

Life extension programme for another air force model

By [Adrian David](#) - March 29, 2019 @ 3:35pm



PC-7 Mk II models, some of which have been in service for nearly two decades, will be refurbished to smoothen operations for the country's ab-initio pilot training at the RMAF base in Alor Star, Kedah. NSTP/DANIAL SAAD

LANGKAWI: The Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) is set to be “back on its feet” with yet another service life extension programme for its aging fleet.

After Aerospace Technology Systems Corp (ATSC) announced that it had begun a refurbishment programme for the 18 Sukhoi Su-30MKM Flankers, Airod Sdn Bhd will undertake a similar programme for the 21 Pilatus PC-7 Mk II.

The New Straits Times understands that the PC-7 Mk II models, some of which have been in service for nearly two decades, will be refurbished to smoothen operations for the country's ab-initio pilot training at the RMAF base in Alor Star, Kedah.

The RMAF had initially procured 44 of the first-generation PC-7 in 1983, but has since phased them out owing to wear and tear after 33 years.

Other than the Flankers, the RMAF's aging fleet includes the BAE Systems Hawk 100/200 fighter jets, Boeing F/A-18D Hornets and a fleet of 14 Lockheed C-130 Hercules, in service for more than 20 years.

The Sikorsky S-61A-4 Nuri helicopters, meanwhile, have served the RMAF for over 40 years.

RMAF chief General Tan Sri Affendi Buang had expressed concern that 40 per cent of its assets required immediate upgrade.

In the latest refurbishment deal, Airod engaged Pratt and Whitney Canada (PWC) to provide performance-based support and maintenance of the PC-7 Mk II's PT6A-25C turbo-prop engines.

The deal was clinched at the 15th edition of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition (Lima) 2019 at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre at Padang Matsirat.

Airod managing director Datuk Seri Elkany Ahmad said, over the years of dynamic and fruitful cooperation with PWC, both entities had demonstrated and implemented shared capabilities in providing a dependable propulsion solution with a responsive team.

“The plan is to offer a comprehensive maintenance support solution tailored to accommodate operational requirements for the RMAF, via high standards and quality,” he said. PWC business development and strategic marketing senior manager Benjamin Murat-Prats said the deal allowed RMAF to focus on its training missions and enhanced PWC's footprint in Malaysia and regionally.

“By customising service offerings, we help engine operators to maximise fleet availability and minimise costs over the lifecycle of their engines,” he said.

Murat-Prats added that the deal also involved maintenance, repair and overhaul, integrated logistics, management, technical and engineering support.