer being required to accept the use of a component which is not theirs. As an alternative, by working with a large, capable MRO provider with competitive turn-around times (TATs) and strong yields can help mitigate the need to rely on component pools.”

If you could redesign the component support model for aging aircraft from scratch, what would you change to make it both more resilient and more cost-effective?

Now this question should produce some very interesting answers, so rather than keeping you waiting, let's cut to the chase.

Where Kevin Rimmer is concerned, he would “...create a more open and

competitive support environment that reduces dependence on single-source solutions and encourages engineering innovation.

- **Greater Component Standardization:**

Increase commonality and interchangeability across platforms to reduce inventory requirements and improve supportability.

- **Expanded Repair Development:**

Encourage greater use of DER-developed repairs and engineering-based life extension solutions that safely reduce ownership costs.

- **Improved Access to Alternative**

Solutions: Allow qualified engineering organizations and MROs greater opportunity to develop approved repairs, alternative materials, and reliability-driven modifications.

For aging aircraft, maintaining airworthy rotables economically and efficiently is challenging. Operators can combat this by embracing engineering innovation, approved alternative solutions, and proactive reliability strategies rather than relying on an “as needed” replacement-based maintenance model.”

“I'd move the industry away from thinking in terms of transactions and towards thinking in terms of stewardship,” suggests Andre op't Hof. He then continues: “Too often, support ends when production ends, even though aircraft may continue flying safely for decades. Instead, we need a model that recognises long-term parts stewardship as a core responsibility. That means preserving engineering knowledge, sustaining manufacturing capability, proactively managing obsolescence, and investing in the long-term support of critical components throughout their operational life. At Ontic, we believe in supporting parts “for a lifetime of flight” – that means that if we acquire established aerospace product lines, we take on responsibility for their long-term support, ensuring that operators continue to have access to the parts, expertise and engineering capability they need long after the original production



Andre op't Hof, Commercial Director - North America MRO Operations, Ontic MRO

programme has ended. It's a model that shifts the focus from end-of-production to end-of-life support, giving customers confidence that essential systems will remain supported for as long as they need them.” From another perspective, Marko Niffka comments that: “Ideally there would be more of a partnership approach between operators and MRO shops on the one hand, and parts repair providers on the other hand. Moving away from a purely transactional approach towards longer-term arrangements with large committed volumes could also help operators and their component providers to plan capacities and improve both commercial and technical performance (including repair yields and exchange availabilities).”

“If I can redesign the component support model for aging aircraft from scratch, there are a few changes I would make to make it more resilient and more cost effective,” says Jelani Cain. He goes on: “One, I would make tech documents for older aircraft free and more accessible 145s. If the FAA could implement some type of “sunset” rule where all CMMs are available to all 145's for free after a certain point of a fleet's life, i.e., when only 200 or less of that specific aircraft is still operating, it will make a big difference in the aftermarket.

Shops and operators currently must go to the manufacturer to get access to CMMs and often need to pay for it if they don't own an aircraft with that component installed. As fleets age and more aircraft retire, the demand for programs supporting them also decrease. The incentive for 145's to invest in equipment and tech documents



Marko Niffka, Director Marketing and Sales EMEA & Asia, StandardAero

is reduce along with their return on invest. This sometimes leads to the manufacturer being the only option for component repairs which might lead to excessive lead-times and expenses for the operators. If 145's that already have the benches, manpower and experience to service a component, having free access to CMM's would increase the number of shops with capabilities, increasing competition and give operator's more choices and better prices."

Christopher Olds suggests that we should "Stop treating teardown, repair, and distribution as three separate businesses run by three separate providers with three separate sets of incentives. Place them under one structure, working from the same data, and inventory decisions, repair routing, and customer demand all start informing each other in real time instead of operating in silos. That's the direction we've taken AerSale — pairing our teardown pipeline with MRO capability so a part's entire lifecycle is managed as one continuous process, not a handoff." He goes on to say that: "Tailored network regionally, deliberately, rather than around a single hub that looks efficient on a spreadsheet. Shipping is fast now, but proximity still matters for genuine AOG events, and VAT

“ Ideally there would be more of a partnership approach between operators and MRO shops on the one hand, and parts repair providers on the other hand. Moving away from a purely transactional approach towards longer-term arrangements with large committed volumes could also help operators and their component providers to plan capacities and improve both commercial and technical performance. ”

Marko Niffka, Director Marketing and Sales EMEA & Asia, StandardAero

and tariff jurisdictions can erode the benefit of a fast shipment if the part's crossing the wrong border. Layer in demand forecasting built on MTBUR trends and ATA-chapter-level removal data, so the chapters driving the most activity — gear, APUs, the usual suspects on aging fleets — are anticipated rather than chased after the fact. Last piece: expand pooling and exchange infrastructure into the markets that don't have it yet, where support is still fragmented and heavily OEM-dependent. Build all of that together and you establish support that's actually built for how aging aircraft behave."

Sometimes MRO decisions are based on the actual plane and the model. Pascal Parant has focused in particular on the A320, which if nothing else, makes one wonder where all that time has gone as the first units that came off the production line in 2010 and would now be classed as an 'ageing aircraft'. To conclude this article, he advises that: "Once an aircraft type has been in service for around 15 to 18 years, I would progressively move away from full PBH coverage toward lighter pooling arrangements while taking advantage of the increasingly liquid USM market. At that stage, I would build my own inventory at a much lower acquisition cost and optimise the repair-versus-replace decision whenever a component is removed. The A320neo, particularly those powered by the GTF, is a very interesting exception. More than 25 aircraft have already been parted out to generate USM, something we at Vallair

had never seen so early in an aircraft programme. This is largely the consequence of the well-known GTF issues.

Aircraft values increased dramatically, while AOGs caused by engine problems forced lessors to rethink their strategies. Faced with uncertainty over engine availability, soaring engine values, and strong demand for both engines and airframe material, many owners realised they could generate greater returns by parting out aircraft than by continuing to lease them.

As a result, we have seen a significant volume of USM becoming available less than 12 years after the aircraft entered service, which is highly unusual. Even in that environment, I would still favour a PBH solution for the A320neo, while negotiating pricing to reflect the growing availability of USM and reduce the associated capital costs. I would not, however, switch to a pure time-and-material model. Inventory acquisition costs for the neo family remain far too high today to make that strategy economically attractive," he advises.



Pascal Parant, Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer – Vallair Group

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Pascal Parant, Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer – Vallair Group



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It all started with one JT8D engine

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THE EVOLUTION OF WILLIS LEASE FINANCE CORPORATION

PART ONE

The Idea That Changed Engine Ownership

How Charlie Willis Helped Pioneer the Aircraft Engine Leasing Business

Willis Lease Finance Corporation (WLFC) was established in 1985 around an idea that was still largely untested in commercial aviation: an aircraft engine could be leased independently from the aircraft it powered.

At the center of that idea was Charles F. "Charlie" Willis IV. A visionary aviation leader and industry pioneer, Willis is widely credited with helping introduce the concept of commercial aircraft engine leasing. Alongside the growth of aircraft leasing, the model fundamentally changed how airlines could manage their fleets—providing greater flexibility, improving capital efficiency and strengthening operational resilience.

His foresight helped reshape the aviation-finance landscape and laid important groundwork for today's global engine-leasing ecosystem. That vision became the foundation of WLFC.

When Willis began building the company, engines were not yet widely viewed as the highly mobile, independently financeable assets they are today. Airlines bought engines, maintenance organizations worked

on them and owners financed them.

Willis saw something different: Why should an operator have to own an engine simply because it needs to use one?

An early maintenance customer needed an engine on lease, and with no established independent engine-leasing market readily available to meet that requirement, Willis decided to provide one himself. He mortgaged his home, acquired an engine and put it on lease. One engine. One maintenance customer. And an idea that would help reshape the way airlines manage some of their most valuable assets.

Aviation in the Family

Aviation was already deeply embedded in the Willis family. Charlie's father, Charles Willis, Jr., a World War II Navy pilot, served as President and CEO of Alaska Airlines from 1957 to 1972. Charlie himself would later work for Alaska Airlines in flight operations, sales and marketing before pursuing his own aviation ventures.

That heritage gave Willis an early view of aviation not simply as a collection of aircraft, but as an operating system in which capital, equipment, maintenance and reliability all had to work together. That perspective would ultimately become central to WLFC.

What began as an engine-leasing business would over four decades expand into a global aviation platform

encompassing asset management, material solutions, engine and airframe disassembly, maintenance and other services designed to support aviation assets throughout their lifecycles.

Today, that aviation lineage continues with Charlie's son, Austin Willis, serving as CEO of WLFC—but the company's evolution has remained rooted in the same fundamental idea: understanding the engine not simply as an asset, but as part of a much larger operating ecosystem.

And it started with seeing the engine differently.



Charles F. Willis Jr.

An Engine as an Independent Asset

A commercial aircraft engine can have an economic and operational life independent of the aircraft on which it happens to be installed. An engine can be removed from one aircraft, enter an MRO facility, return to service on another aircraft and later transfer to an entirely different operator. Its technical and economic life follows a different path from the airframe. Willis recognized the opportunity in that independence. If an engine could move between aircraft and operators, it could also move between customers financially. It could be leased.

Solving an MRO Problem with a Financial Solution

The origins of the Willis model are particularly relevant to MRO360 because the customer requirement at the heart of the story was connected to maintenance. Engines periodically come off-wing for inspection, repair, overhaul or replacement of life-limited components. The aircraft may remain perfectly capable of flying, but without a serviceable engine it cannot generate revenue.

Historically, an airline addressed that problem by owning spare engines. The drawback was capital efficiency. An operator might require a spare during a shop visit without needing that engine permanently. Willis offered another answer: Instead of owning every spare engine you might need, gain access to one when you need it. The operator could preserve capital. WLFC could redeploy



Austin Willis

the engine when the requirement ended. And the same asset could generate value through multiple leases and maintenance cycles. Willis was beginning to separate two concepts aviation had traditionally connected: engine availability and engine ownership.

Understanding What Creates Engine Value

Turning that insight into a business required more than simply buying engines and leasing them. Engines are unusual financial assets because their value is deeply connected to their technical condition. Hours and cycles matter. Life remaining on life-limited parts matters. Configuration and records matter. And the timing and cost of the next shop visit can dramatically affect value. For WLFC, understanding the investment meant understanding the engine.

When should it go through a shop visit? What work scope makes economic sense? How will that investment affect future value? Should the engine be repaired, redeployed or eventually disassembled for material? Those questions would ultimately pull WLFC much deeper into the aftermarket. The connection between leasing and MRO was present almost from the beginning.

From One Engine to a Business

During WLFC's first decade, commercial fleets expanded and airline maintenance requirements grew with them. More aircraft meant more engines. More engines meant more shop visits. And more shop visits meant greater demand for spare-engine capacity.

WLFC built its business around that requirement, developing relationships with airlines, MRO organizations, manufacturers, financial institutions and technical specialists around the world. The asset might be financial, but the customer's requirement was operational: the right engine, in the right condition, available at the right time.

