HAECO talks lengthening aircraft lifespans through modifications and maintenance



Gerald Steinhoff, Chief Commercial Officer, HAECO at MRO Europe 2026 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

HAECO, a global provider of aircraft engineering and maintenance solutions, returned to The Netherlands last week for Aviation Week's MRO Europe 2026 at the RAI Amsterdam. As part of its nose-to-tail service portfolio, HAECO offers component repair and overhaul solutions through its operating companies, including HAECO Component Overhaul, HAECO Composite Services, and HAECO Landing Gear Services, supported by facilities in Hong Kong and Xiamen.

Earlier this year, HAECO was recognized as "Asia MRO of the Year – Component Services" at the 7th MRO Asia-Pacific Awards 2026 in Singapore, recognizing HAECO's component services capabilities, and strong presence in the APAC region. But its presence in the European market is just as critical to its growth trajectory.

As Gerald Steinhoff, Chief Commercial Officer at HAECO tells *PAX Tech* during a conversation on the exhibition floor in Amsterdam, "Our MRO Europe 2026 focus is to showcase our big growth opportunities. This includes global investments in our core products, which are base maintenance, engine services and, component services repair. We are looking forward to a great growth story."

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Steinhoff highlights HAECO's growth with its facilities in Hong Kong and Xiamen, with the Xiamen facility slated for opening on Christmas Eve this year. The space features a new hangar, which Steinhoff says is the biggest single span hangar in the world. Next to these base maintenance capabilities, HAECO is extending its component repair and engine capacities. Looking ahead, he notes HAECO will also be opening another maintenance hangar in Vietnam.

"These are huge investments that are coming," he previews. The expansions in Xiamen will be presented to HAECO customers in the third week of January, when the company will invite its partners to tour the space where HAECO is currently investing into the industry.

Announcements at MRO Europe

During MRO Europe 2026, HAECO announced a partnership with TESTFUCHS to develop the first LEAP Elite test stands for Woodward components. The partnership will see the two companies jointly develop the first proprietary LEAP Elite testing platform to provide OEM-quality testing and repair of critical Woodward fuel system components for CFM International LEAP engines. The platform is scheduled to enter operation in the first quarter of 2028 following successful validation.

HAECO also announced a partnership with Bauer to support LEAP engine fuel accessories test capability during MRO Europe. HAECO has been selected by Bauer to supply advanced test equipment supporting CFM LEAP fuel accessories. This collaboration further strengthens the relationship between HAECO and Bauer while expanding test capabilities for next-generation commercial aircraft engine components, the company said in the October 28 press release.

Bauer's customized test solution will support HAECO's efforts to expand its technical capabilities and provide reliable, efficient testing of critical fuel system components used on LEAP engines.

HAECO in the balance

As for how HAECO is helping airlines balance the scope of material upgrades with operational and commercial requirements, Steinhoff says cabin modifications is a growing business and positions HAECO as an industry leader thanks to the breadth of its Hong Kong facilities.

"We are one of the leaders in the industry of cabin modifications," he says. "We had fantastic results with SWISS recently. We had fantastic feedback from Jetstar Australia. We currently have 777 aircraft from American Airlines in our shops. It is part of our services that we offer."

HAECO helps airlines plan repairs and modifications from the outset. Steinhoff notes that these projects can be complex for airlines to manage on their own.

"Airlines need us to establish that modification," he explains. "That relationship between the suppliers, manufacturers, us and the airline itself is key."

Steinhoff underscores the importance of advanced maintenance and modification planning for airlines, noting that parts supply is a challenge facing the industry, with some parts currently sold out for the next 12 to 24 months.

"We work together with the airline on a very trustful basis and try to show flexibility and adapt to any potential schedule changes caused by parts shortages," he explains.

New lease on life

HAECO is already growing rapidly. Steinhoff says airlines are bringing older aircraft, such as A330s and 777s, into its shops to enhance the interiors and maximize the product.

"Since airlines need to use these aircraft for longer than initially planned, it is necessary to invest in

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the interior," he explains. "It presents a good chance for HAECO to work with the airline, focusing on the modification, but also performing service checks."

He notes that HAECO offers packages and service solutions to help airlines optimize layovers and minimize aircraft downtime.

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