



MRO

# AMAC Aerospace, Excellence in Aviation

By Sylvie Peron - ©AMAC Aerospace

**AMAC AEROSPACE**





MRO | XX



**A**n aviation one-stop shop, AMAC Aerospace AG, headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, was founded in 2007 to serve corporate and VIP demand. Today, the thriving organization is represented as a Group of Companies that span the width of Europe, including France and United Kingdom, with presence in Turkey, Lebanon and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With a network of 8 hangars, including 5 at EuroAirport in Basel, that cover a footprint of over 100 000sqm for mid-size jets, narrow and wide-body aircraft, the company is dedicated to maintenance and modifications activities. Furthermore, AMAC is renowned worldwide for its bespoke completion works. Its high-skilled staff of over 1,250 employees across the group is specialized in various domains of aviation, offering a one-stop shop for aircraft owners.

The Group is made of affiliated sister companies, including the aircraft management and charter company AMAC Corporate Jet, located in Kloten, Zurich, which manages a portfolio of 12 privately owned aircraft.

AMAC Aerospace Istanbul, Turkey, located at Atatürk International Airport provides MRO (Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul) services on Pilatus PC-12, PC-24 and Dassault Falcon aircraft. Also in Turkey, AMAC Aerospace Bodrum, is the only MRO at Bodrum-Milas Airport. The hangar offers services for both line and base maintenance. Its mixed business model is unique. During the winter months, from October to May, the hangar carries out commercial line and base maintenance. During the summer season it flips over to VIP business aircraft maintenance.

JCB Aero, based in Auch, France, was acquired in 2016. Specializing in composite and carbon fiber production techniques and methods, JCB are qualified in completion in VIP Helicopters and are in the process of acquiring their 145 approval for maintenance.

In Beirut, Lebanon, AMAC Aerospace operates a regional sale base for the Middle East but is currently inactive due to the local political unrest.

Registered in Saudi Arabia since 2023, AMAC Aerospace Ltd offers consulting services on aircraft maintenance, completion and refurbishment, management and charter to stakeholders in the aviation industry. Gamit Ltd, UK, was founded in 1990. Based at London Stansted Airport, it supplies professional and technical support to local MROs, airlines, private and corporate aircraft owners.







MRO I XX

## A family operation

«AMAC started on the foundation of a family business. All shareholders' family members have an option to work here,» says Kadri Muhiddin, Group Executive Chairman & CEO. «We give priority to family members of our personnel if they're qualified.» Shareholder and Group CFO Mauro Grossi whose daughter and son have joined the company, quietly acquiesces. Grossi joined the company since inception and is one of AMAC's main pillars. He and his team make sure the company is working in harmony and he's a great motivator for the workforce. Being originally Italian, he considers himself the 'Godfather' of the company.

On this sunny early spring afternoon, we're meeting informally with Management at the company's headquarters in downtown Basel. Relaxed and friendly, the visionary leader stresses on the importance of the desire to learn and prosper.

«Nobody is born with knowledge, it's available if you want to acquire it,» states Kadri Muhiddin. «I was an aeronautical engineer and I had a desire to learn. With the learning, you start producing.»

Under his wise and demanding leadership the global company has prospered beyond expectations. Nonetheless, it wasn't always a smooth ride. «When I started AMAC with the founders and shareholders I had been running a commercial airline in Turkey for a few years so we wanted to do this collectively as a team. Each one had a vision. Some of the shareholders didn't agree with expansion, but we managed to override that. We took it from there, never stopped and we're still booming with the market demand.»

Our philosophy is to study what the market wants, analyze it and proceed accordingly. Today the market is crazy. We are full, and so are our competitors. Manufacturers like Airbus or Boeing have 2027/28 delivery dates for green aircraft.» Over 40 nationalities of different ages and cultures, religions, beliefs and work ethics are currently employed within AMAC. «Managing people is the most demanding task,» says Muhiddin. «The hardware is easy to achieve; what is difficult is to harmonize people.»



Waleed, Tarek & Nadeem Muhiddin



Mauro Grossi, Kadri Muhiddin & Ruedi Kurz

## Experienced talent

Ruedi Kurz, a shareholder of the company and Director Maintenance & Production & CAMO Accountable Manager, has been with the company since the beginnings, joining from another MRO as many other experienced craftsmen did at the time. In his previous position, he had been Director of maintenance for 28 years. Having started on the hangar floor he made his way up.

«One of the strengths of AMAC is how we treat the people in the company,» he says. «We're a team, from the cleaners to management, like one big family. People are not numbers, but part of a very complex organization.»

There was a vision from start, and as Kurz says: «It was a unique chance to create something based on the experience from former jobs. That's why we were so motivated.»

One of AMAC' strengths is based on delivering on time meeting the highest standards customers expect, both in maintenance and completion. Interior designs are getting more and more complex, and being capable of transforming designers' ideas into reality with good quality, functionality and structural integrity is invaluable.

«Quality is one thing the other is on-time delivery,» says Kurz. Honesty is another strong point. «We have very good communications with our clients, whether it's completion or maintenance. We talk. The customer becomes part of our team, we have very open, fully transparent conversations policy, and if there is a problem, which can occur, we bring it on the table and find a solution in a combined effort. All this comes down to the philosophy of the company. We have nothing to hide.»

