

DCMA Orlando Reconditions Training Aircraft to Support Iraqi Air Force

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The U.S. is assisting Iraq in establishing an Air Force Command by providing Iraqi pilots needed aircraft training. The U.S. Air Force has been tasked with purchasing Cessna commercial aircraft that are suitable as trainers for this project.

Africair was selected as the contractor to perform engine modifications on eight new Cessna 172s. The Miami-based corporation originated in 1961 through the purchase of Pan African Airlines Ltd., based in Lagos, Nigeria. As the demand for air transportation and maintenance services increased in the region, the company appointed a distributor for Cessna Aircraft Company and Bell Helicopter.

In 1968, Africair acquired Safari Air Sales Ltd., a large and respected 33-year-old Cessna distributor located in Nairobi, Kenya. By 1978, business had grown to an extent that it was impossible to administer

efficiently from within Africa. The company then moved all aircraft and parts sales to the corporate headquarters in Miami to provide better access and faster service to clients all over the continent.

Cessna aircraft are shipped to Africair, and the standard engine is removed and replaced with a new Thielert 2.0 liter diesel rated at 135 horsepower. The aircraft is painted and new markings are added to identify it as one belonging to the Iraqi Air Force. As a result of a delegation from the primary contract management office, Defense Contract Management Agency Boeing Wichita, on this Wright Patterson Air Force Base contract, the DCMA Orlando South Florida product assurance team was tasked with signing the technical acceptance. Africair operates out of Tamiami Airport in West Kendall, Fla., where modifications and testing are accomplished.

The DCMA Orlando South Florida quality assurance specialists verify

completion of modification, proper paperwork and spare parts inventory. Once the modification is completed, the aircraft are tested on the ground and in flight to ensure proper operation. Once this is accomplished, the aircraft are disassembled and shipped to Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., where other modifications are made and the final acceptance documents are executed. Then it is shipped to Iraq to be used by the U.S. Air Force for training Iraqi pilots.

Prompt responses by DCMA Orlando South Florida quality assurance specialists to the customer's needs facilitated the shipments of the aircraft to the Iraqi Air Force on or ahead of the contractual delivery schedule of two aircraft from Oct. 19, 2007, through April 30, 2008. **C**



DCMA assists in modifying the Cessna 172 aircraft for training budding Iraqi Air Force pilots. (Cessna Aircraft Company photo)

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