The concept Charlie Willis had backed personally was becoming a repeatable business model. But engine leasing is capital intensive. To scale, WLFC needed greater access to financing. In 1996, just over a decade after its establishment, Willis Lease Finance Corporation completed its initial public offering and began trading publicly on Nasdaq under the ticker WLFC.



Charles F. "Charlie" Willis IV.

Charlie Willis had demonstrated that a customer did not necessarily have to own the engine it needed.

Now WLFC had to prove the model could scale. That would become the company's next chapter.



Charlie and Austin Willis at MRO Americas April 2025

NEXT: PART TWO — PROVING THE MODEL

How WLFC used capital, technical expertise and an expanding aftermarket presence to turn a pioneering leasing concept into a global engine platform—and began assembling the pieces of what would become an integrated aviation-services business.

Read in the September edition of *AviTrader MRO 360°* magazine.



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Practical support for a time-critical aviation environment

In aviation, operational resilience is tested under pressure, and a single grounded aircraft can disrupt schedules, stretch maintenance resources, affect customer commitments, and quickly become a wider commercial issue. At that point, the question is whether the right partner can bring together stock, logistics, repair capability, and response speed quickly enough to restore continuity for the operator.

That is the role AJW Group has played for more than 90 years.

A dynamic, privately owned, and independent aviation company, AJW Group has built its reputation on helping customers manage complexity across the aviation supply chain. Headquartered in West Sussex, UK, the Group supports the commercial, business, and defence aerospace sectors through end-to-end solutions for component provision and repair, warehousing, and logistics. Its state-of-the-art MRO facility, AJW Technique, is in Montreal, Canada, while AJW Technique Europe is based in West Sussex. Together with operational hubs and local offices on every continent, AJW

has the footprint to support customers on a global scale.

Over the decades, AJW has built a reputation for practical delivery. The Group supports more than 1,000 airlines across 100 countries by helping customers optimise inventory, streamline procurement, and improve efficiency across daily operations and time-critical events. Its business ethos of quality and flexibility continues to shape the customer experience, supporting long-term relationships built on trust.

For airlines and MRO organisations fleet availability, repair cycles, stock positioning, supplier responsiveness, and logistics performance all interact. When one part of that chain slows, the effects are felt across maintenance planning, dispatch reliability, and cost control. For operators under constant pressure to maximise aircraft availability, the challenge is that supply, logistics, and repair must all work together if operations are to keep moving.

AJW supports all major commercial and business jet platforms, with a focus on the latest generation of Airbus and Boeing aircraft. Behind that offer sits

significant scale: 450,000 line items of inventory valued at more than US\$500 million, managed to support customers worldwide. Combined with specialist repair capability and a global logistics network, holding extensive inventory allows AJW to respond to planned requirements and urgent operational events with speed and confidence.

Few situations test that capability more sharply than an AOG event. The commercial impact can be immediate, but the reasons delays build are complex and emerge through a chain of friction points: fragmented sourcing, limited stock visibility, uncertainty over whether a repair, loan, or exchange is the right route, and logistics processes that do not move at the pace the situation demands. For procurement and maintenance leaders, those gaps create pressure quickly.

AJW has shaped its aircraft spare parts support around those realities. Its support model combines aircraft spares sales, loans, exchanges, repair management, logistics, and 24/7/365 AOG response so customers can move from first enquiry to operational solution

without unnecessary handoffs. Rather than treating sourcing, delivery, and repair as separate conversations, AJW's model is designed to connect them.

That is reflected clearly in the Group's AOG support. AJW has a dedicated AOG team, extensive inventory available at strategic locations around the world. The Group operates a major warehouse and logistics hub at its headquarters in West Sussex, which serves as a primary distribution point for aircraft spare parts globally. Additionally, it has strategic aircraft spares held globally across our operational hubs and local offices in Africa, Asia Pacific, China, CIS, Europe (Malpensa, Italy and Amsterdam, Netherlands), Latin America, Middle East, and North America. Its Montreal-based MRO facility also supports component repair and parts distribution.

Whether the request sits within a contractual arrangement such as a PBH (Power-by-the-Hour) agreement, or comes as a one-off time-critical event, the objective is to help return the aircraft to service with minimal delay.

That operational focus is one reason AJW continues to resonate with commercial airline and MRO procurement and maintenance teams. Customers want a partner that can help them assess the right route quickly, secure the part or support required, and coordinate delivery in a way that protects maintenance schedules and wider operational performance.

Loans and exchanges are a good example of that flexibility. In many cases, waiting for a repair cycle is not the



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most effective operational choice. When utilisation is high and time pressure is mounting, a loan or exchange can provide the fastest route back to service. AJW's support structure incorporates those options as part of a coordinated response, giving customers more flexibility when they need it most.

Logistics is equally central. Sourcing and moving a component quickly and compliantly is vital. AJW's support content highlights round-the-clock logistics, the prompt delivery of critical parts worldwide, and the specialist expertise required to navigate customs, hazardous goods regulations, and export controls. In urgent situations, an effective and efficient AOG response is what operators want.

AJW also strengthens that model through digital access. By embracing digital transformation, the Group has

developed e-Marketplace with AJW eventory and a 24/7/365 customer portal, helping customers access support and information when timing is critical. In an industry where visibility can shape operational decision-making, that digital layer improves the responsiveness of the wider service model.

At its core, AJW remains a service-led organisation built around quality, agility, and accountability. That approach continues to shape the customer experience and underpins the Group's role in supply chain fulfilment.

AJW's long history in aviation has given it a practical understanding of those demands. Its global presence, technical capability, and scale matter, but their value lies in how they come together in practice.

That is where AJW's aircraft spare parts support has its strength. It brings together strategically positioned inventory, logistics readiness, clearly understood repair options and a support model that helps teams act with speed and confidence.

For a business with more than 90 years in aviation, AJW remains relevant because it helps customers deal with familiar operational pressures with dependability, while continuing to adapt to a changing industry. When aircraft are grounded and time is critical, that dependability can make the difference between extended disruption and a return to service.



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*Footnote: This article was developed with AI-assisted editorial support, using AJW Group source content, briefing, and review.



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AI In Aircraft Maintenance

How the introduction of artificial intelligence has taken the digitalisation of MRO systems to a new level

By David Dundas

Artificial intelligence (AI) is almost being treated like a magic bullet these days and there are very few elements of our lives that are not either directly or indirectly affected by its roll-out. For MRO operators it seems at though AI has come at a time when the digitalisation of much of this sector of the aerospace industry has only just taken effect and many individuals are still getting used to the dramatic changes in working practices. Certainly, digitalisation has improved

efficiency and helped streamline many procedures, but one has to wonder if change can happen too fast and whether it is safe to let AI loose in an environment where there simply is no room for error. While in some environments an AI-based error can result in a financial loss, in this industry a mistake can cost many lives. One is therefore left to ask the question of whether AI can be fully trusted today, or whether all the hype has seen the MRO sector almost forced to adopt it to simply to keep up with the times.

are made based on visual inspections? Are we even sure that AI is here for good when until recently all it promised was potential? "AI in aircraft maintenance is past the proof-of-concept stage but not yet mainstream," says Monica Badra, Founder & CEO, Aero NextGen, Inc. She elaborates further: "What we're seeing today is deployment in controlled, well-defined use cases — anomaly detection in sensor data, unscheduled removal prediction for high-cost components, and natural language search across technical documentation. Most mature implementations are sitting inside the larger airline and OEM ecosystems, where data volume and infrastructure investment make the business case clear. For the MRO sector — particularly independent shops under US\$500m in revenue — adoption

How would you describe the current role of AI in aircraft maintenance today?

How much involvement in the MRO sector can AI have when so many decisions



Monica Badra, Founder & CEO, Aero NextGen, Inc

“For the MRO sector — particularly independent shops under US\$500m in revenue — adoption is still early. The technology exists; the integration pathways and change management rarely do. The honest state of play: AI is adding real value in pockets, but it hasn't yet transformed day-to-day maintenance operations at scale.”

Monica Badra, Founder & CEO, Aero NextGen, Inc



is still early. The technology exists; the integration pathways and change management rarely do. The honest state of play: AI is adding real value in pockets, but it hasn't yet transformed day-to-day maintenance operations at scale." Tom Eskola, Vice President, Panasonic Technical Services, Panasonic Avionics is of a similar persuasion to Monica Badra when he tells us that "Today, AI in aircraft maintenance is best understood as a decision-support rather than a replacement for skilled technicians. Its role is to turn large volumes of operational data into useful information, helping maintenance teams identify patterns, prioritise faults and investigate potential issues more efficiently. Within Panasonic Technical Services (PTS), Panasonic Avionics' global maintenance and support network for in-flight engagement and communications (IFEC) systems, we see AI supporting the industry's move from reactive towards more proactive maintenance. This becomes more valuable within a connected aircraft environment. For example, Converix, Panasonic Avionics' modular onboard computing and application-hosting platform for non-safety-critical services, is designed to host airline and third-party applications and make aircraft data available for operational uses. Within that environment, our responsible AI approach places emphasis on transparency, governance and airline control. AI can flag what requires attention,

support faster diagnosis and help engineers make better-informed decisions. However, qualified maintenance professionals remain firmly at the centre of every safety-critical outcome."

From a positive and constructive viewpoint "AI is all about teaming up with us instead of taking over our jobs. The whole idea is 'human AND machine': using AI to help people become 'super-users,'" suggests Tulika Dayal Considine, COO & Co-Founder, SkySelect, Inc. "Right now, AI is really good at quickly sifting through tons of structured and unstructured data: automating repetitive work like identifying what parts to buy, when to buy, where to buy it, and which to option to pick. For instance, it handles repetitive tasks like material sourcing, RFQ processing, and basic compliance checks. This shift changes maintenance operations from reactive firefighting to a more coordinated, data-driven, and predictive approach. As a result, people can focus on making strategic decisions and tackling more complex challenges." For Tom Torosian, Director of Aviation Business Development, TruVideo, one of the problems is training data, or lack of it. He feels that "Right now, AI in aviation maintenance is more promise than reality, but the promise is real. It's working well where clean, structured data already exists, such as in engine health monitoring, component life tracking, and fleet trend analysis. Those are genuine successes.

But step onto the hangar floor, and you hit a wall. The data driving maintenance decisions – what the technician sees, what the fault looks like on the aircraft, and what the repair entails – remains largely verbal and invisible to AI. At TruVideo, we believe AI is only as good as the operational data it's trained on, and today's maintenance environment is missing a critical layer: a Video Intelligence Layer. Structured, time-stamped, tamper-resistant video intelligence captured at the moment an issue is identified provides AI with the context it has never had before."

Which maintenance activities are seeing the greatest benefits from AI first?

