SF AIRLINES WILL RETROFIT THEIR AIRCRAFT WITH THALES/ACSS AVIONICS

News / Airlines, Manufacturer



SF Airlines, which operates China's largest cargo fleet, has chosen Thales and ACSS, an L3Harris Technologies and Thales joint venture, as the exclusive avionics suppliers to retrofit its fleet with ADS-B Out-compliant airborne equipment. This selection is an active response to CAAC's (Civil Aviation Administration of China) promotion of ADS-B technology.

Jerome Bendell, Vice President of Thales North Asia and CEO of Thales in China commented: "We are very honoured to partner with SF Airlines and provide this avionics retrofit to the largest aircraft cargo fleet in China. We will continue using our full capabilities in mature airborne and ground solutions to support our partners and CAAC, promoting the safe and efficient development of China's civil aviation industry"

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ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast) technology is aiming at vastly improving air traffic efficiency and capacity. It enables air traffic controllers to get much improved situational awareness thanks to the real-time aircraft information provided by their internal GPS, with more accuracy than with the usual radar. In view of these benefits, CAAC has listed ADS-B as one of the new technologies to be promoted for improving flight safety and operational efficiency as well as on-time performance. According to CAAC's plan, all China's in-service aircraft are mandated to implement ADS-B Out Version 2 functions by the end of 2022.

Being the first to market certified ADS-B In and Out Solutions, Thales' partner ACSS is a leading equipment manufacturer in the domain. Together the two companies have delivered over 5,000 NXTs (Next Generation Transponder) on different types of aircraft including Airbus, Boeing and Embraer for airlines around the world.

With this contract, the Thales partnership will provide ADS-B-compliant solutions for SF Airlines' existing 59 aircraft and future optional aircraft. Corresponding airborne equipment will be installed based on the different configuration of each aircraft, including replacement TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System), TCAS directional antenna, and ATC (Air Traffic Control) transponders, etc. This avionics retrofit of 59 aircraft will be fully implemented by the end of 2022, and represents the largest cooperation project between Thales and a Chinese cargo airline to date.

In addition to the airborne equipment, Thales has also provided ADS-B ground station equipment to China. By virtue of its expertise in air traffic management, as well as its technology and experience in the field of ADS-B In and Out applications, Thales has actively supported CAAC in carrying out China's ADS-B operations, notably through the first ADS-B In demonstration flight in 2017.

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