

# Emirates' two-year A380 retrofit program begins



Engineers on the Emirates retrofit team

This week, [Emirates](#) began its two-year retrofit program with work starting on the first of 120 A380 aircraft earmarked for a full cabin interior upgrade and the installation of the airline's latest Premium Economy seats.

After completing flight EK928 from Cairo to Dubai on Monday, A6-EVM was steered to Hanger E at the [Emirates Engineering Centre](#) where a team of specialized engineers began prepping the aircraft for its makeover.

In addition to recruiting 190 additional staff for the project, Emirates is also engaged with 62 partners and suppliers that have hired hundreds more people for the biggest-known aircraft retrofit program in modern commercial aviation.

After months of planning, and months of [detailed test runs on an actual A380 aircraft](#), engineers took stock and requested 2,200 part numbers. In turn, Emirates' procurement team raised 12,600 purchase orders for the initial phase. At the Emirates Engineering Centre, purpose-built workshops have been set up and stocked with parts and equipment for the project.

For the next 16 days, round the clock, teams of engineers and technicians will take apart the cabin interior of the A380 and put it back together again in a carefully planned and tested sequence.

Thousands of parts will be removed, replaced, or receive a facelift. Even Emirates' famous Shower Spa will feature new color tones with a hand-stencilled motif of a Ghaf tree.

Trained teams will implement a consistent process for every aircraft - a team of engineers will first remove the window seats in Economy class, freeing up space for another team to remove the side panels of the cabin interiors. These panels will go straight to one of three purpose-built workshops to be laminated with Emirates' latest colour tones. To make room for the 56 Premium Economy class seats, 88 Economy seats at the front of the main deck will be removed.

On the upper deck, Business and First Class seats will be dismantled and loaded onto a modified

catering truck to lower them to the ground where other vehicles will shuttle them to bespoke workshops. Business Class seats will be repainted and re-upholstered with new leather at Emirates Engineering, while First Class seats will be sent to a specialist at Dubai World Central (DWC) for refurbishing.

All carpets and floorings throughout the aircraft cabins will be replaced before the refurbished seats are re-installed.

### **Health and safety**

All processes were designed to the highest health and safety standards. No detail was too small to review, for instance, the decision to invest in the latest equipment to protect workers from harmful vapours in the cabin while the First Class shower spa gets a hand-painted makeover.

Once the refit work is completed, the aircraft will be inspected and certified by aviation authorities before it re-enters service.

### **Program pace**

The second aircraft scheduled for a makeover, A6-EUW, will roll into Emirates Engineering Centre on December 1.

As the program goes into full swing, engineers will work simultaneously on two aircraft. This means, every eight days, one aircraft will be grounded and towed to Emirates Engineering for retrofitting. By 23 May 2024, all 67 A380s earmarked for the retrofit program will be back in service and Emirates will then begin work on 53 of its Boeing 777s. By March 2025, all 120 retrofitted aircraft will be back in service.