The earliest and clearest benefits are likely to be in diagnostics, fault isolation, and proactive maintenance planning. These are data-rich areas where AI can identify anomalies, compare performance across systems and help technicians narrow down the likely cause of a problem. Tom Eskola explains further: "This can reduce the time spent investigating intermittent or complex faults and allow maintenance teams to prepare before an aircraft arrives. At PTS, we combine digital monitoring with physical maintenance execution, spares support and field services. PTS' Total Care Package is a lifecycle-support program that brings together areas such as

system-performance reporting, proactive maintenance, diagnostics, program management and access to OEM expertise. AI can strengthen that model by making troubleshooting and maintenance planning more targeted. Real-time health monitoring is another strong early use case. Our newest IFE systems include a proprietary aircraft health monitoring capability that feeds continuous data through Converix. This allows maintenance teams to detect emerging issues before they cause disruption, moving from solving problems to identifying and fixing them before they become disruptive. Condition-based planning also supports early identification as instead of relying on fixed schedules, AI-driven analytics help airlines optimise maintenance intervals and resource allocation. Over time, this can support more condition-based planning, allowing airlines to schedule work according to system performance rather than relying on fixed intervals or waiting for a complete failure." Data is also very much at the forefront where Tulika Dayal Considine is concerned. She shares with us that "Right now, we're seeing the biggest benefits in areas where there's a lot of data to handle and high operational demands: **Supply Chain & Parts Sourcing:** AI helps automate routine purchasing, match part requirements with global suppliers, and avoid those frustrating delays that come with AOG situations. **Smart Inventory Management:** By using predictive demand modelling, we can keep stock levels just right across various hubs. This approach helps lower holding costs, eliminate excess deadstock, and ensures that crucial components are ready to go before maintenance tasks begin. **Predictive Maintenance & Telemetry:** Analysing real-time engine and component sensor trends to catch failures before they cause unscheduled downtime. **Compliance & Contract Monitoring:** Cross-referencing maintenance records against Airworthiness Directives, service agreements, and lease return conditions," She concludes by saying that: "Of these, supply chain and sourcing are where we see the fastest, most measurable ROI - because the cost of getting it wrong, an aircraft on the ground, is so immediate and expensive."

Tom Torosian sees tremendous benefits to the integration of AI in certain visual aspects of MRO practices. "AI is earning its keep in areas where operators already have quality data, including engine trend

monitoring, component wear prediction, and optimising scheduled maintenance. AI-assisted search across maintenance manuals and service bulletins is also gaining traction on the hangar floor. But the biggest near-term opportunity is AOG troubleshooting. A widebody sitting on the ground can run an operator well into six figures per day. Today, a technician often describes the fault over the phone while an engineer makes critical decisions based on a second-hand verbal explanation. Delivering structured video evidence of the fault to the right expert in real time enables faster diagnosis, fewer clarification calls, better collaboration, and quicker return to service," he advises. Like Tom Eskola and Tulika Dayal, Monica Badra is also focused on data, though not solely. As she explains: "Predictive maintenance and reliability-centred maintenance planning are leading because they're data-rich and the cost of unplanned removals is quantifiable. Engine health monitoring and APU trend analysis have clear ROI that justifies the investment. Beyond those, two areas are gaining traction faster than most realise: parts demand forecasting, which directly compresses working capital, and technical records digitisation with intelligent classification. The latter is less glamorous but operationally critical — the backlog of paper-based maintenance records at legacy MROs is enormous, and AI-assisted processing is making aircraft sales and lease transitions significantly faster. Compliance workload automation, specifically tracking airworthiness directives against fleet configurations, is also gaining ground at CAMO organisations."

How might AI improve access to maintenance manuals, service bulletins, and troubleshooting procedures?

As with so many aspects of digitalisation, the data used for training and any data that AI interacts with needs to be totally accurate. As the expression goes, "Rubbish in, rubbish out". Tulika Dayal Considine is very much aware of this as she tells us that: "AI, when integrated with a physical device like smart glasses, can greatly reduce the time technicians spend on maintenance tasks. Much of a technician's day is often spent searching for information rather than actually fixing issues. However, there is a caveat regarding accuracy: source documents can vary

significantly in format and completeness, so any answers generated by AI must be verified against the authoritative source before any actions are taken. When used effectively, this technology can save a considerable amount of time." For Tom Torosian, the challenge is dealing with the mountain of legacy paperwork - thousands of manuals, constant revisions, and technicians expected to locate the correct procedure under significant time pressure. As he says, "The model worth building puts visual documentation at the centre of that workflow. A technician captures what they see, and that video evidence becomes the query. AI then surfaces the relevant aircraft maintenance manual section, service bulletin, or troubleshooting procedure while maintaining a continuous, time-stamped visual record attached to the work order."

Where Monica Badra is concerned, this is one of the most underserved opportunities in the sector. Technicians today still lose meaningful time searching across AMMs, CMMs, SRMs, and service bulletins — often across multiple OEM portals with inconsistent interfaces. AI-powered retrieval, purpose-built for aviation technical documentation, can surface the right procedure, with the correct revision, for the specific aircraft configuration in front of a technician in seconds rather than minutes. She expands on this: "Beyond search, large language models trained on aviation technical content can help with troubleshooting guidance — presenting the most relevant fault isolation steps without requiring the technician to manually cross-reference multiple documents. For MROs evaluating these capabilities, the matching challenge is real: the market has dozens of vendors claiming this functionality, with very different levels of aviation-specific accuracy. Aero NextGen's Solution Finder was built precisely to help shops cut through that noise — a free, vendor-neutral quiz that surfaces best-fit options based on fleet type, documentation environment, and operational priorities, not vendor marketing claims." There is no question that AI can make technical information much easier and faster to navigate and Tom Eskola rightly points out that maintenance manuals, service bulletins, and troubleshooting documents are often extensive and spread across multiple sources. "An AI-supported system could allow an engineer to ask

“An AI-supported system could allow an engineer to ask a direct question and receive a focused response linked to the relevant approved documentation. The important point is that AI should not replace the source material, but instead identify the applicable procedure, show where the information came from and ensure that the technician is working from the current revision.”

Tom Eskola, Vice President, Panasonic Technical Services, Panasonic Avionics

a direct question and receive a focused response linked to the relevant approved documentation. The important point is that AI should not replace the source material, but instead identify the applicable procedure, show where the information came from and ensure that the technician is working from the current revision. The greater opportunity comes from connecting this technical documentation with live system data. For instance, a detected fault could be matched with the relevant troubleshooting procedure, service bulletin or maintenance history. This is where our Converix system will become increasingly relevant as it is designed to host non-safety-critical applications and bring together information from different aircraft and cabin systems. This means it can support tools that provide contextual guidance closer to the point of work. Used correctly, this could shorten troubleshooting time, improve consistency, and help technicians find the correct information quicker, while also ensuring

teams always work from current, compliant information. The goal is not to remove the engineer's judgment, but to put the right knowledge in front of them exactly when they need it,” he adds.

Which skills will become more important for maintenance professionals as AI becomes more common?

As aircraft systems become more connected and software-driven, maintenance professionals will increasingly need to combine traditional engineering expertise with stronger digital skills. Data literacy will become particularly important, as technicians must be able to interpret system-health information, understand what AI recommendations mean, and recognise when to trust or challenge them. Tom Eskola at Panasonic Avionics believes that “Familiarity with connected diagnostic platforms, software configurations and digital maintenance tools will also become more valuable. As aircraft and cabin systems become increasingly integrated, engineers may need a broader understanding of networks, data flows and cybersecurity alongside their existing mechanical, electrical and avionics knowledge.” He then adds that: “Critical thinking will remain essential as while AI



Tom Eskola, Vice President, Panasonic Technical Services, Panasonic Avionics

provides recommendations, technicians must still evaluate that recommendation against approved procedures and have the confidence to evaluate them rather than accept them blindly. Regulatory must therefore become more, not less important, and training can no longer be a one-time event. As tools and systems evolve quickly, ongoing development needs to keep teams up-to-date and capable across both digital and hands-on work.” As routine data entry and document searches get automated, the skills that people need are changing. Instead of doing repetitive tasks, professionals now have to focus on curating, verifying, and thinking critically. It's no longer just about manual work; they need to evaluate and confirm AI-generated suggestions in real-world situations, using their creativity to tackle complex maintenance problems. Plus, having a solid grasp of how AI comes up with its recommendations helps ensure that humans stay legally accountable for approvals and keep up with airworthiness standards.” Tulika Dayal Considine, COO & Co-Founder of SkySelect, Inc feels that as routine data entry and document searches get automated, the skills that



Tulika Dayal Considine, COO & Co-Founder, SkySelect, Inc

“Instead of doing repetitive tasks, professionals now have to focus on curating, verifying, and thinking critically. It's no longer just about manual work; they need to evaluate and confirm AI-generated suggestions in real-world situations, using their creativity to tackle complex maintenance problems.”

Tulika Dayal Considine, COO & Co-Founder, SkySelect, Inc



people need are changing. She backs this up by commenting that “Instead of doing repetitive tasks, professionals now have to focus on curating, verifying, and thinking critically. It’s no longer just about manual work; they need to evaluate and confirm AI-generated suggestions in real-world situations, using their creativity to tackle complex maintenance problems. Plus, having a solid grasp of how AI comes up with its recommendations helps ensure that humans stay legally accountable for approvals and keep up with airworthiness standards.”

TruVideo specialises in the visual aspects of the MRO sector and like all companies is learning to adapt to and embrace AI. Tom Torosian, Director of Aviation Business Development, believes that “Digital fluency with visual documentation will become an essential skill. As AI learns from visual maintenance data, technicians who document work effectively will become significantly more productive and influential. But this only works if technicians trust it. No one wants to feel like they’re being recorded for a performance review, and those concerns are legitimate. The organisations that get this right will be clear from the outset: visual documentation exists to protect the technician’s work and support their decisions, not to second-guess them. Get that wrong and no amount of technology will save the rollout.” At Aero NextGen, Inc, Company CEO and Founder Monica Badra sees data literacy sitting at the top of the list, “not data

science, but the ability to interpret AI-generated outputs critically and recognise when a prediction or recommendation needs to be questioned,” she further explains. “That judgment capability is the difference between AI as a tool and AI as a liability. Alongside that, understanding the limits of model confidence matters enormously in a safety-critical environment. Technicians and planners who can articulate why a system produced a particular recommendation — and when to override it — will be disproportionately valuable. On the technical side, integration fluency is becoming essential: the ability to work across connected systems, understand data handoffs between maintenance platforms and AI modules, and participate meaningfully in implementation decisions rather than just receiving the output,” she concludes.

What level of confidence is needed before maintenance organisations trust AI in safety-critical decisions?

