

THOMPSON AERO SEATING TO CREATE WORLD-CLASS DYNAMIC TEST FACILITY

News / Manufacturer



Thompson Aero Seating plans to create a world-class Dynamic Test Facility in Northern Ireland. This is a £7.5 million investment in a facility that will catapult Thompson into a new era of development and innovation. Building works have already begun to extend the premises for the DTF at the Thompson brownfield site in Banbridge, County Down, and are planned to complete in Spring 2023, with the test equipment to be installed in the Summer and testing due to begin from Autumn 2023.

Neil Taggart, CEO of Thompson Aero Seating, says: “Having our own Dynamic Test Facility will give us a huge opportunity to save on lead times in the development of our new seats and improve sustainability – which have to be positives for our airline customers.”



In parallel with the building works, will be recruitment for several test engineering roles representing an exciting opportunity to shape the formation of a new capability within the business and become an integral part of designing the next generation of world-class aircraft interior products.

The DTF will give Thompson enhanced capability to certify new products for airworthiness and to carry out research and development work, without even needing to leave the factory. Currently, there is no DTF on the island of Ireland and Thompson has had no choice but to send products and team members to test facilities in Europe and North America.

Innovation and green credentials

Having enhanced in-house dynamic testing capability will give Thompson greater opportunity for innovation and will allow designs to be optimised, reducing weight and, therefore, reducing the carbon footprint of the seats in flight. Furthermore, testing onsite will be positive for the environment.



Testing specification

Sled testing allows engineers to reproduce the dynamic conditions of a full-scale crash event in a controlled environment. The reverse accelerator sled being installed can produce up to 100g accelerations.

Funding partnership

Neil Taggart says: “The majority of the funding for the project has come from Thompson's shareholder, with Invest Northern Ireland is part-funding the project. This is a very exciting opportunity for Thompson Aero Seating. It will enable us to push the boundaries of design and bring further innovation to the aircraft interiors industry.”

Support has also been received from local MPs, Councillors, business leaders from the Makers Alliance, from ADS the national trade body for Aerospace, Defence, Security & Space and our Sharing In Growth business transformation coaches.



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