

IN BRIEF

SILK FINDS A WAY TO LEASE AN-124

Silk Way Airlines has agreed terms to lease an Antonov An-124 freighter from Russia's Ilyushin Finance Company.

IFC expects a firm contract to be signed within a month, the lessor said at a signing ceremony at the show today. This was attended by IFC chief executive Alexander Rubtsov and Silk Way Group president Zaur Akhundov.

Azerbaijan-based cargo carrier Silk Way operates a fleet of seven Ilyushin Il-76 and two Antonov An-12 freighters, and its subsidiary Silk Way West has five Boeing 747 freighters.

THE HEAT IS ON

Manchester-based Wallwork Group (Hall 4, G121) has inaugurated its new online quoting service at the show. "A manual quotation can sometimes take 24h to turn around and many customers working 24/7 on tight deadlines find this frustrating," says director Ian Griffin. "This new service means we can give them an indicative price automatically."

GRANDNEWS ARE THE MAINE THING

Leonardo announced the sale of three GrandNew helicopters in EMS configuration to US customer LifeFlight. The rotorcraft will join a mixed fleet to deliver advanced in-flight patient care and transport to critically injured patients across the state of Maine.

BREATHING EASY

Cobham (Hall 4, G68) is introducing its prototype military physiological monitoring system in the form of breathing sensors. These will form the basis of a life support system that will protect fighter pilots from unperceivable, debilitating hypoxia-like symptoms.

RUAG GETS Do228 OFF TO FLYING START IN USA



Photo: Bly/PA

BIG IN AMERICA: (l-r) Büsser, Skvarla and Stern shake on the arrangement at the show yesterday

RUAG is embarking on a new sales push for the Do228 utility and special missions turboprop in the USA.

Having recently received US Federal Aviation Authority certification for the latest variant of the workhorse turboprop, the Swiss manufacturer has appointed North Carolina-based AMC Aviation as its authorised distributor and service centre in North America.

"In terms of the US market, it is important to have a partner that we can work with, that can be a local presence for us and our channel to market in the United States to our customer segments," says Martin Büsser, senior vice-president sales and marketing at RUAG.

By **ELLIS TAYLOR**

Chris Stern, general manager of AMC Aviation, says that the company will be targeting both government special missions requirements, and "blue chip" commuter airline customers in North America.

"We felt that now is the right time to push this aircraft. There is no real competitor in that class in the Do228," he adds.

Stern says that the government of North Carolina has also been crucial to AMC securing the distributorship of the aircraft.

John Skvarla III, North Carolina's secretary of commerce, says that, as an "aviation state", the government is keen to support the relationship with AMC and RUAG.

"We are very, very proud of this relationship and we want to do everything we can to help it grow, and to have them part of North Carolina," he says. "RUAG has other things that North Carolina can possibly benefit from too. This is the beginning of a very multi-faceted relationship."

The push into North America comes as RUAG prepares to commence series production of the turboprop at its Oberpfaffenhofen facility near Munich. It is targeting production of 8-12 aircraft per year from early 2017.

Swiss manufacturer RUAG expects that government agencies will account for close to half of the sales of its Do228 utility turboprop in the near future.

Martin Büsser, senior vice-president sales and marketing, says that at present, commuter airlines account for around two-thirds of the market, with government and special missions customers the remaining third.

"There is an increase in special missions needs for this type of aircraft because of its versatility and affordability. I expect that probably the special mission government tasks at the end of the day will be 50:50," he says.

Key to the aircraft's appeal in the special missions market is its aerodynamics. Büsser

All-purpose turboprop set for more special roles

er notes that the aircraft has a high cruise speed, but thanks to the unique design of its wing, it can also operate at slow speeds in icing conditions, even at low altitude.

A number of Do228s are in service around the world in coast guard, aerial sur-

veillance and utility transport roles with government and military agencies.

Its short take-off and landing capability has also made it suited to niche commercial operations, such as in the Channel Islands – with Guernsey carrier Aurigny, which RUAG labels as "blue-chip" operations.

Having now launched a new distributor arrangement in North America, Büsser says that RUAG is also looking to further sales growth in Asia and Africa.

Flight Fleets Analyzer shows that there are eight RUAG-built Do228s in service and 15 on order, while a further 96 were built by Hindustan Aeronautics are also in operation. A further 132 built by Fairchild Dornier remain in use.



JOYCE: Steady growth gives grounds for confidence

GE BULLISH ON ENGINE BACKLOG

GE Aviation remains confident that it can execute its enormous backlog of commercial engines in development and production.

Fifteen years into a steady commercial aviation growth cycle, the US manufacturer has 46,000 engines – worth \$154 billion at list price – in the order backlog, including for recent developments with the GENx, Leap-1 and GE9X engines.

"We're still very bullish," says GE Aviation chief executive David Joyce. "We're feeling pretty good about the business and the environment we're working with right now."

The company is so busy that it is no rush to take on additional work, as Boeing continues

discussing a middle-of-the-market (MoM) project for the mid-2020s and Airbus evaluates a further stretch of the A350-1000.

"We have to make sure we're comfortable with the business case," says Joyce, referring to Boeing's proposed MoM concept.

If the business case were approved, GE would be competing with Rolls-Royce and Pratt & Whitney to power the Boeing aircraft, positioned in size and capability between the 737-9 and the 787-8.

"We will always be competitive when an airplane is ready to go and the business case closes," Joyce says. "Don't underestimate our competitive responsibilities as a company."

GE can leverage a suite of emerging technologies in new aircraft engines, including new and improved 3D printing manufacturing techniques and advanced materials such as ceramic matrix composites.

Both of GE's competitors have disclosed plans to develop new or improved fan-drive gear systems in future engines, which could lead to significant improvements in fuel efficiency by allowing larger bypass ratios.

So far, GE has not confirmed whether it would also seek to develop a similar reduction gear in a future engine, although the manufacturer is suing P&W over its rival's patent claim on the technology.

LEVERAGING OUR CAPABILITIES

COME MEET **YOUR** LANDING GEAR **PARTNER**

HALL 4, STAND B50
AND AT WWW.HEROUXDEVTEK.COM