As we mentioned at the beginning, AI may not be new, but its roll-out into the MRO workspace is, and it seems to have gathered pace. The question is, at what cost? Not just in fiscal terms, but in terms of safety and accuracy. As Monica Badra puts it: “The bar needs to be genuinely high, and it should be defined operationally, not just statistically. A model accuracy figure in isolation is not

sufficient justification. What matters is: how does the system perform on your aircraft types, your maintenance environment, your historical data quality? Organisations need to understand failure modes — not just average performance. Explainability is non-negotiable for safety-adjacent decisions; a black-box output is not acceptable when the consequence of an error is an airworthiness event. Regulatory alignment matters too — EASA and FAA guidance on AI in aviation is evolving, and any implementation needs to track that actively. In practice, most mature operators are running AI as a decision-support layer rather than a decision-making one, with human sign-off retained. That architecture, applied with rigor, is the right posture for this stage of the technology’s maturity.” The threshold for safety-critical decisions must remain extremely high. Aviation operates under rigorous safety and regulatory standards, and AI does not change this. An AI system would need to demonstrate consistent performance within a clearly defined use case, supported by rigorous validation, traceable data and documented limitations. Beyond this, Tom Eskola believes that “Maintenance organisations must be able to understand how the system reached a recommendation, which information it used and how reliably it performs under different operating conditions. Strong configuration control, cybersecurity, human-factors assessment and regulatory acceptance would also be required.

This is why Converix was designed as an onboard hosting and computing platform for non-safety-critical applications as, within this scope, our responsible AI approach emphasises airline control, transparency and governance. We see AI's near-term role as assisting qualified professionals rather than replacing their authority. It can surface relevant information, identify anomalies and recommend areas for investigation, but the final decision should remain with authorised personnel working within approved maintenance procedures." He concludes by saying that: "Trust will be built gradually through measurable performance, operational experience, clear human oversight and regulatory approval."

Tulika Dayal Considine takes a cautious approach, where trust is critical. "Before maintenance teams can rely on AI for safety-critical decisions, the system needs to show it can predict outcomes reliably, explain itself completely, have almost zero chances of critical failures, and align with aviation safety standards. Until we can fully trust autonomous systems and have them certified, it's best to use AI as a supportive tool, while human engineers keep the final legal and safety responsibility," she cautions. "Explainable, traceable, and audit ready. That's the bar," says Tom Torosian, making it clear that: "Aviation doesn't accept something simply because it works most of the time, and AI shouldn't be held to a different standard. That's why the industry needs to build around evidence, not just documentation. Structured, time-stamped visual records tied directly to the work order create a chain of evidence that makes AI-assisted maintenance decisions explainable, traceable and defensible."



Tom Torosian, Director of Aviation Business Development, TruVideo

Which AI capability do you believe is currently overhyped, and which is underestimated?

The common theme here is autonomous maintenance decision making in terms of overhyped capabilities. As Tom Eskola points out, "The idea that AI will soon replace technicians or independently manage safety-critical maintenance underestimates the complexity of aircraft systems, the demands of certification and the importance of practical engineering experience. Many tasks will continue to depend on experienced technicians working directly on the aircraft, and they should. What is underestimated is AI's ability to improve everyday maintenance execution. Faster fault isolation, more effective access to technical information and better maintenance planning may not attract the same attention as full autonomy, but they can deliver substantial operational benefits. The real challenge is the final step between identifying an issue and resolving it. An AI-generated alert is useful only when it reaches the right team, is supported by reliable evidence and results in an appropriate maintenance action. This is where connected platforms and technical support operations become important. By linking data, diagnostics, documentation and maintenance execution, AI can help airlines act more quickly and consistently. Well-governed AI integrated into existing workflows is likely to create far more value than ambitious standalone demonstrations." For Tulika Dayal Considine, the idea of fully autonomous maintenance engineering sounds exciting and that it suggests that AI could take over diagnosing complex system failures and certifying airworthiness all by itself. She further says that "... it's important to remember that aviation is governed by strict legal, safety, and regulatory rules. Even with great accuracy, we'll always need a human touch for those crucial decisions and to ensure accountability. On the flip side, back-office automation and supply

chain intelligence are often overlooked. Automated sourcing, part-matching algorithms, and inventory optimisation can tackle huge inefficiencies, like the \$50 billion tied up in excess inventory and US\$30 billion in costs from grounded aircraft. By making the procurement process more efficient, we can keep planes in the air and see quick, tangible returns on investment."

Tom Torosian is unequivocal in terms of autonomous maintenance decision making in the foreseeable future as being overhyped. However, on the underestimated side of things he sees "AI's ability to take administrative weight off technicians. Sign-offs, logbook entries and compliance paperwork pull skilled people away from aircraft. If AI can help give a technician back even an hour in a shift by relieving the documentation burden, that's real value delivered today, not five years out. It isn't glamorous, and that's exactly why it's overlooked." Monica Badra brings everything to a close as she discusses both aspects. For her, "The pitch for fully autonomous maintenance scheduling driven by AI is compelling. However, as she explains, "... the reality in most MRO environments is that data quality, system integration depth, and regulatory oversight requirements make true autonomy impractical in the near term. The demos look impressive; the production deployments rarely match them." Where underestimated capabilities are concerned, she feels that is in the area of the commercial and operational side of MRO businesses — quote generation, capacity planning, customer communication, and contract review. "These workflows are labour intensive, directly affect margins, and don't carry the same regulatory complexity as airworthiness decisions. The ROI case is faster and more straightforward, yet most AI investment in aviation gravitates toward the technically complex applications while these high-impact business process improvements get overlooked," she advises.

“If AI can help give a technician back even an hour in a shift by relieving the documentation burden, that's real value delivered today, not five years out. It isn't glamorous, and that's exactly why it's overlooked.” Tom Torosian, Director of Aviation Business Development.

Tom Torosian, Director of Aviation Business Development, TruVideo

A Revolution in Base Maintenance Intelligence for MROs

Introduction

The aircraft maintenance industry is at a point where the volume of data and the maturity of analytical technologies have changed fundamentally. Advances in artificial intelligence, semantic analysis, and large-scale data processing now make it feasible to understand maintenance activity at a level of depth and consistency that was not achievable previously. This creates an opportunity not only to improve existing processes, but also to rethink how maintenance intelligence itself is created and applied.

This white paper details a new approach to maintenance intelligence. One that moves beyond static task execution and historical reporting, towards intent-based learning and predictive foresight. It examines why traditional systems have struggled to support learning in third-party maintenance and how emerging technologies can overcome limitations that were previously considered structural and unavoidable.

For MRO leaders, the implications are significant. Organisations that can learn faster, forecast more accurately, and apply insight consistently across customers and aircraft gain a lasting operational and commercial advantage. For the MRO sector collectively, shared learning has the potential to raise standards, reduce uncertainty, and change expectations of what is achievable in base maintenance planning and execution. This white paper outlines the foundations of this evolution, and what it means for the future of third-party maintenance.

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Executive summary

Third-party Maintenance Repair Organisations (MROs) operate in an environment where learning is structurally constrained. Whilst aircraft maintenance is governed by OEM Master Planning Documents (MPDs), execution occurs through Approved Maintenance Programs (AMPs) that vary widely in structure, terminology, and task definition. This fragmentation prevents aircraft data from being reliably aligned across customers, forcing MROs to reset planning assumptions and rely heavily on manual experience whenever they change operator.

Traditional maintenance systems reinforce this limitation. Built around AMP-level task execution, they rely on exact references, keyword matching, and manual mapping. Even advanced reporting remains siloed and customer-specific, making cumulative learning across third-party maintenance effectively impossible. As a result, predictive planning, accurate defect forecasting, and scalable operational insight have remained out of reach.

MRO-PRO addresses this problem by introducing a fundamentally different approach to maintenance intelligence. Instead of treating tasks, defects, parts, and tools as isolated records, MRO-PRO's platform understands what they represent functionally. Whilst humans intuitively grasp intent, doing so consistently and at scale across thousands of tasks and historical checks has never been achievable.

At the core of this approach is **MILE™ — the Maintenance Intelligence & Learning Engine**. MILE is a proprietary engine developed by MRO-PRO to understand maintenance intent and align all activity back to a single MPD-driven foundation. By seeing through operator-specific AMPs to the MPD beneath, MILE establishes a consistent source of truth for planning, execution, and analysis.

This MPD-level alignment enables a step change in capability. Tasks, defects, parts, tooling, and services can be traced back to their true origin, allowing defects and material demand to be forecast probabilistically, rather than assumed. Forecast accuracy improves continuously as execution data feeds back into the system and learning compounds over time.

This intelligence accelerates work pack planning, supports fully digital, paperless execution, and gives managers live insight into milestones, man-hour burn rates, and emergent workload. The same capability extends into sales, enabling accurate forecasting of labour, defects, and material during tendering, replacing spreadsheet-driven estimation with data-backed confidence.

MILE can operate at industry scale, dramatically accelerating learning and reducing the risk of entering new aircraft types or maintenance domains. Together, these capabilities define a new operating model for third-party maintenance, that's based on shared intelligence, continuous learning, and predictive foresight. MRO-PRO does not simply digitise existing workflows. It redefines how maintenance intelligence is created, learned, and applied.

The core industry problem: Fragmented maintenance intelligence in MROs

Third-party maintenance repair organisations (MROs) operate under fundamentally different conditions to in-house airline maintenance teams. Rather than supporting a single operator with a single Approved Maintenance Program (AMP), third-party MROs service multiple airlines across the same aircraft types. Although every aircraft is governed by an OEM Master Planning Document (MPD), MROs do not execute the MPD directly. Each operator or CAMO derives its own AMP from the MPD, introducing variation in task references, descriptions, structure, and grouping.

As a result, the same physical maintenance activity appears differently across customers. Execution data generated for one operator cannot be reliably aligned with data from another, even when the aircraft type and maintenance scope are identical. Planning intelligence, statistical analysis, and operational learning become trapped inside individual AMPs. When an MRO changes operator, accumulated knowledge is largely lost, forcing planners to reset estimates and rely once again on manual experience and judgement.

Traditional maintenance systems are built around this AMP-level reality. They depend on exact task references, keyword matching, manual mappings, and spreadsheet-driven analysis. These approaches may function within a single operator's environment but fail in a multi-operator context. Even advanced reporting tools remain fragmented, producing narrow, customer-specific insight that cannot be reused or scaled. This is not a tooling gap or a configuration issue; it is a foundational limitation. Without a reliable way to align data beyond the AMP, cumulative learning across third-party maintenance has historically been impossible.

The breakthrough insight: Maintenance intelligence must be built on intent not labels

The key insight behind MRO-PRO is that meaningful maintenance intelligence cannot be built on labels alone. Task references, descriptions, defect narratives, part numbers, and tooling identifiers are all examples of artefacts that vary between engineers, operators, and MROs, even when they refer to the same underlying maintenance activity.

For example, one engineer may record a defect as "MLG seal worn," another as "main landing gear leg seal U/S," and another as "left leg O-ring worn." Although these descriptions refer to the same underlying issue, traditional systems treat them as unrelated events. The same problem exists across AMP tasks, parts, tooling, services, and equipment, where small variations in wording, acronyms, part numbers, or naming conventions prevent reliable aggregation and meaningful analysis.

What matters is intent, which means what the task, defect, part, or tool represents in functional maintenance terms. By understanding intent, differences in wording, acronyms, and operator-specific conventions become irrelevant. Tasks can be aligned back to their MPD origin. Defects can be grouped by true underlying issue rather than free-text description. Parts and tools can be understood by what they are used for, not simply how they are labelled.

