

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN collaboration on computer-based training for the C-130J

The TSM Corporation (USA) has signed a collaborative agreement with APROPOS (Norway) to develop computer-based training systems for technical personnel associated with the C-130J cargo airplane. The two companies now hope to sign a contract with the Royal Norwegian Air Force which could be their entry into the international market.

Richard Hassan from TSM said that the American Armed Forces have been using our computer systems to train service and maintenance personnel for their C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, but are now looking to adapt our training program to the new C-130Js. Still, we hope our collaboration with APROPOS here in Norway will make it possible to develop a computer-based training system for C-130J technicians.

TSM was established by the end of the 1970s, but it was not until 2003 that the company began expanding at a high rate of speed. The company has now more than 400 employees. One of the main products developed and offered by TSM in recent years is a computer-based training system for the American Armed Forces. At any rate, the company has never entered the international market until now, and Norway will be the first country where TSM tests itself on a non-American customer.

The great advantages of computer-based training

Aeronautics technicians receive their basic education at a technical college, often specialising in advanced training in one specific area. But after taking their final exams, the newly educated technicians are often left standing between two worlds. The technical colleges argue that their students have gained enough knowledge to put together or take apart an airplane, but experienced aeronautics technicians at the air stations and in workshops would never allow a newly educated technician near the aircraft, Hassan stated.

In our experience, a newly educated technician will need an extra year or

two of training at a workshop before being given specific independent tasks. We believe we can reduce that extra time to 3-6 months with help from the systems we developed for computer-based training, Hassan explained.

One issue worth considering is the great savings implied when reducing the length of time needed to train a technician. Another issue is that traditional training requires access to airplanes almost every day. For a small country like Norway (which only owns four C-130Js) grounding one of these aircraft for training purposes implies a substantial loss of operating capacity.

Great opportunities for APROPOS

APROPOS will not only function as TSM's Norwegian partner; we will also help TSM with product development, says Morgan Fosstveit, account manager of APROPOS.

APROPOS was developing computer-based training systems since 2000, before partnering with TSM, and we have a number of large organizations as customers such as Avinor, DnB NOR and two of Norway's regional health trusts, among others.

Our experts will assist TSM in improving their systems, in ways like incorporating the ability to store and administer user experiences in connection with the systems and components. In practical terms this implies that experienced technicians or their trainees can introduce own experience and comments into the system where specific aircraft components are concerned.

The advantage of this is twofold, Fosstveit added. The first advantage is that these added comments will constantly



Richard Hassan (on the left) from TSM Corporation (USA) and Morgan Fosstveit from APROPOS (Norway) are collaborating on an offer to the Royal Norwegian Air Force for computer-based training systems for technicians of the Royal Norwegian Air Force's new C-130J cargo planes. In our experience, computer-based training of service personnel and technicians provides significant savings for our customers, Hassan says.

improve the training system and thereby making training more effective. The second advantage is that the comments will also aid in upholding and systemising the technicians' practical expertise, which is often not found in any manuals or instruction books.

Valuable knowledge and expertise are often lost when people leave an organization. Defence forces often experience this in connection with restructuring and downsizing. By using computer-based training with the possibility to introduce experiential comments, a lot of this expertise will be systemised and remain within an organization.

We at APROPOS also see great opportunities arising in the future if the Royal Norwegian Air Force selects our computer-based training solution to train its cargo plane technicians. A number of other countries are currently using the C-130J, and if we can develop the system for Norway we can leverage this experience when reaching out to markets in other countries.

