

Flying classroom takes to the sky

Posted on March 21, 2022 by Business Editor



A project to facilitate the training of the next generation of aerospace engineers in the UK's only "flying classroom" is now fully operational.

Working in partnership with Cranfield University's National Flying Laboratory Centre (NFLC), aircraft interior specialist company Starling Aerospace provided its technical expertise to the project, which consisted of a six-month programme to modify and re-certify all 35 seats onboard the NFLC's Saab 340B aircraft - the latest educational asset to join the university's fleet.

The Saab 340B is unique in the UK in its role of creating new research capabilities, including the development of advanced aerospace technologies and flight operations.

According to Starling Aerospace, the project required a bespoke solution for the fitment of computer tablets and other equipment to each seat-back of the flying classroom.

Starling was responsible for the complete design, fabrication, modification, re-certification and installation process, which provides aerospace engineering students from over 20 universities and Cranfield with the chance to gain invaluable flight test experience as part of their research studies.

Starling's co-founding director, Coralie Wigg, said: "Supporting Cranfield's training programme of future aerospace engineers has made this an exceptionally rewarding undertaking for Starling and one that required a complex array of technical challenges to be overcome, regarding bespoke design, parts manufacture and stringent re-certification. Our team of design engineers and fabricators rose to these challenges with great professionalism and we were very proud to have partnered with Cranfield in support of its endeavours."

Richard Jones, Aircraft Technical Manager at the National Flying Laboratory Centre, said: "Starling Aerospace delivered a fantastic 'future proof' solution to accommodate the Microsoft Surface Pro tablets in the headrests of the Saab 340 cabin seats, for our flying classroom tutorials. We were equally impressed with the durability and finish of the synthetic leather together with high standard of workmanship achieved by the whole Starling team."