This is not a new concept to experienced planners or engineers. Humans intuitively understand intent. Given enough time, a skilled individual can review task cards, defect histories, and material usage and mentally connect related items across different descriptions and operators. However, this process is manual, subjective, and unscalable. Performing

this level of analysis across thousands of tasks, defects, parts, and historical checks would take weeks or months of effort and would need to be repeated for every new work pack and customer.

MRO-PRO's breakthrough is the ability to perform this intent-based understanding at scale. By using AI to analyse maintenance language, industry acronyms, and historical execution patterns, the system can identify intent and align data consistently in seconds rather than months. This makes it possible to move beyond simple historical reuse and into probability-driven forecasting, where the likelihood of defects, parts, and tooling requirements can be predicted reliably, based on true maintenance intent rather than fragmented labels.

Introducing MILE™ — Maintenance Intelligence & Learning Engine

To solve this problem, MRO-PRO has developed MILE™ — the Maintenance Intelligence & Learning Engine. MILE is a proprietary engine purpose-built to understand maintenance intent across tasks, defects, parts, tools, and services, and to align that intent back to a common MPD-driven foundation.

MILE converts maintenance data into semantic intelligence. It analyses task references, descriptions, aircraft context, defect narratives, industry acronyms, and historical outcomes to determine what each item represents functionally, not just how it is written. The engine has been trained on OEM MPDs, aviation-specific language, and industry terminology, allowing it to interpret varied expressions of the same maintenance activity with a level of accuracy that traditional systems cannot achieve.

From the outset, MILE delivers a high degree of accuracy by presenting probable matches and relationships based on learned patterns and intent recognition. Crucially, this is not a static process. Human planners and engineers remain in the loop, reviewing results, making refinements, and confirming or correcting matches where necessary. These human decisions are not lost but rather captured and fed back into MILE's learning process.

Over time, this creates a compounding intelligence effect. Each confirmation, adjustment, and correction improve the engine's understanding, meaning that future work packs benefit from the learning of past ones. Tasks that once required manual interpretation are recognised immediately. Defect relationships become clearer. Parts and tooling associations become more precise. The system continuously refines itself, reducing the need for human intervention as confidence and accuracy increase.

MILE is owned, designed, and continuously evolved by MRO-PRO. It is not a generic AI service or an analytical add-on, but the core intelligence layer upon which the entire platform is built. As MILE learns, the effort required to plan a complex base maintenance check reduces dramatically. What once took weeks or months of manual analysis can, after a period of learning, be achieved in minutes, with a level of granularity, consistency, and predictive confidence that has not previously been possible in third-party maintenance.

Why MILE changes everything: A single MPD platform for Predictive Maintenance

The most fundamental capability of MILE is its ability to see through operator-specific AMPs and align maintenance activity back to the MPD. This single capability changes everything. By establishing a consistent MPD-level foundation, MILE removes the fragmentation that has historically prevented meaningful learning across operators, customers, and organisations.

Once AMP variability is eliminated, every downstream element of maintenance can be traced back to a common origin. Tasks align to MPD requirements. Defects can be associated with the MPD-driven activity that caused them. Parts, tooling, services, and equipment can be linked to the maintenance intent they support. Rather than existing as disconnected records, all execution data converges around a single, consistent reference point.

This convergence enables a fundamentally different form of learning. Because MILE operates at the MPD level, it can aggregate execution data across multiple checks, operators, and participating MROs. A defect is no longer “something that happened before” within a single organisation; it becomes an outcome that can be analysed probabilistically against a specific MPD task across the industry. The same applies to parts and tooling, where MILE can determine not just what has been used historically, but the true likelihood of a given item being required for a given maintenance activity.

As more data flows through the system, MILE’s predictive accuracy increases. Federated learning across anonymised industry data allows probability models to be built on a scale that has not previously been possible, particularly for less common tasks and defects. This creates a continuously improving feedback loop, where every completed check strengthens the intelligence available for the next one.

This architecture cannot be retrofitted into legacy maintenance systems. Platforms designed around simple task execution models cannot be transformed to operate at MPD-level intent without rebuilding. MRO-PRO has been designed around MILE from the outset, with planning, execution, and analysis all driven by the same intelligence engine.

This is why MILE changes everything. By establishing a single MPD-driven source of truth and continuously learning from execution data across organisations, MRO-PRO moves maintenance from static planning and historical reporting into a new era of predictive, probability-driven maintenance intelligence that improves with every use.

Learning-driven work pack planning at speed

With MILE in place, the work pack planning process changes fundamentally for planners. Instead of starting from a blank slate for each new customer or check, planners import tasks into MRO-PRO and immediately benefit from intelligence accumulated through previous planning activity and execution outcomes.

MILE recognises tasks based on intent and automatically matches them to previously learned MPD-aligned tasks. Along with this match comes the associated planning intelligence, including historical man-hours, known defect relationships, typical parts and tooling usage, and any refinements made by planners during previous checks. What was once manually inferred or remembered by individuals is now applied consistently and automatically.

This removes the need for planners to repeatedly decide where tasks sit, how they should be categorised, or what they are likely to require. There is no reliance on assumptions such as “this card usually belongs here” or “this task always needs that part.” Once a task has been planned and confirmed, that learning is retained. By the third or fourth similar check, the system is effectively pre-configured, allowing work packs to flow with minimal manual intervention.

The result is a planning process that is faster, more consistent, and far less dependent on individual experience. Work packs that previously took days or weeks to assemble can be prepared in a fraction of the time, with greater accuracy

and completeness. Planners move from manually constructing plans to reviewing and refining intelligently prepared work packs, focusing their effort where it adds the most value, rather than repeating the same setup work for every check.

Digital execution with built-in operational intelligence

MRO-PRO extends MILE's intelligence from planning into live execution on the hangar floor through a fully digital, paperless maintenance environment. Engineers perform all task execution, inspections, defect recording, and CRS sign-off electronically, working directly on tablets at the point of maintenance. This ensures that execution data is captured accurately, consistently, and in real time.

Because all tasks, defects, parts, tools, services, and equipment are pre-classified, zoned, and structured through MILE, execution data is inherently consistent across the entire work pack. Tasks are completed within a known context, by zone, priority, inspection status, and maintenance intent. This consistency is critical. It transforms raw execution activity into high-quality operational data, that can be analysed and compared across time, checks, and organisations.

On top of this digital foundation, MRO-PRO provides a layer of execution intelligence that gives managers unprecedented visibility into the live state of the maintenance event. Milestones can be tracked dynamically, with progress measured not only by task closure but by time elapsed, revisions applied, and delivery rate against plan. Manhour consumption is visible in real time, including burn rates, closure rates, and emerging workload as new defects are raised.

One of the most powerful outcomes of this approach is visibility into emergent man-hours. By comparing MILE-driven forecasts against live execution data, managers can see how much unplanned work is appearing, when it is appearing, and how it is impacting the required daily throughput to maintain TAT. This insight allows early intervention, whether through manpower adjustment, milestone revision, or commercial discussion, rather than reacting after the impact has occurred.

The result is a step change in how base maintenance is managed. Execution is no longer opaque or retrospective. Managers are equipped with live, structured insight that reflects the true position of each project. Decisions are informed by data rather than intuition, enabling better control of progress, risk, and outcome throughout the maintenance event.

Commercial and sales enablement through MILE

The same intelligence that transforms maintenance planning also fundamentally improves the sales and bidding process. Because MILE aligns tasks to their MPD origin and understands the downstream impact of those tasks, it provides a level of cost and effort visibility that has traditionally been unavailable during tendering and quotation.

When a prospective customer provides a task list or bid tally, MRO-PRO can analyse it in seconds. Tasks are recognised by intent, aligned to MPD requirements, and enriched with historical execution data. More importantly, MILE can forecast the probability of defects arising from those tasks and identify the likely parts, tooling, services, and equipment required to address them. Labour, material, and support costs can therefore be estimated not only for the planned scope, but for the work that is statistically likely to follow.

This replaces a historically manual, spreadsheet-driven process that relied on limited data, isolated experience, and conservative assumptions. Instead of pricing blind or buffering excessively for risk, MROs gain a data-backed view of probable workload and cost before committing to a contract. The result is more accurate bids, better capacity planning, and reduced exposure to under-quoted work.

By using the same intelligence for both planning and sales, MRO-PRO ensures consistency between what is sold and what is delivered. Forecasts used during tendering flow directly into work pack planning and execution, reducing commercial surprises and improving trust between the MRO and its customers.

Federated learning and scalable acceleration

MILE becomes even more powerful when combined with federated learning across the MRO-PRO ecosystem. Participating organisations can choose to opt in to anonymised data sharing, allowing MILE to learn from a much broader dataset than any single MRO could generate alone.

Because learning occurs at the MPD and maintenance-intent level, data can be shared without exposing commercially sensitive information. Pricing, customer identity, and contractual terms are not shared. What is contributed is execution intelligence: task outcomes, defect relationships, labour consumption, and material usage aligned to MPD intent. This ensures confidentiality while maximising collective learning.

The impact of federated learning is a dramatic acceleration in accuracy and confidence. Probability models for defects, parts, and tooling improve far more quickly as data volumes grow across multiple organisations. Forecasts that might take years to stabilise within a single MRO can mature in a fraction of the time when informed by industry-wide execution patterns.

Federated learning also removes one of the biggest barriers to growth for third-party MROs: entering new aircraft types or maintenance domains. Traditionally, moving into a new platform meant starting from scratch, with limited data and high commercial risk. With MILE and federated learning, MROs can begin with a baseline of collective industry knowledge, enabling more confident bidding, planning, and execution from the outset.

Participation is optional. MROs may choose to operate in isolation, but they will learn more slowly and with less statistical confidence. Those who opt in benefit from faster learning, stronger forecasts, and a continuously improving intelligence layer. Over time, the advantages of participation compound, creating a clear incentive to contribute to and benefit from shared, non-commercial maintenance intelligence.

A new operating model for third-party maintenance

MRO-PRO represents more than an incremental improvement in maintenance software. It introduces a fundamentally new operating model for third-party MROs, built on shared intelligence, continuous learning, and intent-based understanding rather than static task execution.

By anchoring all planning, execution, and analysis to MPD-level intent, MRO-PRO removes the structural barriers that have prevented third-party MROs from learning effectively across customers, aircraft, and time. What was once

fragmented, manual, and experience-dependent becomes systematic, scalable, and continuously improving. The result is not just better outcomes on individual checks, but a permanent uplift in organisational capability.

For MROs using the platform, this creates a step change in how work is prepared, delivered, and managed. Planning becomes faster and more reliable. Execution becomes more transparent and controllable. Commercial decisions become better informed and less risky. Over time, organisations that adopt this model operate with a level of foresight, consistency, and confidence that fundamentally differentiates them from those relying on traditional approaches.

At an industry level, the implications are even broader. Federated learning allows maintenance intelligence to improve at a pace that no single organisation could achieve alone. As more data flows through MILE, probability models strengthen, forecasts sharpen, and blind spots shrink. The industry stands to benefit from better insight, more predictable outcomes, and a shared understanding of maintenance reality that has never previously existed.

