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PRESS RELEASE

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Vallair leases the first Airbus A321F in Europe to SmartLynx Malta



Luxembourg, 14th June 2021 - [Vallair](#), the mature aircraft asset and cargo conversion specialist dedicated to the support of both operators and lessors, has delivered its second Airbus A321 freighter conversion. This is the first ever A321F to be operated by a European based carrier. Having received its STC from the FAA in April 2021, the aircraft bearing MSN 891 has been prepared for delivery at Vallair's specialist MRO & Painting facility in Montpellier, France immediately following its conversion in the USA. MSN 891 has been leased by Vallair to SmartLynx Malta who will now operate the aircraft on behalf of DHL.

Centered around the conversion of narrowbody aircraft Vallair has been engaged in cargo conversions for more than ten years. The Company's data confirms the A321 freighter variant is far better for the environment due to its circa 15% reduction in fuel burn versus its most direct competitor, as well as offering exceptional range, payload, and additional cost benefits. The innovative design particularly benefits from a lower cargo hold allowing it to offer shipping of containerised cargo in addition to its normal cargo positions. From an air logistics point of view, this then makes the A321F the most attractive, and cost-effective narrowbody proposition as the ability to offer containerisation of cargo reduces turn-around times and therefore increases load efficiency.

"We are delighted to see the successful delivery of our second A321 freighter conversion," says Patrick Leopold, Director of Trading & Leasing at Vallair. "This is, of course, another significant milestone for Vallair and serves to showcase the full remit of our capabilities. From acquisition of suitable feedstock by our Cargo Conversions and Trading & Leasing teams and the support of our dedicated Aerostructure facility enabling us to repair and replace the thrust reversers, to the maintenance and painting carried out by our MRO team in Montpellier, at every stage and at every level Vallair has been able to ensure the safe and efficient redelivery of this aircraft."

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Maintenance requirements for this aircraft were minimal, however the aircraft has been repainted in Vallair's dedicated paint hangar in the south of France.

In parallel with the delivery of MSN891, Vallair has also been preparing its next two aircraft scheduled for conversion. By carrying out heavy maintenance in advance of induction at its Montpellier facility, Vallair anticipates a significant reduction in turn-around-time for the entire conversion process.

"Our third A321F is now scheduled for delivery in Q3 2021 and it is part of an extensive programme of A321 passenger-to-freighter conversions which will be carried out over the coming months and years," continues Leopold. "Vallair has been a true pioneer at understanding all the potential of this aircraft and we took the decision early on to invest in the first conversions. Converting a passenger plane to cargo is indeed an extremely complex undertaking which needs to be managed by highly experienced people - this applies not only to the physical conversion process, but also in terms of engineering and project management. The delivery of our second A321F, following the delivery of the world's first a few months ago, is testament to the total dedication of all the teams who have brought this to fruition in such challenging times".

"Additionally, more cargo players are using containers, and the environmental performance of the A321 freighter here is impressive. A circa 30% greater CO² emissions efficiency is generated per containerised cubic meter being flown than competitor types. That's an impressive achievement and a persuasive factor for customers who are increasingly conscious of ESG matters".

The Vallair team in Montpellier is experienced in major repairs, skin and frame changes, with larger repairs carried out at its specialist aerostructure repair facility in Châteauroux. In addition, Vallair supports lease transitions, incorporating aircraft reconfiguration, painting, and cabin refurbishment as well as aircraft parking and storage. This affords Vallair's MRO division a great deal of flexibility in its offering as the paint facility can be used in conjunction with maintenance or modification input. Composite and sheet metal repairs on a variety of aircraft structures and components can be undertaken at Vallair's aerostructure facility which also manages an extensive pool of rotatable assets available for sale, lease, or exchange.

Vallair is a Franco-Luxembourgish aviation company. It provides integrated support for mature aircraft, engines and major components. Seven complementary business units are founded upon engineering excellence: trading & leasing, cargo conversions, aircraft MRO, engines, aerostructures & painting, material management and aircraft disassembly. These offer aircraft operators and owners worldwide cost-effective solutions to extend the life of their assets or dispose of them in an economically beneficial and environmentally acceptable way. Vallair is a leading player in the trading and leasing of A320 family, ATR and B737 aircraft. To learn more visit www.vallair.aero

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