

Royal Australian Air Force benefits from Airbus SmartForce digital services

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Amberley (Australia), 28 January 2021 – Airbus has recently signed a contract to provide a digital services focus for the maintenance of the Air Refueling Boom System (ARBS) on the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport (A330 MRTT) fleet.

Based on the Airbus suite of digital services SmartForce, this service is intended to support the operator in reducing maintenance costs and improving fleet availability by optimizing the fault diagnosis and troubleshooting tasks for the ARBS of the tanker aircraft, based on data analytics applications.

The Central Data System plays a key role, allowing operators to draw on the flight data recorded by the Mission Recording System and provides information outputs about issues registered during the flight and recommended maintenance actions to fix them.

Within the KC-30A Enterprise, the Central Data System is a joint development built upon a successful long-standing collaboration among Airbus, the Commonwealth of Australia (CoA) and the Australian KC-30A Through Life Support (TLS) provider Northrop Grumman Australia, in sharing data and defining the architecture of the system.

Future proposed development of the capability will allow customers which apply this technology to their fleet to be able to extend the ARBS analytics to entire aircraft level diagnostics.

Stephan Miegel, Head of Military Aircraft Services at Airbus Defence and Space, said: “Since the launch of SmartForce in 2018, Airbus is fully committed to support the digital initiatives of our customers. Working collaboratively with them, we have signed five agreements for the co-development of new services and technologies. We are proud to see that military operators are increasingly joining us on our digital journey.”

Jake Adams, Northrop Grumman Australia KC-30A Program Manager, said: “The introduction of the Central Data System has provided significant benefits in terms of increased availability of the ARBS. The recent agreement between Airbus and Northrop Grumman Australia ensures that the RAAF continues to benefit from this capability as well as providing the opportunity for ongoing collaboration and sharing of data and analytics to enhance the ARBS capability.”

Group Captain Scott Parry, Officer Commanding Heavy Air Lift Systems Program Office, commented: “The Central Data System delivers a significant capability benefit for the KC-30A aircraft and demonstrates the strong commitment within the KC-30A enterprise to innovation and improvement.”

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SmartForce is a suite of services enabling military operators to exploit aircraft data to improve troubleshooting, optimize maintenance effort, predict maintenance actions and plan smartly for material demand and improving the fleet availability. SmartForce capitalizes on the new power of big data analytics coupled to secured connectivity to maximize mission readiness.

About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2019, it generated revenues of € 70 billion and employed a workforce of around 135,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world's leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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