

SATAIR PROVIDED METAL PRINTED FLYING SPARE PART

Hamburg, Germany - 27 October 2020 –

Satair, an Airbus services company, has provided one of its airline customers in the US with what is believed to be the first certified metal printed flying spare part. This A320ceo specific part is no longer procurable from the original supplier, thus leading to an alternate solution developed by Satair. The tailored additive manufactured solution reduces the likelihood of an AOG for this specific aircraft, and on a larger level leads to an increased flexibility in part production while meeting the same high quality standards ensured by EASA Form1 certification.

The A320ceo wingtip fences are installed in four different versions – starboard, port, upper and lower. These parts are A320ceo specific and no longer in production. The spare parts supplier had difficulties providing the cast part. This led to a regular loss of the moulds, resulting in a potentially high investment cost for Satair to replace the moulds for individual orders. Satair also studied other conventional options such as re-designing the part for machining technology, but the resulting cost and lead-time implications were not competitive.

Felix Hammerschmidt, HO Additive Manufacturing Satair, explained: "We received an order for replacement parts and our AOG procurement department turned to the Additive Manufacturing (AM) team for a solution. After a short pre-assessment, the part was handed over to the RapidSpares design offices at Airbus. Using a new certification process they were able to re-certify the former cast part within five weeks and adapt it to titanium, which is a qualified airworthy additive manufacturing material". He added: "The lead time for certification is expected to reduce even further in the future once the technology becomes more of a standard."

The printing of the wingtip fence parts was carried out at the Reference Manufacturing shop in Airbus Filton, which was process qualified in 2019 and is now able to produce airworthy parts regularly. Four parts (full shipset for one aircraft) are printed simultaneously in a build job, which takes 26 hours, to reduce the cost per piece and the printing time per part.

After printing, the part requires different post-processing steps to become an airworthy part, making it a one-to-one replacement for the original part whilst meeting the same safety requirements as the conventional part. The new AM part is supplied with an EASA Form 1 certification approval.

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The shipset was delivered earlier this year – making the airline the first operator with an Airbus metal printed AM spare part. Compared to conventional solutions, total non-recurring costs were reduced by 45% making it a cheaper solution for customers and with a shorter lead time.

Bart Reijnen, CEO of Satair, added: “Satair is leading the way in providing additive manufactured parts for the aviation aftermarket and we currently have more than 300 part numbers certified for the technology covering every Airbus aircraft family type including tools and Ground Support Equipment. With more than 7,000 A320ceo Family aircraft in service worldwide, the demand for this specific additive manufactured part is likely to increase and with this Additive Manufacturing supply chain now in place, we will be able to produce these parts within a shorter lead time. Four more customers have already requested that same part following this successful delivery.”

He added: “We have already identified more titanium parts for which Additive Manufacturing could as well become a more economical way of production, with higher flexibility and shorter lead times.”

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About Satair

Satair is a key part of the Airbus Customer Services unit and a global company with more than 1,300 employees, operating from 10 locations worldwide. The company supports the complete life cycle of the aircraft with a full and integrated portfolio of flexible, value-adding material management products, services and tailored support modules across all platforms. Satair is a stand-alone Airbus subsidiary. To learn more about Satair, visit www.satair.com, or follow the company on Twitter: @Satair_aviation

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