Safran waging on local service

With the contract signed by Aircelle and Rolls-Royce with British Airways at Farnborough and the orders racked up by Messier-Bugatti-Dowty at MRO* Europe, Safran strengthened and consolidated its position in the strategic maintenance sector in 2012.

To avoid having capital tied up in inventory and high storage costs, airlines are increasingly outsourcing fleet maintenance in order to focus on their core business. Aircelle and Messier-Bugatti-Dowty (Safran) have adapted their strategy to grasp the opportunities created by this new situation.

"In the customer’s backyard"

In the summer of 2012, Aircelle and Rolls-Royce signed a comprehensive services offering for Trent 900 engine nacelles on British Airways’ A380s. This contract involves an unprecedented 25-year coverage period during which Aircelle will ensure the availability of key Trent 900 nacelle components – including thrust reverser, fan cowl, air inlet and exhaust system – and directly manage more than 130 line-replaceable unit part types. The company will also provide around-the-clock maintenance, repair and overhaul coverage for the nacelle hardware. By opening a Field Service Office (FSO) at Rolls-Royce’s Hatton Cross/London Heathrow Airport facility to work alongside the engine manufacturer, Aircelle is looking to achieve a better result. "Aircelle aims to become an essential player in the provision of services which implies a far-reaching review of its operations and a more customer-oriented approach. In other words, we need to move from a product-focused culture to a pluralistic culture that encompasses service," stresses Marc Laubreaux, SVP Customer Services at Aircelle. "In order to adapt our logistics and engineering processes and upgrade our information systems and methods of communication, our teams will have to get intimate with customers."

Strengthening our leadership

Prospects are also bright for Messier-Bugatti-Dowty who was awarded a number of major maintenance contracts at MRO Europe 2012 in Amsterdam. A welcome boost for the MRO business of the world leader in landing systems. "We have experienced two rather tough years, with a lot of pressure on prices due to supply outweighing demand. We have therefore stepped up our efforts in terms of productivity and undertaken continuous improvement initiatives. This will put us in an ideal position to successfully manage the sharp resurgence in our activity expected in 2014, or even 2013 in Asia," explains Bruno Chiarelli, MRO Division VP, Messier-Bugatti-Dowty. The OEM has strengthened its leading position in the MRO market by scooping the contract to overhaul the landing gear on various types of Airbus for six airlines**. Such operations will take place at repair facilities in Gloucester (UK), Molsheim (France) and Singapore.

* MRO: Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul

** Aegean Airlines, Cyprus Airways, Maximus Air, Egypt Air, Qatar Airways and China Airlines