

Q & A

In the hot seat...

Jan van Engelen
Chief Executive Officer
MAAS Aviation



What attracted you to this industry?

I have a long history of working in the aviation services industry and have always found it a fascinating sector to be involved in. The key attraction to joining MAAS was the team of passionate professionals focused on quality, sustainability, and customer experience, who have built the strong brand and reputation the business holds today. There is great potential to further enhance MAAS' market position, I look forward to getting personally involved and adding value through my complementary skills, industry experience and network. I am excited to be working with the team and supporting the company's continued success.

What is your key priority for MAAS Aviation as the new CEO?

My focus is on enhancing performance and driving sustainable growth throughout the business. MAAS has a refreshing 'no-nonsense' culture and a healthy focus on its people – characteristics we are building upon as we create new opportunities to reinforce our business values, network synergies and customer centric, partnership approach.

What key trends are you seeing with aircraft painting services post-pandemic?

The main change we have seen in recent years is to the painting systems themselves. Developments in new technologies have led to impressive performance improvements both in terms of increased quality and longevity of paint finish, and in environmental benefits. On average, aircraft need to be repainted every 4 to 5 years, but using the latest technology paint products such as basecoat clearcoat and Socogel/ Bogel – coupled with our OEM-standard painting techniques and processes – we at MAAS are seeing finishes that still look great and perform well seven and even eight years after being painted.

In terms of the painting process itself, the key operational trend is an increased adoption of digital tools to streamline operations and efficiency. We recently implemented a state-of-the-art, digital, cloud-based Management Information System across our sites which has

transformed our data-driven decision-making abilities and reporting. As we continue to see high demand for painting slots, especially during peak season, this ensures we are optimising operations and delivering unparalleled performance.

How is the drive for sustainable aircraft painting progressing?

In the sector there is of course an ever increasing focus on sustainability and ESG issues, but at MAAS this has been a key part of our business plan for many years and we work hard to be as 'green' as possible in all our operations and facilities. As we design, build and operate our own cutting-edge paint shops, environmental systems are included in our site plans from day one and I'm proud to say that all MAAS facilities are ISO 14001 environmental management certified. We have an executive leadership team manager responsible for driving our ESG roadmap forward with the objective of making a meaningful contribution to combating the impact of CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions generated through our business practices. We have a number of recycling initiatives already in place to reclaim and reuse materials. The latest example of this is a water treatment plant that has been installed at our Kaunas facility to process chemical waste from our daily operations and separate the water from the contaminants, enabling cleaner and easier disposal.

Furthermore, all of our paint bays have underground sump systems built below the hangar floor to ensure no waste chemicals or contaminated water ends up on the apron or local area. We have also developed our own unique recycling technology which allows us to recover 80% of the solvents we use. These are then redeployed for cleaning equipment such as paint guns, lines and pipes. We also recycle all the dry materials used in the painting process, such as paper, plastic sheeting and tape.

Other smaller scale initiatives include offsetting programmes at some of our sites and a business-wide policy that all new company vehicles must be 100% electric. As mentioned, developments in paint technology are also making great headway in improving sustainability. We work closely with paint manufacturers to ensure we

get the most out of the high-performance aerospace coatings we use, so they not only look superb but also reduce aircraft weight to improve fuel efficiency, thereby lowering emissions. Our aim is to balance the best combination of performance and sustainability across our multi-site operation. As an industry there is still a long way to go on the road to sustainability, but we are committed to investing in innovative solutions that make a real difference.

What challenges are you observing in paint and coatings market?

Whilst there has been strong recovery in the market and we see a lot of optimism, it's fair to say that there are still many challenges post-pandemic. Escalating operating costs, supply chain and production issues as well as recruitment and workforce challenges, are all putting pressure on the sector. But these problems are not exclusive to the aircraft painting and coatings market, or even the broader aviation industry, these are far reaching business issues that we must adapt to in order to thrive and grow.

These operating conditions provide an opportunity to examine the business and identify areas where operational excellence can be enhanced. By continuing to invest in our people, processes and infrastructure, I am confident that MAAS will grow to become an even stronger business.

What's next in the pipeline at MAAS Aviation?

MAAS Aviation is a world-renowned aircraft painting and exterior coatings specialist, which has earned the reputation of delivering the highest quality industry standards across our network of facilities. Our number one priority is to ensure we consistently deliver the OEM painting standards we are known for, working closely with our customers to optimise their operations and enhance our partnerships. In tandem with this, we are exploring a number of initiatives as we strategically grow and evolve the business. These include acquisition and partnership opportunities, as well as developing our business offering, so we are by no means standing still. I look forward with enthusiasm and optimism as we continue on our path of business growth and innovation.