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LEADING AVIATION ENGINEERING COMPANIES TEAM UP TO FORM THE INDEPENDENT AIRCRAFT MODIFIER ALLIANCE

A group of significant players in the aviation industry are cooperating to form a new alliance in the field of aircraft modification. As leading companies in the retrofit industry, Etihad Airways Engineering, EAD Aerospace, Lufthansa Technik and Envoy Aerospace have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to form the Independent Aircraft Modifier Alliance (IAMA).

IAMA aims to encourage aircraft owners and operators to modify and modernize their fleets through high quality equipment and rigorous inspections, irrespective of which IAMA members provide the engineering services.

Aircraft modifications, such as the installation of new cabins, connectivity solutions or avionics systems can be approved and documented through a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) offered by providers such as the IAMA members. The alliance addresses customer concerns with regard to documentation, data availability and a worldwide customer support network across different regulatory systems with various national authorities.

The main objectives of the Independent Aircraft Modifier Alliance are to agree to common standards for the documentation and quality of Supplemental Type Certificates, to establish an open, secure documentation platform for airline customers and aircraft owners using STCs, and to inform the relevant public and expert communities about the advantages of STC approved solutions.

Bernhard Randerath, Vice President Design, Engineering and Innovation of Etihad Airways Engineering said: “This alliance is a positive step towards addressing the challenges that customers face with STC solutions today. As the Middle East’s largest MRO, we use OEM solutions, however, Etihad is renowned for innovation and applying our own STC modifications. We believe that OEMs will also benefit from becoming members of IAMA, which is open to all modification providers.

“Our customers need seamless solutions and efficient support during implementation and most importantly in service afterwards. STCs are a fast, cost efficient way to provide modifications, and IAMA is a promising approach to address the critical points of documentation simplicity and continued after-sales support.”

Thomas Rueckert, Head of Base Maintenance and Aircraft Modification at Lufthansa Technik, said: “We enable aircraft operators to decide objectively and independently on the best possible modification solution for their fleet – regardless of a specific provider. Safety, flexibility of solutions for implementation of customer requests, along with speed and efficiency are at the heart of our activities.

“In addition, value retention and reliable life cycle support are essential factors for aircraft operators and owners. IAMA jointly develop transparent standards that will help our customers make the right decisions,” adds Andreas Gherman, Head of the Design Organization at Lufthansa Technik.

Patrick Gindre, Sales Director of EAD Aerospace says: “The aftermarket modifier ecosystem needed a “home” to discuss our challenges, best practices and to improve our services by delivering a common message to the market. Together, we have the objective to shape the future of the STC in the aviation world”.

Romain Mbwang Seppoh, Head of Airworthiness at EAD Aerospace adds: "The retro fit market has specific challenges to be handled with customers and operators in terms of organization and mandatory exchange of data. IAMA will be a collaborative and knowledgeable reference and voice to regulators and standardization committees regarding how STCs efficiently fulfill these obligations. Being in the heart of the activity, IAMA tackle those challenges daily. The

alliance will foster proportionate and adapted regulations, and jointly develop and provide the optimal tools to its members.”

“We are excited to be a part of IAMA,” said Adrian Honer, partner and ODA Lead Administrator at Envoy Aerospace, LLC. “The affiliation will provide our members with a significant voice to resolve issues that affect retrofit certification approvals. Our involvement in IAMA reflects our commitment to our customers, present and future, to be a leader in retrofit aircraft certification quality.”

Marilyn Feigl, partner and ODA Administrator at Envoy Aerospace adds: “Retrofit modifications on aircraft have unique challenges. IAMA will offer its members mentorship and counselling to deal with these challenges, especially when dealing with regulatory agencies and the industry at large. This will help raise the certification standards to ensure the highest quality STC products.”

The launch meeting of the IAMA is scheduled for spring 2019. The Independent Aircraft Modifier Alliance is open to all market participants including aircraft manufacturers, airlines, suppliers and lessors. Founding members of the alliance believe that a strong and transparent retrofit market will benefit everyone. Members of the alliance work together to offer a transparent, distinct and independent market for aircraft retrofits, providing greater choice for operators and added value for the aviation industry.

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