Boeing Agreement With Fokker Services B.V. Provides Maintenance Software Tool For Fokker Airplanes

A powerful software tool developed by The Boeing Company to help airlines quickly troubleshoot their Boeing and Douglas jetliners now is available to operators of Fokker airplanes.

Boeing has entered into an agreement with Fokker Services B.V., under which Boeing will adapt its Portable Maintenance Aid (PMA) software application for use by maintenance and engineering staffs supporting Fokker aircraft.

There are almost 1,200 Fokker turboprop and jet-powered airplanes in service worldwide. They were built by the former Fokker Aircraft B.V. of the Netherlands. Although production of these airplanes has ceased, operators continue to receive technical support from Fokker Services B.V., a unit of the Dutch concern Stork Aerospace Group.

Boeing developed PMA software in the mid-1990s and began marketing it three years ago to Boeing and Douglas fleet operators. It is an entire digitized library of key technical information contained in just a few compact disks. The disks can be loaded into a mechanic's laptop computer and taken directly to an airplane in need of servicing.

PMA software offers several significant time-saving advantages for aircraft troubleshooting. First, mechanics don't need to make repeated trips to a crew room or technical library to look up information on paper or microfilmed documents. Secondly, advanced search capability and "hyperlinks" connecting related references in text allow instant access to any part of the Fault Isolation Manual, Aircraft Maintenance Manual, Aircraft Illustrated Parts Catalog and other documents.

PMA users also benefit from intelligent graphics technology. Mechanics can point-and-click on a highlighted area of an illustration and instantly bring troubleshooting text into view. That same technology also speeds up fault isolation by quickly displaying the next choice of options at each step in a fault-tree diagram.

Boeing estimates PMA software reduces the time it takes to search and retrieve information by as much as 40 percent compared to using paper or microfilm-based reference systems. In addition, by presenting the user with the exact information needed to address specific tasks, PMA software reduces guesswork and enhances the safety and efficiency of the entire maintenance process.

Among other advantages, PMA users can add their own airline-specific maintenance information and have full access to it through the PMA search engine. The software is network compatible, too, allowing access by multiple users via a local server. Engineering staffs find the software particularly useful for analyzing technical problems and issuing work orders.

All of these advantages now are available to Fokker fleet operators. Airplanes covered under the PMA agreement with Fokker Services B.V. include Fokker 50 and 60 turboprops and the Fokker 70 and 100 jetliners.

Under the agreement, Fokker Services B.V. will market PMA software to its customer base and will provide technical data and updates. Boeing will support the PMA application, including 24-hour telephone assistance and on-site consultation.

"Our PMA software has proven to be an extremely valuable tool to the more than 65 Boeing and Douglas fleet operators who have contracted for the product," said John J. Gibson, Boeing director of Maintenance Solutions and Support. "We believe it can benefit the entire air transport system, and the agreement with Fokker Services B.V. is a major step to expand its use in our industry."

PMA software is one of several information technology offerings from Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. These offerings include both online and media-based products and services for airplane maintenance and operation.

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For further information:
Dick Schleh (Seattle)
office: 206-544-9528
Kristine Touw (Netherlands)
Fokker Services
office: 31-164-618517