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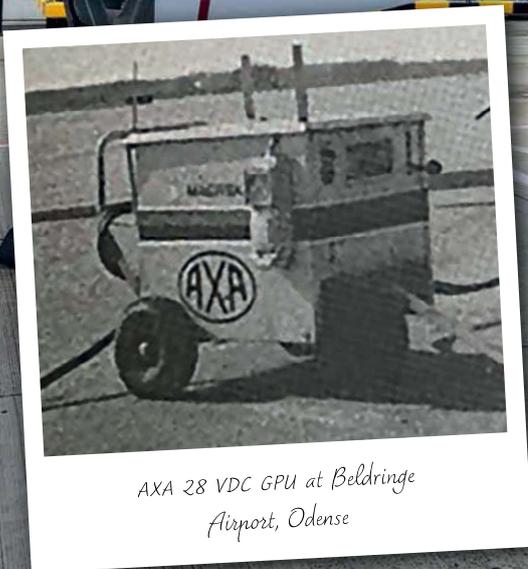
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*AXA 28 VDC GPU at Beldringe
Airport, Odense*



36 INDUSTRY
INTERVIEW

Hactl uses robotics to solve manpower crisis



40 BELTLOADER
MARKET

How automated solutions are helping ramp agents



46 WORLD
ANALYSIS

Strong passenger growth in the Middle East

EXTERIOR CLEANING MADE EASY

Aerowash machines are revolutionising aircraft washing, saving airlines critical time and money and giving handlers new business opportunities.

Manufactured in Sweden, the AW3 machine is designed to dry wash all types of aircraft, including widebodies such as Airbus A350, Boeing 787, Boeing 777 and right up to the Airbus A380. Already deployed by Finnair and Air Canada, the number of machines in India are now gaining traction thanks to a partnership between Aerowash and AeroTech Support Services and Air India SATS, (AISATS).

AISATS Delhi was the first station to deploy the machine with several active AW3s on the ground, now AISATS has ordered more units for operation in Bangalore and Hyderabad airports, with potential for more later this year.

AISATS has completed an impressive 1,000 mechanised dry washes since the machine was introduced in August 2023.

Sanjay Gupta, CEO of AISATS, said: "As a ground handler committed towards providing our client airlines with innovative airport solutions, we understand the pain points airlines face when it comes to aircraft exterior cleaning. Conventional washing methods are labour intensive, consume too much water and make an aircraft unavailable for long periods of time while it is being cleaned. Aerowash sets new benchmarks in

Air India SATS has introduced India's first and only robotic dry wash aircraft exterior cleaning system at Delhi Airport.

aircraft cleaning efficiency, which accelerates cleaning times, reduces manpower requirements and saves water. It also increases an airline's operational efficiency by improving aircraft turnaround times and reduces aerodynamic drag."

CEO of Aerowash Niklas Adler said: "We have a very good cooperation with Ashwani Khanna and AeroTech Support Services. They have been a really good launch partner for us. India is the first place where we are rolling out Aerowash at a big scale. We of course have a good relationship with Finnair and Air Canada, which has helped us enormously and with joint efforts with AeroTech we have just received a huge order from Dubai that we are about to deliver on, so our business is growing quickly and we are constantly recruiting more people to come and work at our factory."

There are multiple benefits to using the Aerowash machine, especially in warmer climates found in India, the Middle East and Asia Pacific, saving around 1,400 litres of water per wash for a narrowbody aircraft and delivering substantial carbon savings.

"For every narrowbody, you could end up saving close to 180 tons of carbon dioxide," said Khanna. "For widebody aircraft this

could be as high as around 463 tons per year but with B747s and A380s, this could go nearer to around 900 tons per year."

The dry wash process is unique because it uses a plant-based product that is 100% biodegradable. It is manufactured by company, SOCOMORE, which has production plants in the UK, France and the US. The beauty of the substance is that it absorbs any dust or dirt, leaving a layer of shine on the aircraft. "The shine is not a wax kind of coating, it does not attract dust, it works in the same way as a non-stick pan coating would. If the layer is good, you would use less oil for cooking. Here, you would use less ATF when flying," explained Khanna. It is estimated that it saves up to 19 kg of ATF per hour of flight for a narrowbody aircraft.

"With a dry wash, the advantage is you don't need to tow the aircraft either to the washing bay or the hangar wherever the aircraft is standing the remote-operated machine would come there, clean the aircraft, with hardly any residue falling on the ground."

How the machine is operated

One person operates the machine with the help of three other people assisting in a technical clean that includes the flaps and

landing gear areas. Normally it would take a crew of up to seven people to manually clean an narrowbody aircraft for at least five hours but with the Aerowash machine, cleaning time is reduced to just two hours.

“When we talk about cleaning in the aviation industry it is defined into technical cleaning and aircraft cleaning. Technical cleaning is when you do the landing gear, including the wheels, when you extend the flaps, you clean the slots in-between them, so it becomes a thorough technical clean. When we do aircraft cleaning in India, we do all of it. Airlines are really happy that we provide this add-on service,” added Khanna.

So what's next?

The uptake in Europe for the Aerowash machine could increase, says Adler, due to chronic manpower shortages and labour costs. “The high cost of labour is putting pressure on the European airlines and service companies to do this more efficiently and take advantage of all the other added benefits and environmental savings that come with our machine.”

Khanna added: “When I look back on the past year, we have been able to cover



good ground, not only here in India, but in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia. We have signed a MOU with AirAsia, Malaysia and they are interested in exploring the mechanised dry wash machine for their entire AirAsia Malaysia fleet (220 aircraft). Niklas and I are also working in Turkey and other markets. With Air India SATS we've signed an innovation partner agreement

and are currently working on a few more projects, again a first in the industry. At AeroTech Support Services we believe that the solutions that we introduce, should reduce the operating cost for the aviation industry and our earnings should come out of these savings that we help realise for our customers, this will always be a win-win relationship.” **ghi**

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