

# INTO THE BLUE

Aircraft painting and exterior coatings company MAAS Aviation is celebrating its long-term partnership with Ryanair – and with the mutual trust and benefits that come with such a working relationship, there could be many more years to come, says MAAS’ chief commercial officer **Richard Marston**



**“There is now great value assigned by customers to being able to source a top-quality aircraft paint finish applied in the shortest possible down time”**

**Richard Marston** is MAAS’ chief commercial officer

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**A**s with many other business sectors, working relationships between aviation companies change on a regular basis. New providers enter the market promising better and faster services, different technology or pricing structures are offered, or maybe it’s down to more suitable locations becoming available. Whatever the reason for changing, it’s a competitive marketplace with few business relationships really standing the test of time.

At MAAS Aviation – recognised experts in aircraft painting and exterior coatings – we are very proud of our enduring partnership with Ryanair, which spans more than four decades, dating back to when the airline was founded in the 1980s. Our business has changed during this time, and Ryanair has grown to become Europe’s largest airline group – operating over 3,000 flights per day this summer. I believe it is our shared focus on quality, attention to detail and the highest delivery standards that has led to our continuing positive partnership throughout that time.

Forty years on, and MAAS is still painting Ryanair’s aircraft today and is responsible for ensuring the high-quality appearance of the carrier’s fleet of over 500 Boeing aircraft. Ryanair maintains very high standards, investing in every element of its fleet to ensure it operates, and looks, first-class all of the time.



1 It is this quality driven ethos that the company seeks in its supply partners too, so the OEM operating standards we work to at MAAS are a perfect fit.

In 2021, following a multi-million Euro investment, MAAS Aviation opened a purpose-built twin bay paint shop at Kaunas Airport, Lithuania, growing our global footprint to 11 state-of-the-art facilities and increasing our overall MRO capacity in Europe by 40 per cent. The ultra-modern paint shop features the very latest technologies, including systems to ensure safe and secure operations and to manage the environmental impact of the company’s activities.

Demonstrating trust and confidence in its long-term supplier, Ryanair partnered with MAAS in launching the new facility, and re-located its established winter



repainting programme to the new Kaunas 24/7 coating lines.

Airlines like Ryanair continue to place huge emphasis on differentiating themselves through the use of innovative cabin interior products and by having an equally innovative high-quality external livery applied to their aircraft.

Consequently, there is now, more than ever, great value assigned by OEM, airline and lessor customers to being able to source a top-quality aircraft paint finish applied in the shortest possible down time.

According to Adam Hale, head of base maintenance at Ryanair, the airline’s “relationship with MAAS is built on consistently delivering an outstanding quality product, on time, every time”.

He adds: “With the Ryanair Group fleet now standing at over 500 aircraft, it is essential to have suppliers like MAAS that have grown up alongside us that can meet and exceed our exacting standards. We look forward to many more years working together as the fleet grows to over 600 aircraft by 2025.”

## Environmental sustainability

Environmental responsibility is an important factor that is at the forefront of MAAS’ business strategy and it is another area where the two businesses share values.

It is very important to us at MAAS, and to Ryanair, that we constantly seek new ways to be sustainable and minimise our impact on the environment. Having developed a decarbonisation strategy in 2021 – Pathway to Net Zero – Ryanair has set an ambitious goal to be a carbon neutral airline by 2050. This will be achieved via a number of strategies set out by the airline, including working with its partners – like ourselves at MAAS Aviation – to make aviation more sustainable.

At MAAS, all our facilities are designed to manage waste from our processes responsibly, with waste materials recycled wherever possible. In fact, our unique recycling technologies allow us to recover 80 per cent of the solvents we use.

We work continuously with paint manufacturers to ensure the high-performance aerospace coatings we use not only look superb but also reduce aircraft weight to improve fuel efficiency, thereby reducing emissions.

OEM-approved aviation paint supplier AkzoNobel is another long-term partner for us at MAAS and is the preferred coatings provider to the Ryanair programme. AkzoNobel’s systems include a number of chrome-free products, further supporting us in our environmental goals.

The company’s performance means that we require less paint to achieve the same result (the Basecoat/Clearcoat

system requires just a single coat as opposed to two or three), not only reducing the amount of material we use, but also reducing the overall weight of the aircraft. Both of these advantages – along with the proven durability of the coatings – contribute to more sustainable operations by lowering aircraft fuel consumption and thereby reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which makes the overall solution as lean as it can possibly be.

The collaborative relationship between MAAS, Ryanair and AkzoNobel makes for an enviable partnership, which delivers a fleet appearance that is second to none, and that really stands out at the airport.

Ryanair is very proud of its fleet and demands the highest of standards in terms of gloss-retention and colour stability, as well as overall longevity of the coating’s performance. Our experience in aircraft painting and first-class, modern facilities are directly supported by the coatings selected, which are fast drying and assist ease of application, meaning we can limit an aircraft’s time on the ground and deliver the highest quality finish in the fastest turnaround time possible.

It is a mutually beneficial partnership between MAAS Aviation, Ryanair and AkzoNobel and one that we look forward to continuing for many years yet. **M**

- 1. MAAS has been painting Ryanair’s aircraft for four decades
  - 2. The painting company employs the latest technologies
  - 3. Ryanair’s suppliers must meet its “exacting standards”
  - 4. A focus on sustainability is shared by both companies
- All photos courtesy of AkzoNobel

