

FREIGHTER TRENDS

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Rs. 75/-

AN UPDATED TRENDS IN THE FREIGHTER INDUSTRY, P2F CONVERSIONS, AIR CARGO & MRO

IAI TO ESTABLISH A BOEING 777 CONVERSION FACILITY IN SOUTH KOREA

THE NEW FACILITY IS TO BE ESTABLISHED TOGETHER WITH INCHEON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND SHARP

Israel Aerospace Industries' (IAI) Aviation Group signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA), with the Incheon International Airport and Sharp Technics, to establish a Passenger 2 Cargo (P2F) conversion site in South Korea. The facility will specialize in converting Boeing 777-ERSF ("Big Twin") from passenger to freighter. Within the framework of the agreement, IAI will convert six B777-300ER, and a B777-200LR per year, starting in 2024. Establishing more P2F aircraft conversion facilities around the world is necessary in order to meet the expected rise in demand for wide-body freighter aircraft with capacity for long flights.

IAI's Aviation Group is working around the clock during this time to prototype the B777 P2F conversion and is

expected to conclude the licensing process during 2023. The B777 model represents the next generation of freighter aircraft, and will join the family of IAI's conversions, including: B747, B767, B737NG, and the B737 classic.

Yossi Melamed, VP and GM of the Aviation Group, IAI, said, "IAI's Aviation Group is a world class leader in converting wide-body passenger aircraft to freighter, and manages conversion lines in Israel and around the world. Signing today with Incheon International Airport and Sharp is directly connected to IAI's close cooperation with the South Korean aviation industry, and highlights IAI's trust and respect in South Korea's ability to establish a conversion line to meet demand, along with the necessary trained manpower. Over the

past few years IAI has transferred production of business jet wings, main frame, and parts of the tail to Korean companies. I look forward to expanding our strategic cooperation activities with South Korean companies and government authorities."

President Kim Gyeong-wook of Incheon International Airport Corporation said, "By attracting the first overseas production base of IAI's large-sized cargo aircraft to the Incheon Airport MRO cluster, which exclusively possesses the technology for retrofitting Boeing's large passenger aircraft, we will grow together and contribute greatly to the development of the national and regional economy. Based on the world-class air transportation infrastructure of Incheon International



THE NEW FACILITY WILL BE A NATURAL EXTENSION OF VALLAIR'S EXISTING OPERATIONS

VALLAIR'S CARGO CONVERSION PROGRAMME IS NOW EXCLUSIVELY FOCUSED ON THE A321F

This significant project in partnership with the Centre Val de Loire Region and the Chateauroux Airport Establishment further establishes Vallair's MRO footprint in central France, and further complements its MRO & painting facilities in Montpellier. In an exclusive to Freighter Trends, Patrick Leopold, Director of Trading & Leasing Vallair mentioned that Vallair has increased its MRO offering to include A330 aerostructure repair capabilities. To date Vallair's aerostructure capability has focused on narrowbody aircraft such as the B737 and the A321, so this will be a new path for Vallair. Here are the details

Can you give a brief on Vallair's new MRO facility at Châteauroux, France.

Patrick Leopold - This new facility will be a natural extension of Vallair's existing operations in Montpellier and Châteauroux providing maintenance, lease transfers, modifications, reconfigurations, aircraft parking and storage as well as repairs of aerostructure and composite elements. In addition to this we will be establishing our own dedicated conversion unit which will showcase Vallair's experience and knowledge of passenger-to-freighter conversions. Our aim is to support our customers through these challenging times and to be prepared for the surge in demand expected post Covid.

Does the new facility offer repair and overhaul of narrowbody aircrafts only. Do you also plan to have repair and overhaul of widebody aircraft as well?

Patrick Leopold - Currently our MRO capabilities are focused on A320 and B737 aircraft types (all series), including the BBJ and ACJ, and ATR regional aircraft, providing basic line support through to 'D' check type maintenance. However, we have recently added A330 aerostructure

repair capabilities which are available at our Châteauroux facility. We have upskilled our current workforce to accommodate these additional services and work on A330 thrust reversers and inlet cowls will began in March. Currently our turn-around times for narrowbody thrust reversers are four to five weeks, with five to six weeks for outer worksopes, and we will maintain these efficient TATs for the A330.

Does this facility have the capability of the conversion of P2F as well?

Patrick Leopold - Vallair was awarded a ten-year lease for a new state-of-the-art full-service aircraft maintenance, repair, overhaul and cargo conversion hangar which is being constructed adjacent to our existing aerostructures repair and logistics facility. Over the coming months we intend to invest a further 5 million Euros. Our cargo conversion programme is now exclusively focused on the A321F which is the ideal candidate to fulfil the burgeoning demands of air cargo throughout the world. Due to the availability of feedstock, with around 1100 aircraft manufactured, and younger technologies utilised by the



Patrick Leopold

aircraft resulting in a fuel efficient, environmentally friendly freighter variant. On average, we expect that operators will see a 20% reduction in fuel burn per payload.

Can you highlight the Vallair business unit. What customized aircraft engine solutions do you offer to your customers from this facility?

Patrick Leopold - From a state-of-the-art workshop in Chateauroux, France, we repair a variety of parts, including nacelles, inlet cowls, fan cowls, thrust reversers and flight controls. Our highly skilled and dedicated workforce is committed to



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the CFM56-3, CFM56-5A and V2500-A5 engine types, as well as flight controls on A320 and B737 aircraft.

What are the future freighter conversion programmes Vallair is looking at? Looking at the current situation, which type of conversion is more in demand? How many types do you have in order?

Patrick Leopold - We will maintain our focus on the A321 freighter variant. In October 2020 Vallair signed an LoI (Letter of Intent) with US based start up GlobalX to lease ten converted A321 freighter aircraft, which is, to date, the most significant deal in the history of the A321F to take place within the air cargo industry. The first GlobalX A321 will be delivered by the third quarter of 2021 and we anticipate all ten A321F aircraft to be delivered and in revenue operation by the second quarter of 2023.

As well as offering a higher volumetric capacity than other comparable narrow body freighter variants, the lower cargo hold on the A321F allows for the transit of ten containers in addition to the fourteen cargo positions available on the upper cargo deck; this ability to offer containerised cargo, increases efficiency by reducing turn-around times.

providing technical solutions, in shop or in the field, to restore or repair all of our customers' aerostructures, cost effectively and in the shortest lead time possible. Our Chateauroux facility specialises in a wide range of composite and sheet metal repairs on a variety of aircraft structures and components. All specialist work meets regulatory standards and fulfils the requirements of the various airworthiness bodies. A dedicated field service team is on hand to support with any aircraft

inspections or onsite repairs and modifications.

In addition to its repair services, Vallair Aerostructures manages an extensive pool of rotatable assets available for sale, lease or exchange. These assets have been repaired and certified in our repair shop to the highest standards and are available to customers around the world at competitive market pricing. Our inventory includes an array of products, such as inlet cowls and thrust reversers for

WE ARE FAMILY!

The Airbus Freighter Conversion

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