

YORKSHIRE COMPANY WINS AIRLINE ORDER

British Airways has called on the expertise of a North Yorkshire manufacturing company to provide an engineering solution for its new fleet of Airbus A380 and Boeing 787 aircraft.

The airline has placed an order with Unison, based in Scarborough, for its tube bending machinery to produce replacement rigid hydraulic tubes for its new aircraft.

Both the A380 and the 787 Dreamliner have advanced hydraulic systems that operate under much higher pressure than other commercial aircraft. To accommodate the greater pressure, the new Unison equipment will manufacture the hydraulic pipework from specialist aerospace materials, such as titanium alloy, using thick tube walls.

British Airways has invested in 12 new A380s and 24 Boeing 787s, and 20 new aircraft will arrive this year. The tube bending machinery will be installed at the airline's Engineering maintenance base at Heathrow Airport where the aircraft will be maintained.

The brief for Unison was to produce a solution for the quick and cost effective repair of fluid lines on aircraft to the very high quality and safety standards of the airline. Their all-electric tube bending technology is used by a number of leading aerospace manufacturers including Airbus and Boeing, to produce parts for engines and airframes.

The bespoke machinery is capable of producing precision tubework to exactly replicate worn or damaged parts quickly, efficiently and cost effectively.

In addition to supplying the complete tube fabrication solution Unison will also be working with British Airways to integrate the new process into the airline's engineering operation.

British Airways Engineering general manager, James Murray-Smith, said: "Our investment in new aircraft demands the very best maintenance care and equipment available.

"We're excited to be working with this talented British company that can provide the high calibre of specialist knowledge, experience and quality product that we need."

Alan Pickering, managing director of Unison, said: "This turnkey solution demands tight integration of hardware and software to create a seamless production environment for the efficient on-demand manufacture of specialist precision parts.

"By assigning responsibility for the performance of the entire installation to Unison, British Airways can be confident that its tube fabrication requirements are fully met from the outset."