This is a genuine inflection point. The combination of modern AI techniques, domain-specific intelligence, and real-time digital execution makes possible what could not be achieved before. MRO-PRO is pushing the boundaries of what maintenance systems can do, not by digitising existing workflows, but by rethinking how maintenance intelligence itself is created, learned, and applied.

For third-party MROs, adopting this model is not simply a technology upgrade. It is a shift in how maintenance is understood, planned, and delivered.



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Company Interview with Aeras Aviation

Aeras Aviation is a global aviation asset management and aftermarket solutions company which has recently undergone an organizational restructuring and is now headquartered in the United States instead of the UAE, with additional operations in the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, and Australia. Since its founding in 2017, the

company has focused on helping airlines, lessors, MROs, and asset managers maximize the value and performance of their engine assets throughout the lifecycle. Their mission is to keep aircraft flying longer by delivering reliable, cost-effective, and technically driven solutions that improve operational resilience while supporting a more sustainable aviation industry.

We were fortunate enough to recently catch up with two key executives at Aeras Aviation and they were kind enough to tell us a little more about the company.

DEMETRIOS Bradshaw, CEO, Aeras Aviation

AviTrader MRO: Aeras Aviation has experienced impressive growth since its founding. What inspired the company's creation, and what were the key milestones in its development?

has been defined by disciplined growth. Since launching the business in 2017, as mentioned we restructured to build a US-led platform centered on engine asset management and lifecycle expertise at its core, while expanding operations across the UK, the UAE, and Australia to support customers globally. We have earned key industry certifications including ISO 9001:2015 and ASA-100, and have developed long-term partnerships with airlines, leasing companies, and MRO organizations. Today, continued investment in our US headquarters and broader engine lifecycle capabilities position Aeras as a comprehensive aviation asset management partner with global reach.

Which customer groups do you primarily support, and what are their biggest challenges today?



DEMETRIOS Bradshaw, CEO, Aeras Aviation

DEMETRIOS Bradshaw: Our journey

Our primary customers include



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commercial and cargo airlines, aircraft leasing companies, MRO providers, and aviation asset management firms. While each customer has unique priorities, they're all facing similar industry pressures: limited engine availability, supply chain disruption, rising maintenance costs, extended shop visit turnaround times, and the need to maximize asset utilization.

At Aeras, we address these challenges through engine asset management, strategic teardowns, used serviceable material (USM) supply, engine management programs, and tailored aftermarket solutions. Our objective is to reduce downtime, improve planning, and deliver greater predictability so our customers can keep their fleets operating efficiently.

How has your background in aviation influenced the vision and culture at Aeras Aviation?

My career in aviation has taught me that success in this industry is built

on trust, technical expertise, and long-term relationships. Aviation is an industry where precision matters, and every decision has operational consequences. That mindset has shaped the culture we've built at Aeras Aviation.

We encourage our team to think beyond transactions and focus on solving customer problems. Planning,



Todd Jensen, Executive Vice President, Aeras Aviation

organization, accountability, and collaboration are central to how we operate. We've also fostered a culture that values continuous learning and innovation because the aviation industry is constantly evolving. Ultimately, our vision is to be more than a supplier, we want to be a trusted strategic partner that helps shape the future of aviation asset management through expertise, technology, and global collaboration.

Todd Jensen, Executive Vice President, Aeras Aviation

AviTrader MRO: The aviation aftermarket is highly competitive. What differentiates Aeras Aviation from other engine asset management companies?

Todd Jensen: Aeras Aviation differentiates itself as a small, quality-focused organization that values a diverse workforce, which translates into a faster, more personalized

service and rigorous attention to every detail of engine asset management. Our size enables short decision cycles and direct access to senior leaders and program managers, so customers get tailored solutions aligned with their fleet utilization and cash-flow goals. Our diverse team brings a wide range of perspectives to problem solving, enhancing safety, reliability, and regulatory compliance, while fostering innovative approaches to lifecycle challenges. We deliver end-to-end lifecycle management—from buy/sell decisions through overhaul, testing, certification, and resale—with proactive obsolescence planning and the ability to adapt rapidly to market changes. Finally, our commitment to sustainability and lifecycle value means we place great emphasis on end-of-life planning, component reuse where feasible, and waste reduction, all aimed at maximizing asset value while minimizing environmental impact.

Many maintenance professionals are familiar with engine overhaul, but fewer fully understand engine asset management. How would you explain your business model?

Our business model centers on treating engine assets as value-generating assets that require proactive management, not just on-demand maintenance. Our partners demand we optimize the entire lifecycle of engine assets—from acquisition or teardown through overhaul, certification, and resale or return to service. We create value by combining three core capabilities: disciplined lifecycle optimization, data-driven decision making, and a responsive, service-focused operating model. First, we apply rigorous lifecycle planning to determine the most cost-effective path for each asset, balancing upfront costs, downtime, reliability, and residual value. This includes decisions about when to overhaul, repair, swap, or sell, with an eye toward maximizing on-wing availability and total asset value over the engine's life.



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Second, we leverage data and analytics to reduce uncertainty and drive better outcomes. We collect and integrate asset histories, performance data, previous maintenance history, and market pricing into a centralized platform.

Third, we operate with a hands-on, customer-centric approach. Our small, quality-focused team delivers personalized service, direct access to experienced certified AMTs/Engineers along with program leaders, and adaptable commercial arrangements. We manage the end-to-end process—buying or sourcing engines, arranging and supervising repairs, validating performance, handling documentation, and coordinating resale or disposition—so customers can focus on core airline or leasing activities. Our governance, compliance, and auditability ensure regulatory integrity across all activities, from CAAC to EASA and FAA requirements.

Your company combines technical expertise with commercial asset management. How do these two disciplines complement each other?

Our technical expertise and commercial asset management work together to maximize asset value and reliability throughout the engine's lifecycle. Our senior leaders bring hands-on maintenance experience from airlines and MROs, so we understand the impact and timing of repairs. This deep knowledge informs sound commercial decisions about when to repair, swap, or part out an asset to maximize uptime, minimize downtime, and protect residual values. In parallel, our commercial discipline translates these technical options into economic terms—cost-to-value tradeoffs, structured pricing, and performance guarantees—ensuring every decision aligns with budget, cash flow, and risk tolerance.



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Aircraft engines represent one of the most valuable assets in an airline's fleet. How can effective lifecycle management maximize both reliability and financial return?

Effective lifecycle management maximizes both reliability and financial return for engine assets by aligning technical decisions with economic outcomes across the entire lifecycle.

Aeras Aviation's key approaches include:

- Optimized overhaul and disposition strategy: Determine the optimal timing for mid-life repairs, or part-outs to balance reliability with residual value. This includes considering technical feasibility, repair requirements, and

lead times.

- End-to-end lifecycle planning: Develop asset-specific roadmaps from acquisition or teardown through resale or return to service, capturing capital costs, repair investment, downtime, and expected resale value. Use this to drive decisions that maximize up time and minimize total lifecycle cost.
- Spares and obsolescence management: Maintain an optimized parts strategy to ensure high availability while controlling carrying costs. Proactively manage obsolescence and component transitions to avoid expensive last-minute surprises that cause a requirement to use NEW parts.
- Robust governance and compliance:

Ensure all decisions comply with airworthiness regulation and OEM/repair network requirements, with auditable records and transparent change management.

- Value realization through resale and asset recovery: Plan for the best possible disposition at end of life, including engine exchanges, leasing options, or part-out, to recover maximum residual value.
- Sustainability and asset value: Incorporate end-of-life options, part-out, and repaired component reuse to reduce environmental impact while preserving financial value.
- Stakeholder collaboration: Coordinate among maintenance, operations, finance, and supply chain to ensure asset strategies support our financial objectives.

What factors determine whether an engine should undergo another shop visit or be retired for teardown?

Economic viability, remaining useful life, and the asset's condition are the primary factors in deciding whether to return an asset to service or retire and part it out to support our core business. We also continuously monitor market conditions and regulatory changes that could affect asset values.

How do you help customers make these complex economic and technical decisions?

We help customers make these economic and technical decisions by combining rigorous analytics with practical, decision-focused collaboration, while offering practical support. Once a decision is made, we assist with plan development, timelines, funding, repair coordination, and performance tracking to ensure the decision delivers the expected usable asset and financial returns..



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Comprehensive Range of Asset Management

Talking to Lee Carey, Chief Investment Officer – EirTrade Aviation

EirTrade Aviation is a global aviation asset management and trading company headquartered in Dublin, Ireland with facilities/representation in Europe, USA and Asia. Dedicated to the service of MROs, operators and lessors, EirTrade offers customers a comprehensive range of asset management services including end of life asset management, engine & aircraft parts trading, aircraft storage & disassembly, engine disassembly, consignment programmes, technical storage & services.



Lee Carey, Chief Investment Officer – EirTrade Aviation

AviTrader MRO: EirTrade Aviation has developed a broad portfolio of aviation asset management and technical services. How has the company evolved to meet the changing needs of airlines, lessors and MROs?

Lee Carey: In recent years, EirTrade has continued to expand capacity and the service offering to cater for the ever-evolving needs of our customers. Key investments in EirTrade's Part 145 line maintenance capabilities have been instrumental in this, adding additional aircraft types to the approvals, and increasing the scope of approvals.

Your facility at Knock has become a key part of EirTrade Aviation's service offering. What makes this location particularly attractive for aircraft owners and lessors?

At the facility on the west coast of Ireland, EirTrade offers a wide range of services including Part 145 Line Maintenance, airframe disassembly and engine disassembly. The business

continues to invest to create a centre of excellence for mature aircraft and the recent planning permission which has been granted to develop additional infrastructure, including a narrowbody hangar with further warehousing and office space, is testament to this.

How does EirTrade Aviation help customers minimize aircraft downtime and control costs during lease transitions?

EirTrade continuously strives to maintain a large serviceable inventory across a wide variety of commercial aircraft types. This allows the business to ensure that high demand components are constantly available for our customers, and to ensure that their aircraft continuing flying.

Additionally, the availability of EirTrade's USM inventory provides a strong value proposition to aircraft owners which can reduce both the cost and turnaround time of maintenance events by having USM material readily available to cater for their requirements.

How does your Part 145 line maintenance capability complements the wider range of services offered by EirTrade Aviation?

EirTrade's Part 145 line maintenance approvals asset owners by offering parking, storage and maintenance for aircraft following redelivery. This enables the aircraft to be positioned for reactivation as required, or disassembly if sold as an end-of-life asset.

Additionally, the 145 is utilised to ensure high value components such as engines and APUs can be removed from the aircraft in a serviceable condition so that they may be put back into commercial service.

EirTrade is committed to continuously expanding the maintenance capabilities at the facility to satisfy the needs of clients, and the wider business. EirTrade's current approvals at Ireland West Airport (IATA Code: NOC) include EASA Part-145 line maintenance, as well as approvals from the airworthiness authorities of Guernsey (2-REG), the Cayman Islands (VP-C) and Bermuda (VP-B).

