



## **AFI KLM E&M to upgrade French Air Force C135s**

**Paris, Amstelveen, 18 January 2009 – French defense procurement agency Délégation Générale pour l'Armement (DGA) has selected Air France Industries (AFI) and KLM Engineering & Maintenance (KLM E&M) to upgrade the French Air Force fleet of C135 aerial refueling tankers and their ageing avionics. The contract also includes related support services.**

AFI-KLM E&M has been commissioned by the DGA to make the aircraft compliant with recent regulatory changes enacted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and to replace obsolete systems. At the same time, the DGA has asked AFI and KLM E&M to provide complementary staff training and initial support services. AFI-KLM E&M will return the first aircraft to the French Air Force in early 2011. Delivery of the other 13 aircraft will then be phased through to 2013.

**40 years' experience on the C135.** The DGA has entrusted the contract to the maintenance & engineering arm of the AIR FRANCE KLM Group which, as an airline operator, has in-depth knowledge of the regulatory environment as part of its day-to-day flight operations.

AFI KLM E&M is also approved to carry out work on airframes in most areas, in the same capacity as the aircraft manufacturer on the strength of the Part 21 certification obtained by the Group's Product Modification department.

The company's experience and know-how in respect of the C135 were a contributing factor in the DGA's choice. As Jean-Marc Roffi, "Ingénieur en chef de l'Armement" within DGA emphasized: "AFI-KLM E&M have the capabilities to carry out this type of modification, with over 40 years' experience on this aircraft. We quite naturally took their tender into account initially and, after examining the technical solutions, we accepted their proposals, which are a particularly good match in all areas of activity."

Alain Bassil, President of AFI, said: "We are delighted to be working with the C135 again at AFI KLM E&M. Our experience and expertise with these French Air Force aerial refueling tankers have once again been recognized by the French defense establishment. Our know-how, dependability and extensive capabilities were a perfect fit for the tender specification and proved the appropriate response to the need expressed."

### **About the DGA**

The French Air Force fleet of tankers currently comprises 14 aircraft. With upgraded avionics they will be able to keep flying until the arrival of the first Multi Role Tanker and Transport (MRTT) aircraft scheduled for delivery in 2015.

### **About AFI and KLM E&M**

Air France Industries and KLM Engineering & Maintenance, which joined forces following the Air France KLM merger, are world-leading multi-product MRO (Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul) providers with a joint workforce of 14,000, offering comprehensive repair capability, integration expertise, component pool operational support and a powerful logistics network. Together they support more than 1230 aircraft and serve upwards of 150 major international airlines.

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