

AIRBUS AND THAILAND'S CATC TO WORK ON PILOT, MAINTENANCE TRAINING

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Airbus and Thailand's Civil Aviation Training Center (CATC) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together on projects to develop and implement maintenance training and pilot training courses in the country.

Under the agreement, Airbus and the CATC will identify ways in which they can deepen their cooperation in the training of aviation professionals in the country. Airbus has begun working with the CATC on basic maintenance training courses, and this could be expanded to include additional maintenance courses as well as *ab initio* flight training courses for pilots.

The goal is to support the development of the country's aviation industry by helping to ensure that there is a steady supply of pilots, engineers and mechanics for Thailand's airlines and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) centres. Airbus is forecasting a demand for 220,000 new pilots and more than 260,000 new technicians in the Asia-Pacific region over the next 20 years (Global Services Forecast 2018).

"We are pleased to sign this MoU with the CATC, which is Thailand's leading aviation training institute. Thailand is an important partner for Airbus, as well as one of the fastest growing aviation markets in the region. This allows us to work together to provide the highest levels of training needed to meet the increasing need for qualified aviation professionals in the country," said Jean-Francois Laval, Executive Vice President, Asia, Airbus.

Rear Admiral Piya Atmungkun, President, Civil Aviation Training Center, said: "We are pleased to sign this MOU and deepen our strong relationship with Airbus in the areas of maintenance training and *ab initio* pilot training. The combination of Airbus' world-class expertise and the CATC's understanding of the requirements of Thailand's aviation industry means that this has the potential to become a highly successful and long-standing partnership."

Today's MOU is part of a long-standing partnership between the European manufacturer and Thailand. Thai Airways International (THAI) is one of the European manufacturer's earliest customers with a relationship dating back to 1977. Today, THAI and its subsidiaries operate Airbus narrowbody and widebody aircraft including the A320 Family, the A330, the A350 and the A380. Bangkok Airways and Thai AirAsia are also important operators of the Airbus A320 Family of aircraft on their extensive regional network out of Thailand.

Airbus and Thailand deepened their relationship in June 2018, when the company and THAI signed an agreement to work on an MRO joint venture at the U-Tapao International Airport. This facility would be one of the most modern and extensive in the Asia-Pacific region. When fully operational, it would offer heavy maintenance and line services for all widebody aircraft types, specialised repair shops including for composite structures, as well as a maintenance training centre offering extensive courses for technical personnel from Thailand and overseas.

The joint venture would be located at the heart of the country's Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), which is part of the Thai government's Thailand 4.0 policy that is designed to develop world-class innovative technology-based manufacturing and services.

The Civil Aviation Training Center (CATC), a state enterprise under Thailand's ministry of transport, is the centre of excellence for aviation training in the country. It is responsible for producing and developing highly-skilled personnel for the civil aviation industry in Thailand and the Asia-Pacific region, and for aircraft maintenance, aircraft services and other aviation-related

services that promote the production of such personnel. Ground training courses are conducted at the CATC's head office in Bangkok, while flight training courses are conducted at Hua Hin Airport in Prachuab Khirikhan province and Khon Kaen Airport in Khon Kaen Province.

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