Effective inventory management has become increasingly important in today's supply chain environment. How is EirTrade Aviation helping customers optimize their component inventories?

Effective inventory management has always been of great importance. This involves continuous analysis of data relating to the market pricing, repair costs, scrap rates, in service failure rate, and subsequent demand for each component in the organisation's inventory. EirTrade stocks hundreds of thousands of aircraft components at any one time across a broad range of commercial aircraft platforms so this is no easy feat.

There is a team of skilled individuals who constantly monitor this within to ensure we are fully in tune with market dynamics and the needs of aircraft



Disassembly at EirTrade Aviation Knock Ireland

© EirTrade Aviation

owners. They maintain an effective inventory management strategy that delivers value across the supply chain.

Aircraft retirement is becoming a strategic business decision rather than simply an operational one. How does EirTrade Aviation support customers through the teardown process?

Aircraft retirement is, and always will be, a strategic business for those who fully understand it, and the complexities involved in the effective and equitable retirement of a commercial aircraft.

EirTrade's ability to manage the asset utilising the Company's vertically integrated platform allows asset owners to have one point of contact throughout the process. Through the service offering, and EirTrade's experience, the business can ensure that the value of each asset is maximised for stakeholders.

One of EirTrade Aviation's strengths is the ability to offer multiple services across the aircraft lifecycle. How does this integrated approach benefit customers compared with sourcing services from several different providers?

EirTrade's vertical integration was a strategic move by the business to efficiently service the organisation's owned assets as well as those of customers.

This reduced the organisation's reliance on third-party companies keeping the business in control of the asset from the time it is redelivered from the existing lessee. This improves the organisation's ability to ensure shorter turn times, and guarantee high-quality work while maintaining the ability to be nimble despite the Company's exponential growth.

If there is one message you would like airlines, lessors and aviation investors to take away about EirTrade Aviation's service offering, what would it be?

EirTrade aims to provide flexible solutions for aircraft owners, whatever the situation or their needs may be. Services are tailored to each project to ensure an optimal and equitable outcome for all stakeholders.





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“Every one’s a MAASterpiece.”

Richard Marston, Chief Commercial Officer of MAAS Aviation strips back the layers to reveal what turns a good paint job into an outstanding one

MAAS Aviation is a leading aircraft painting and exterior coatings specialist. Across thirteen paint shops worldwide, it delivers OEM-quality standards for up to 580 narrowbody, regional and private aircraft each year. Specialising in commercial aircraft and

business jets, MAAS applies the same precision, quality and turnaround times across both sectors. Its facilities – located in The Netherlands, Germany, Lithuania, and USA – are certified to EN/ASD9100 & ISO9001 standards, with environmental management systems certified to ISO14001.

The scope of work, livery application, and the specific products to be used are all agreed well in advance of any work starting. The engineering order (EO) is reviewed by the Part 145 company responsible for the certificate of release to service (CRS), along with the specific timing of each task within the planned downtime. During this early stage, the MAAS graphics team pre-make the technical marking kit and spray masks that will be used to apply the livery colours, in accordance with the design drawings provided by the customer.

When the aircraft enters the hangar, but before any docking system is put in place, the customer engineer/s and the MAAS team visually inspect the aircraft. Once everyone is satisfied, the aircraft is docked and solvent washed. It is then re-inspected, and a dent & buckle log is recorded. The MAAS team now take film thickness readings across the airframe, an activity which is repeated at every stage of the process,



Richard Marston, Chief Commercial Officer of MAAS Aviation

AviTrader MRO: Could you walk our readers through the complete aircraft painting process, from aircraft arrival to redelivery?

Richard Marston: The painting process starts long before an aircraft arrives at the hangar and involves many stages of preparation ahead of any new paint being applied. Throughout MAAS’ facilities, we run comprehensive in-house training programmes that all our painters take part in, ensuring we maintain the highest quality standards in all areas, at all times.



© MAAS Aviation

and the readings are recorded in the workpack. These are double stamped by the MAAS Supervisor, as well as the customer representative or Part 145 engineer.

Now the preparation stage really starts. To ensure there is no damage to the aircraft, all sensitive areas and composite panels that are not to be painted, are masked off with protective material. Depending on the scope of work, chemical paint stripper can then be applied to the metal areas of the fuselage. All composite areas, wings, and horizontal stabilisers are sanded in accordance with the scope of work, ensuring the correct amount of existing paint is removed. Once the fuselage is completely stripped, a bare metal inspection (BMI) of the airframe verifies there is no damage or corrosion. If any additional repair work is required, it is agreed between the MAAS team and the customer engineer. All damaged sealer is then removed from the joints, which are cleaned before new sealer is replaced. The aircraft is then fully cleaned and re-masked ready for the painting process to begin.

Only after this extensive preparation can the painting sequence start. Pretreatment is applied to all metal areas, followed by primer to the fuselage, vertical stabiliser, engine

cowlings, and winglets/sharklets. The background colour, normally a white basecoat, is sprayed onto the same areas, then the livery colours are applied as per the technical drawings. The aircraft is demasked, mandatory and technical markings are added, followed by a clearcoat to the fuselage, vertical stabiliser, engine cowlings, and winglets/sharklets.

Alongside film thickness, other parameters such as ambient temperature, humidity, material temperature, substrate temperature, mixing ratios and flash-off time are recorded at each stage. Once the clearcoat is dry, the aircraft is demasked and finished. The wings are painted separately and incorporated into the work plan, using specified pretreatment, primers, and high-solids topcoats, with a separate coating on the walkway area.

Finally, the aircraft is presented to the customer representative for inspection. After sign off, it is de-docked and leaves the hangar.

What are the most critical quality control steps during a paint project?

Every step has a clearly defined specification which MAAS' highly experienced quality team ensures is

completed in full accordance with the Aircraft Maintenance Manual/ Structure Repair Manual (AMM/SRM), the EO, and the product Technical Data Sheet (TDS). Correct preparation of the substrate and application of all materials in the correct temperature- and humidity-controlled environment is key. Equally important is following the product manufacturers' mixing and application requirements and respecting the product's drying and open times. Film thickness is vital too, if it's too low you fail to achieve a closed film, or risk dry spray, but too high and you introduce problems such as excessive weight.

What factors determine the duration of a complete repaint?

More complex liveries and VVIP paint finishes can extend the downtime of a paint input. Basecoat colours are typically dry-to-tape in two to three hours, so a standard livery of one background colour and two decorative colours can be applied in a shorter time than a livery with multiple background and paint colours, such as the Embraer Profit Hunter painted at the MAAS facility in Maastricht in 2023. To produce Embraer's unique 'Tech Eagle' livery an experienced and highly skilled team of 38 MAAS painters worked around the clock shifts for 15 days to ensure it was ready to be unveiled at the Dubai Airshow that year.

Commercial aircraft are typically painted wet-on-wet, meaning each layer is applied once the previous layer has had time to flash off. Whereas, VVIP finishes typically involve sanding of primer surfacers and rivet fillers, which takes more time. These aircraft demand far more attention to achieve higher wavescan values, which usually includes polishing of the final finish and leading edges. The removal of flight controls for balancing can also add time to the process for certain aircraft types. At MAAS, our 24/7 operating model helps us achieve market-leading downtimes for both commercial and VIP aircraft.

COMPANY PROFILE

How have modern paint systems changed compared with those used twenty years ago?

The major difference is the move to chrome-free pretreatments, improved primers, and basecoat/clearcoat systems. Modern systems offer better resistance to rivet rash, are generally accepted as lighter, and give better colour retention with greater UV stability from the clearcoat, compared to the older high-solids coatings and chromated wash primer systems. They are also more environmentally friendly.

Are today's coatings lighter, more durable, or more environmentally friendly than previous generations?

Reducing weight, extending durability, and environmental responsibility are all extremely important factors to airlines. Using the latest paint technologies, coupled with the skill and experience of MAAS' painting teams, we have seen good weight savings and improved durability, with some of our key programme customers pushing paint inputs beyond eight years, even up to ten years. The reduction of chromates in pretreatments and some of the primers makes the products more environmentally friendly, and basecoat/clearcoat systems contain significantly less solvent by volume, resulting in lower volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

How do composite structures influence today's painting techniques?

Composite paint is a key consideration. In some cases, such as the larger composite aircraft, it requires selectively strippable paint systems. At MAAS our focus is on narrowbody or smaller aircraft, we key-abrade the areas thoroughly to allow the best possible preparation for the paint system to be applied.



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What do airline customers value most when selecting a painting provider?

Airlines typically look for minimum downtime and the longest period of durability, giving the best value for money. Reliability of delivery and consistency of quality matter just as much, particularly on fleet programmes where the thirtieth aircraft must look exactly the same as the first one. The location of the paint shop relative to the airline's operation can also be a key factor, as ferry flight time and cost form part of the overall equation.

Everyone at MAAS works hard to ensure that we exceed expectations in all areas, we are proud of our long-term, positive relationships with our customers, some of whom we've been working with for over 40 years.

How important are turnaround time and schedule flexibility?

Turnaround time (TAT) is critical. An out-of-service aircraft cannot generate a profit, so reducing a paint input by even a day or two has a direct and measurable value to an operator. At

MAAS, our customers value reduced TATs and close cooperation with scheduling changes, and our 24/7 operating model gives us the capacity to absorb movement in the plan and recover time when an aircraft arrives late.

What advice would you give an airline planning a fleet-wide repainting program?

My first piece of advice would be to talk to MAAS! There are now several painting companies in the market, many offering a low price point to gain a foothold. But, in my experience, you get what you pay for.

MAAS Aviation has been painting aircraft for over 40 years, in which time we have completed more than 6,000 paint finishes for OEM and MRO customers across the globe. We work directly with manufacturers, airlines, leasing companies, MRO partners, VIP fleet operators, and individual aircraft owners. Our mantra is to be the best value for money, judged over the full life of the paint finish, not just on the invoice alone. Our paint finishes last, we are proud of what we achieve, and stand by the service we deliver.



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Maintenance Mythbusters: “Scheduled Maintenance Prevents All Failures”

By David Dundas

It would be easy to think that with all the technologies currently available today that failures in aircraft parts, whether related to the engine, or the main fuselage and wings, would be a rarity. However, if that were the case, why is it that OAG incidents are still relatively commonplace? Okay, admittedly when one considers the number of aircraft in service on any single day there are going to be incidents, which is nothing other than proof ‘all failures’ can’t be avoided through scheduled maintenance.

For whatever reason, parts fail, valves leak, seals stop sealing! It is a fact of life, and no amount of scheduled maintenance can stop the unexpected (but virtually inevitable) from happening. However, with the digitalisation of the MRO workspace and consequent improvements in data analysis, the number of failures should certainly be reduced, but whether it is by a significant amount or not remains to be seen. Will that number ever reach zero, no matter how comprehensive the standard

of maintenance? No. So let us explore a little further as to why.