As the entire MRO market is chock-full with ongoing projects, flexibility is key. «Over 40 years, I have never seen such a high demand for maintenance and completion. In the past we could adapt easier than these days. One of our strengths is to have a lot of flexibility, but it's not so easy now as we have limited slots in the hangar. Customers need to adapt their habits in terms of scheduling and anticipate their maintenance well in advance.»

Simultaneously, finding experienced staff is a problem worldwide. AMAC searches the world market, looking to bring in skilled workforce to keep the highest standard of quality.





MRO | XX



Training technical apprentices for 3 to 5 years before they get a license is part of the strategy. Being taught AMAC's philosophy, around 8 young technicians each year are being rotated within the different maintenance sections of the company. Paid internships for students from the area are also open during the summer holidays.

*«Nevertheless it's difficult to persuade young people to go into aviation. They don't seem to be motivated to do manual work, despite the fact that you can really make your way up from the hangar floor to management,»* regrets Kurz.

Recently, the most common demand for supplemental type certificates (STC) has been for KA/ KU Band connectivity. AMAC has therefore developed several STC's in this field. And like for most MROs, the demand for pre-purchase inspections (PPI) has never been higher on all aircraft types. More of a niche market is the increasing demand for self-defense systems, especially for Heads of States aircraft.

In partnership with a manufacturer that offers laser-based products that divert ground to air missiles from the heat of the engines are installed on (mostly) new wide-body aircraft. The downtime is rather long, so the structural work is often mixed with C-checks or long down-time maintenance. The system is installed and also certified by AMAC under an STC. A specialized team from the manufacturer then tests the system during a flight testing campaign where the functioning of the system is demonstrated and recorded in view of the restricted and confidential nature of this technology.

## Hangar 5

AMAC's latest hangar in Basel was built to host narrow bodies, and being close to the runway, in compliance within the servitude imposed by the authorities. The height of the hangar was brought barely within the servitude to host aircraft from Pilatus up to 5 large Gulfstream G650 or Bombardier 7500.

Further to the hangar is a workshop for the repairs and trouble shooting of window shades for various manufacturers as well as calibration for the company's own tools, thus gaining lower prices and flexibility.

## All in the family

*«My three children joined at different times, when an opportunity opened,»* says Kadri Muhiddin.

Waleed K Muhiddin, the oldest, was the first to join the company. The Director of Business Development & Marketing is often asked the question of how AMAC does tackle sustainability.

*«We're just a facilitator,»* he answers. *«As a completion center we do what is being asked of us with the best craftsmanship and the best quality behind it. The source point for the awareness of sustainability needs to derive itself from the designers. We have to follow the design specifications as best we can.»*

Among several measures already taken, paper is being replaced

with digital communication when possible and waste and energy management programs as well as recycle points have been put in place across the whole group. *«We're looking to work further with designers in seeing what new materials they are sourcing. Designers should be more proactive in visiting completion centers to talk to engineering departments to really understand what is feasible and realistic.»*

Appointed Chief Operating Officer (COO) at the beginning of the year, Tarek Muhiddin is an aircraft maintenance engineer educated in Bristol, who also holds an aeronautical degree from London. He worked originally in Geneva for Swiss International Airlines maintenance and moved to Basel in 2013 to support maintenance on the shop floor at AMAC Aerospace. Sent to Turkey in 2016 he managed the restructuring of the organization in Istanbul and went on to Bodrum in the following year, 2017, to supervise the construction of a hangar. AMAC being the only MRO there, Tarek was able to manifest a new business model for both Commercial and BizAv, extending promotions, services and products to both Middle East and South Asia. Another foreign station was thus established slightly outside of Europe. BizAv in Turkey is a big market. AMAC has 3 slots available in Istanbul and another 4 slots for narrow body aircraft or one large body in the hangar in Bodrum. With approvals for Boeing 737 and 777, Airbus A320, A330 and a workforce of 130 well-trained Turkish staff the operation runs successfully. Bringing synergy to make entities internationally work together is no easy task, but one that is not new to him.

*«The mindset is changing here now so we all work more and more together.»*

Slots at MROs are missing at the moment across the world. *«I ask customers to give me their dates and requirements as soon as possible to be able to start booking them in, give pre-bookings dates and block slots.»*

Nadeem Muhiddin, the youngest son had earned his Masters in commercial real estate before joining and taking charge of Gamit, the Group's operations in the UK. Today Nadeem concentrates his efforts in bringing the harmony of new technologies and business processes to the forefront for AMAC Aerospace. As a Director of Integrations, his movements allow him to navigate the world of AMAC and bring leaner and more efficient processes to all departments within the group.

## Challenge with pleasure

Since the recovery from the Covid pandemics, the urge for flying private has reached new heights. The outlook in maintenance and completion is highly positive. *«Achievement of this company will remain a challenge but the environment we are in as a company is a challenge with pleasure,»* concludes Mauro Grossi. ■

[www.amacaerospace.com](http://www.amacaerospace.com)

