

# FS WELCOMES FIRST NEXT GENERATION BOEING

***"Maersk Air's Boeing 737 Next Generation was the first aircraft that has come in since we received our approval for this type. And that was quite obvious", says Jan Bogers, Hangar Manager at Fokker Services in Woensdrecht. "Everyone was eager to be involved with this, because it was an ideal way to gain experience. That was a good thing, because later on, Maersk Air did admit that they didn't give us much time to do the job".***

## JOINT EFFORT

In early 2002, Fokker Services gained JAR/FAR 145 approval for the Boeing 737 [-600, -700, -800 & -900] Next Generation. This type differs quite markedly from its predecessor, the 737 [-300, -400 & -500] New Generation. Martijn Vromans, Pro-

duct Manager, explains: "The major difference between the first generation and the latter are the systems. This is most clearly exhibited by the so-called glass cockpit of the Next Generation. Thanks to the Fokker 100, we do have a lot of experience with next generation aircraft types. This helps us strongly with the Boeing 737".

On Monday, September 9th, the first aircraft of this type could finally be welcomed at Woensdrecht. Maersk Air had leased the machine out to the Italian company Alpi Eagles and apart from a 1000-hour inspection, the aircraft would also need a number of modifications. That Wednesday evening, the aircraft had to return to Maersk Air. Jan Bogers: "Alpi Eagles, the new operator, wanted to replace and increase the number of seats in the cabin. This meant that the passenger service panels had to be moved

around. In addition, a new carpet had to be laid, new stowage units installed and the existing stowage relocated. Quite a big job to complete in a mere three days, so we needed two shifts per day, consisting of 15 to 16 mechanics. Fortunately, the component shop gave us considerable support with the seats. But, as I already said, everybody involved couldn't wait to get going with this job".

## FLEXIBILITY

Ultimately, the Boeing was not delivered on Wednesday evening, but early on Thursday morning. Jan Bogers: "We had some delays due to critical repairs on the nose landing gear. One specific part was not in stock and had to be ordered quick. This held up progress for a bit". Martijn Vromans: "Thanks to our good relations with local airlines,



Boeing 737



we can quickly acquire the needed parts when time is critical. In this case, Transavia was able to help us. This kind of flexibility ensures us that any obstacles are surmountable and kept to a minimum”.

### A TIGHT TIME LINE

All in all, Fokker Services has every reason to be satisfied with this first

modification of a Boeing 737 Next Generation. Martijn Vromans: "Not only the execution time was very tightly planned, also the preparation. We had to prepare the organization for this job in only five days' time. Since Maersk Air was aware of this, they were particularly pleased with the job we did. In October, we will be welcoming the next 737, We should have some more available time by that time. This Boeing, also

from Maersk Air, will receive a similar service package, but with even more cabin modifications”.

### LARGER GENERATION

Jan Bogers: "What we have also learned from this job is that the Next Generation is much larger than the New Generation. Naturally we were aware of this. The aircraft not only has five meters bigger span, but the wings are also placed much higher. We had to move the other aircraft in the hangar around in order to create enough room for this new model”. Martijn Vromans adds: "We have also noticed how important it is for the entire organization to be on standby for a job needing this kind of a short turn-around time. The fact that everyone was well prepared and knew what had to happen ensured the success of the last operation. Our know-how and flexibility took care of the challenges, underlining our strength once again". STORY Fokker

## ERHARD LENTZ, TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE MAERSK AIR:

“If I were asked to give Fokker Services a score on a scale of 1 to 10, they would get a big fat 9 from me. The cooperation was excellent on all fronts. Common, minor practical difficulties, like a spare part being out of stock, were solved efficiently and quickly. For that matter, I’m used to such minor problems cropping up constantly.

I was told that this was the first Next Generation Fokker Services would be working on, but if I hadn’t known, I would never have noticed. I think that’s because of their experience with other types of Boeing aircraft. Furthermore, I was able to experience the results of their work first hand. When the plane was ready, I joined the flight to Eindhoven. And I must say, it was an excellent journey.

I have relished the work, FS has done a fine job and so I’m looking forward to the next opportunity to work together. That date by the way has already been noted in my agenda!”