AERIA LOOKS TO BRING INTERIOR SKILLS CLOSER TO ASIAN CLIENTS

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Aeria Luxury Interiors recently delivered the first new Boeing Business Jet (BBJ) that it has completed direct from the factory. The aircraft went to an undisclosed customer in Eastern Europe and the San Antonio, Texas-based company is now working to complete a VIP-configured Boeing widebodied airliner that it expects to deliver in the first quarter of 2017.

Benefiting from fresh investment provided by its Singapore-based owner ST Aero, Aeria is expanding its facilities with the addition of around 1,300 square meters (14,000 square feet) of additional workspace, including more cabinetry and upholstery shops. The company also is adding a 186-sq-m (2,000 sq ft) space to accommodate its in-house interior design department and also the sales and marketing team, plus a showroom for customers.

Eventually, ST Aero (which is part the ST Engineering maintenance, repair and overhaul group) wants to be able to establish a parallel completions facility in Singapore that would be more convenient for private and corporate aircraft owners across the Asia Pacific region. This plan is starting out with moves to offer cabin interior maintenance and refurbishment services at the ST

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Aero facility at Singapore's Seletar Airport and Aeria is training its colleagues in all the core skills.

The interior and exterior for the just-delivered BBJ were developed by Aeria's interior designers in consultation with the client. Ron Soret, Aeria's completions vice president and general manager, explained that usually travels with family members or small groups of guests. The cabin includes a crew rest area, a galley, a conference/dining area, a large lounge area with a flat-screen TV and a master bedroom with a private lavatory and shower.

The cabin was fitted with CTT's humidification and zonal drying system. The interior features decorative pieces produced using Aeria's 3D printing capability and finishes using precious stones and other luxury materials.

The 3D printer was purchased in 2014 and it can produce large parts. "We are using it extensively for completions, making prototypes and decorative pieces," Soret explained. For the BBJs, 3D-printed parts included single-seat armrests, loudspeaker bezels and brackets for electronics components. Aeria is using a thermoplastic material that has sufficient structural strength and also meets flammabilityrequirements.

Aeria is very active in VIP aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO), as well as refurbishment. It also specializes in the installation of cabin management and inflight entertainment systems, as well as some avionics work, and is an authorized dealer for both Honeywell and Rockwell Collins.

The existing 9,280-square-meter (100,000 square feet) hangar in San Antonio can accommodate two widebody and two narrowbody aircraft. Last year it provided MRO services to a mix of BBJs, Boeing 737s and 757s. The company can handle C checks and 12-year checks for BBJs.

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