

CZECH AVIATION INDUSTRY: **AN OLD PLAYER MAKING ITS NAME IN NEW TERRITORIES**

In its more than a 100-year old history, the Czech aviation industry has gained a lot of respect internationally. For many experts, the jet trainer and light attack aircraft manufactured by Aero Vodochody (L-29, L-39 and L-159) immediately spring to mind; followed closely by multi-purpose aircraft L-410 made by Let Kunovice (currently Aircraft Industries), or the wide range of airplanes in the UL/LSA category. Thousands of these airplanes have delighted customers across all continents, perhaps with the exception of Antarctica, and their often modernized versions successfully follow in their footsteps. It comes as no surprise that the domestic aviation industry very often – and rightly so – boasts of its achievements. Czech Republic is one of very few countries in the world, whose airplane production – from start to finish – is manufactured within a single country. The same can be said

about the industry's aircraft engine development and production capacity.

Czech aviation industry representatives are starting to explore new territories worldwide, and so far these efforts have been successful. Looking closely at this area of expansion, the domestic aviation industry has proven to be highly competitive in all its main divisions. Examples are ATM systems and radar technology manufacturers in Pardubice, who have been turning the city into a significant aviation technology hub in the region. A true leader with a global impact in this field is ERA, an ATM systems provider and a military surveillance system manufacturer. Their technologies have been deployed in over 60 countries, including the USA, United Kingdom, India, China and Australia. This level of reach in addition to NATO contracts speaks for itself. Another gem of our domestic production



Primoco UAV.



A STEP TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF FLYING

Innovation and continuous development, with the future of flying in mind, are the current building blocks of aviation. A promising startup Zuri proves that the domestic aviation industry is no stranger to this phenomenon. Their electric VTOL airplane, designed for 2-4 passengers, will be able to travel the range of 700 km. The project itself is currently far beyond the concept stage, focusing on the construction of its first experimental aircraft.

All of the above mentioned illustrates, that even a small nation such as the Czech Republic can play a major part in the international field of aviation. Domestic aviation businesses and their potential are attracting more and more attention, even in areas outside their usual expertise. This is of course immensely gratifying. Combining long-standing tradition, experience, with research and development, and a focus on aviation's current trends make the perfect recipe for a complex product portfolio that we can offer to the world. It is safe to assume, that the beginning of the second century of aviation could very well signify a new era for the Czech republic – one of becoming an emerging leader in the industry.

The efforts of domestic businesses to make their mark on the global aviation industry are supported by the business and investment development agency CzechInvest. This agency offers a complete service package in the Aerospace and Defense sector. It helps businesses and institutions with their investment objectives, guarantees longterm ties between the private sector and research & development, secures financial support and helps to collaborate at international events. The agency also serves as a point of contact for foreign entities and is therefore a key element in the development of traditional industry.

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Photos by: Primoco, Zuri**

is ELDIS company, whose radar technology and systems help control the airspace in countries such as Canada, Russia and Indonesia. This pair of highly successful businesses is closely followed by Retia, who offers very similar airspace control technology and caters to customers such as the Ministry of Defense in Vietnam and Airbus Defense and Space.

CZECH PROPELLERS MAKING THEIR WAY TO SOUTH AFRICA, CHINA AND JAPAN

Unbelievable as it may seem, domestic producers excel in the field of propeller production as well. Prague based Avia Propeller, a well-established company with a rich 100-year history, produces all-metal propellers and supplies the engine manufacturer Lycoming. They also cater to historical models such as the T-6 Texan. Woodcomp Propellers, located just a few kilometers away from Avia, is another manufacturer, specializing in the production of wooden and composite propellers. This company supplies dozens of countries worldwide, their propellers have found their way onto airplanes in South Africa, China, Japan and other countries. Among the considerable number of skilled manufacturers is Mejzlik Propellers, who has successfully entered the field of unmanned aerial vehicle production (UAV).

As a result of a boom in tourism, poor alternative transport options, long travel distances and economic development initiatives, air transport has flourished in many parts of the world. As a result of this growth, there is a greater need for adequate infrastructure. In the Czech Republic, these highly specific needs are met by the Transcon Electronic Systems company. They have been a true leader in the electronic and electric airport and heliport equipment field for the last 30 years and are among the top 5 airport technology manufacturers worldwide. A significant part of their services is the concept of modular airports, which allows for a faster and more cost-effective airport construction. This innovation in particular has been a breakthrough in Senegal, where they secured a contract worth 151 mil Euro.

The UAV sector, which has been constantly developing both for the civilian and military markets, has become a big part of the Czech expertise. Prague based Primoco UAV company has established a solid presence over its 5-year existence and has been successfully trading in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America ever since. Their products offer wide range of applications ranging from the agricultural solutions to surveillance systems. In April 2020, their model One 150 has attracted special attention after flying for 15 hours uninterrupted and reaching the distance of 1,650 km.

Zuri.