

RUAG International signs contract for the modernisation of the Royal Thai Navy's Dornier 228

By Defence Review Asia - February 9, 2021



RUAG MRO International is comprehensively modernising Dornier 228 aircraft for the Royal Thai Navy. The upgrade includes the installation of glass cockpits and new mission equipment as well as the modernization of avionics systems.

The Thai Navy uses its Dornier 228 to monitor the exclusive economic zone called the "200-mile zone". The aircraft and their crews conduct ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) missions in the territorial waters of the Gulf of Thailand for the purpose of border surveillance to combat illegal trade and fishing.

Initially, RUAG will now be modernising two of the seven aircraft in the Royal Thai Navy Dornier 228 fleet. This also includes transporting the aircraft to and from Thailand and providing training in the use of the new equipment. For the upgrade, the aircraft were disassembled on site in Thailand. Subsequently, an Antonov AN-124 transport aircraft flew the Dornier 228 to Oberpfaffenhofen, where the experts from RUAG MRO International carry out a comprehensive inspection. In the process, they remove the paint completely and eliminate any corrosion damage to the aircraft structure, which is now 25 years old. The aircraft will be equipped with glass cockpits and modern avionics systems (COM, NAV). The interior, cockpit and aircraft cabin will also be revamped. It will receive modern mission equipment that will enable tasks to be performed more effectively and efficiently. These include a 360° search radar, infrared cameras as well as a mission management and data link for data transmission to ground stations and/or ships.





RTN_Hangar_DSC_0033.JPG

Due to the aircraft modernization, pilots, crew members and technicians will need to be trained in the use of the new equipment. RUAG MRO International will therefore also organize training for crew members and technicians, partly in Germany and partly on site in Thailand. In addition, RUAG's factory pilot team will be responsible for ferrying the modernised aircraft to Thailand.

The Royal Thai Navy is dependent on the greatest possible availability of its aircraft to be able to continuously perform its sovereign tasks. "We are therefore doing everything we can to keep aircraft downtime as short as possible. Especially under the current conditions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, this is a challenge," explains Thomas Imke, Sales Manager. Even sending a five-man team to Thailand for dismantling the aircraft involved considerable effort, given reduced flight connections and quarantine regulations. "These are challenges that we are happy to take on because the satisfaction of our customers is our top priority," concludes Thomas Imke.

RUAG MRO International is an independent supplier, support provider and integrator of systems and components for civil and military aviation worldwide. It also develops and supports simulation and training systems and solutions for international trained security forces.

The company's core competencies range from repair and maintenance work and upgrades to the development and integration of subsystems and components for selected aircraft and helicopters throughout their entire lifecycle.

In addition, as the manufacturer (OEM) of the Dornier 228, a versatile aircraft for special missions as well as passenger and cargo operations, RUAG International focuses on customer support solutions, including OEM services.



RUAG MRO International also develops simulation and training systems for live, virtual and constructive (LVC) training. Thanks to flexible functions and a wide range of additional equipment realistic training can be provided for a wide variety of missions – from individual team training to the training of entire units.

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