The Comfort of the Maintenance Schedule

Aviation is built on structure, discipline, and predictability. Maintenance programmes are carefully designed and structured, checked and approved by regulators, and performed with rigorous consistency. Aircraft undergo routine inspections, scheduled and unscheduled component replacements, and scheduled checks designed to ensure airworthiness for the next cycle as well as, ultimately, throughout their operational life. Because of this systematic approach, a common belief has resulted in the industry: that scheduled maintenance prevents all failures. While the idea that if maintenance is performed on time and according to the required programme, failures should not occur is reassuring, aviation maintenance alone cannot guarantee against every defect or failure. Scheduled maintenance

may be one of the most powerful tools for managing risk, but it will never be a ‘cure-all’ solution.

Maintenance Is Risk Management, Not Failure Elimination

Scheduled maintenance has never been designed to make failure impossible but instead is carried out to reduce the probability of failure to an acceptable and safe level. Aircraft systems are complex, operate under extreme conditions, and are subject to unpredictable variables. Maintenance programmes are now designed based on reliability data, engineering analysis, and operational experience, but it is just not possible to take into account every scenario. Even with perfect compliance, components can fail unexpectedly due to manufacturing anomalies, environmental changes, unforeseen stress factors, or simply random events. Maintenance unquestionably reduces the risk of parts’



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failure, but through its very nature, aviation will always involve residual uncertainty.

Unscheduled Failures Are an Operational Reality

Despite robust maintenance schedules, unscheduled events remain part of everyday airline operations. Intermittent avionics faults, sensor failures, unexpected hydraulic leaks, and premature component wear can and do occur between inspection intervals. Many failures develop in ways that are not predictable through calendar-based scheduling. Modern aircraft systems, especially digital and integrated architectures, may generate faults that are transient or data-driven rather than mechanically progressive. A system may pass every scheduled check yet still experience an in-use failure because parts are not 100% guaranteed never to fail unexpectedly.

Scheduled maintenance may well provide structure, but it does not remove the need for real-time troubleshooting and operational flexibility.

The Limits of Time-Based Maintenance

Traditional maintenance programmes were largely based on fixed intervals: hours flown, cycles completed, or calendar time. Unfortunately, while effective for many mechanical wear-out patterns, time-based maintenance has limitations. Excluding life-limited parts (LLPs) some components simply and frustratingly do not fail based on predictable timelines. Others may fail randomly, or their degradation may accelerate rapidly once it begins. Performing maintenance too early can waste resources and introduce unnecessary disassembly risk, while performing it too late may allow failure to occur. This is why modern maintenance philosophy increasingly recognizes that not all failures are age-related. Some are condition-based, and some are inherently unpredictable. As for LLPs, well they are a different beast. Often used in engines, LLPs are usually key, critical parts that, if they were to fail, could cause catastrophic damage and worse. Consequently, manufacturers use conservative

design limits, strict material testing, and mandatory retirement thresholds (measured in flight hours, cycles, or calendar time) to ensure components are removed long before any statistical probability of structural fatigue or failure. So why can't you use LLPs throughout an aircraft. Well. You could, but the cost of the aircraft would be unaffordable on a commercial basis as LLPs are, by their very nature, expensive to manufacture.

Condition-Based and Predictive Maintenance as the Next Evolution

To address the above limitations, the industry has now moved toward condition-based maintenance and predictive approaches. Aircraft health monitoring systems, engine trend analysis, vibration monitoring, and data-driven diagnostics allow maintenance teams to detect developing issues that may not be captured by scheduled inspections alone. These technologies help shift the nature of maintenance from reactive to proactive and thus help in identifying risk patterns



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before failures occur.

However, even predictive systems are not perfect. Data interpretation, sensor accuracy, and the complexity of failure mechanisms mean that unexpected events will still occur, perhaps it is just a case that these failures are more quickly and easily identified, which can again lead to a misinterpretation of overall events. Improved technology may well improve foresight, but it still does not eliminate uncertainty.

Human Factors and Operational Pressures

Another reason scheduled maintenance cannot prevent all failures lies in the human and operational environment. Maintenance programmes may be perfectly designed, but the physical work takes place under real-world conditions. One must not forget that the working environment is one steeped in time pressure, shift work, interruptions, and workload constraints. Human factors can influence how inspections are performed and how findings are managed.

Additionally, airlines may defer certain maintenance actions under minimum equipment list provisions or operational necessity, increasing the reliance on monitoring and follow-up.

Maintenance schedules provide the framework, but safety ultimately depends on how well the framework is applied in practice.

The Role of Unexpected External Events

Aircraft operate in environments that maintenance schedules cannot fully anticipate. Bird strikes, lightning strikes, ground handling damage, severe weather exposure, and foreign object ingestion are examples of external factors that can cause immediate or hidden damage outside normal inspection planning. Scheduled maintenance cannot prevent these occurrences; it can only provide mechanisms for detection and repair after the event.

Aviation maintenance will therefore always have to remain responsive, not purely become a scheduled event.

Conclusion: Maintenance Programs Are Essential, But Not Absolute

The myth that scheduled maintenance prevents all failures reflects an understandable desire for certainty and maintenance streamlining in a safety-critical industry. Scheduled inspections and part replacements are foundational to airworthiness and understanding how best to achieve these have dramatically improved aviation safety over decades. However, they are not an absolute shield against every failure. Aircraft systems are complex, reasons for a part failure are diverse, and operational environments are unpredictable. Scheduled maintenance is best understood as a structured risk-management system, complemented by condition monitoring, skilled troubleshooting, and strong safety culture. In aviation, maintenance prevents many failures, but it does not eliminate the possibility of failure entirely. The goal is not perfection, but continuous control of risk in one of the most demanding engineering environments in the world.

PEOPLE

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Celso Ferrer

Former GOL Linhas Aéreas Chief Executive Celso Ferrer has been named President of Boeing Latin America and the Caribbean, effective September 4, 2026. Ferrer will be responsible for strengthening Boeing's operations, strategy and presence across the region, as well as supporting growth opportunities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

He joins Boeing after serving for four years as CEO of Brazilian carrier GOL, where he began his career as an intern. Before becoming CEO, Ferrer served as GOL's chief operating officer, overseeing areas including operations, operational safety, airports, planning, network, supply chain and fleet. He previously spent five years as vice president of planning, with responsibilities spanning pricing and alliances. Ferrer is also a certified airline pilot and previously flew Boeing 737 aircraft as part of GOL's flight crew. He holds degrees in economics from the University of São Paulo and international relations from PUC-SP, as well as an Executive MBA from INSEAD in France.

experience at the WEF and expertise in global economic and geopolitical issues would strengthen the association as the aviation industry navigates rapid technological and geopolitical change. Zahidi said her priority would be working with airlines, governments and industry partners to advance innovation, resilience and sustainable growth while strengthening aviation's role in connecting people and economies worldwide. A WEF veteran of more than 20 years, Zahidi currently heads the Centre for the New Economy and Society and has led several of the forum's flagship research programmes, including its Future of Jobs and Global Gender Gap reports. She holds Swiss and Pakistani nationality.



Francesco Baccarani

Francesco Baccarani will become Director Asset Management – APAC for BeauTech Power Systems (BeauTech), strengthening the company's engine leasing and asset management capabilities across the Asia-Pacific region. Based in Singapore, Baccarani will support BeauTech's engine leasing and asset management activities, provide technical expertise and work closely with

customers, lessors, airlines and industry partners. He joins the company with more than 20 years of aviation and powerplant management experience. Most recently, he served as VP Technical Engines at SGI Aviation, where he specialised in engine asset management, shop visit oversight, technical due diligence, pre-purchase inspections, engine redeliveries and fleet support. Baccarani has worked across a wide range of commercial aircraft engine platforms, including the PW4000, CFM56, V2500, CF6-80 and CF34 families. Earlier in his career, he held technical roles at IASG and Volare Airlines, focusing on engine troubleshooting, condition monitoring and maintenance management.



Saadia Zahidi

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has appointed Saadia Zahidi as its next Director General, making her the first woman to lead the organisation. Zahidi, currently a Managing Director at the World Economic Forum (WEF), will take up the role on November 1, 2026. She succeeds Willie Walsh, who stepped down on July 31, after leading IATA through the post-pandemic

recovery. Chief Financial Officer Sandrine Le Borgne will serve as Interim Director General between Walsh's departure and Zahidi's arrival. IATA Chair Roberto Alvo said Zahidi's

PEOPLE

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Darren Naughton

APOC Aviation has hired Darren Naughton as Vice President of Engines, expanding its leadership team as the aircraft parts and leasing specialist seeks to grow its global engine leasing and trading business. Naughton joins the company with 13 years of experience in aircraft and engine leasing, having held commercial, pricing and trading roles at aircraft and engine lessors. He will lead

APOC's engines division, overseeing leasing, exchanges, teardowns and component sales while working with airlines, lessors, MRO providers and OEMs. The appointment comes as demand for green-time engine leasing continues to rise, driven by higher maintenance, repair and overhaul costs, labour shortages and ongoing supply chain constraints. APOC said it aims to capitalise on those market conditions by expanding its engine capabilities alongside its airframe, landing gear and component businesses. The company said its engine strategy will remain broad, focusing on disciplined asset management, customer partnerships and opportunities across different engine types and geographic markets.



Matthew Clay

Aircraft aftermarket solutions provider 3TOP Aviation Services has named Matthew Clay as Chief Financial Officer. Clay joins the company with senior finance leadership experience across the banking, insurance and aviation sectors. He will oversee 3TOP's financial strategy as the company pursues its growth and transformation plans. Chief Executive Chris Emechete said Clay's

experience would support the company's expansion, strengthen its financial strategy and help accelerate growth. Clay said he was joining 3TOP at a time of strong momentum and looked forward to helping deliver the company's long-term ambitions.



Valentina Pilshchikova

Valentina Pilshchikova has been appointed Director Asset Trading for Vallair, placing the long-serving executive in charge of the company's aircraft and engine asset trading activities. Based in Luxembourg, Pilshchikova will oversee the development of new business opportunities, strengthen relationships with customers and partners, identify aircraft and engine acquisition

and sales prospects, and work with internal teams to deliver tailored asset solutions. Pilshchikova joined Vallair in 2018 as a Purchasing Administrative Officer before progressing through roles including Material Sales & Market Analyst and Engine & Parts Trading Sales Manager. She brings more than 15 years of international commercial experience and over seven years in the aviation sector, supported by an engineering background. The Asset Trading division works with airlines, lessors, traders, MROs and other aviation partners to maximise the value of aircraft and engine assets throughout their lifecycle.



XiaoLei (Kevin) Guo

SR Technics has selected Deputy Chief Executive Officer XiaoLei (Kevin) Guo as Chief Information Officer, effective August 1, 2026, adding responsibility for the company's IT organisation to his current role. Guo joined the MRO provider in 2025 and brings more than 20 years of aerospace leadership experience. Before joining SR Technics, he served as Vice President at HNA

Aviation Technic (HNAT), where he oversaw technical services, production planning, aircraft painting and information technology. SR Technics said Guo will lead the company's IT strategy, with a focus on digitalisation, artificial intelligence and the delivery of high-quality IT services to support operational performance and business growth.

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