

Duncan Aviation Expands Capabilities, Adds New Facility

STORY BY CHRISTINE KNAUER

As the New Year unfolds, expansion plans dominate water cooler conversation at Duncan Aviation. The Nebraska-based, FAA-certified repair station is expanding its helicopter avionics business, growing the company's components capabilities by adding some services previously offered only by equipment OEMs, and preparing to open its third major airframe service center in Provo, Utah, later this year.

Currently, Duncan Aviation's network includes complete service facilities in Lincoln, Neb., and Battle Creek, Mich., as well as more than 20 satellite locations and seven Rapid Response Team sites throughout North America. Now, Duncan Aviation plans to lease 15,000 square feet of hangar space from Million Air at the Provo Municipal Airport. The facility likely will open

with a team of 15 to 20 personnel, offering airframe and avionics support for business jet aircraft. If the market supports doing so, the family-owned company may build its own facility on location in the future.

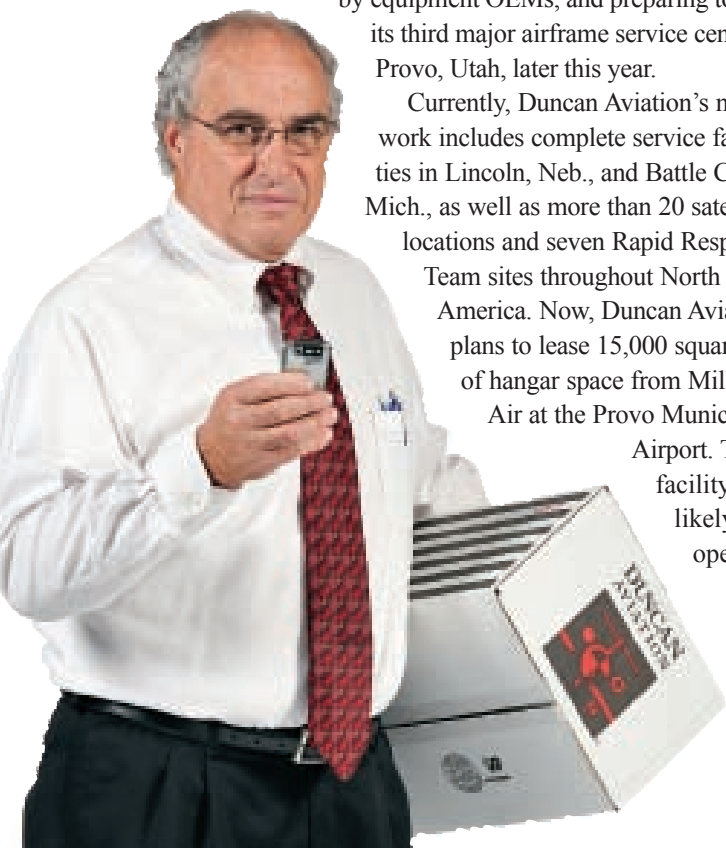
An Increasing Focus on Helicopters

Although Duncan Aviation primarily is known as an aviation provider for business jets, it now is reaching out to helicopter operators to offer repair and overhaul for rotorcraft components, including avionics, instruments and accessories.

"We've been known as a fixed-wing company, working on Learjets and Citations and Falcons," said Karl Detweiler, director of business development and marketing for Duncan Aviation's Component Solutions. "But, over the years, our satellite locations have actually been doing a lot of helicopter maintenance. Many of them are located near the coastlines where there are a lot of helicopter operators.

"We just never really tried to go out and market to those operators. Now, we're starting to do that," he said.

Duncan Aviation is a factory-authorized service center or dealer for most major business airframe manufacturers,



Karl Detweiler, marketing and sales team leader for Duncan Aviation Component Solutions.

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Lincoln Airport
3701 Aviation Road
Lincoln, Neb. 68524
800-228-4277

Battle Creek Service Center
Duncan Aviation
15745 South Airport Road
Battle Creek, Mich. 49015
800-525-2376

WEBSITE: www.duncanaviation.aero
EMPLOYEES: Nearly 1,900
FOUNDER: Donald Duncan
DATE FOUNDED: 1956
AEA MEMBER SINCE: 1970



Photos courtesy of
Duncan Aviation Inc.

Duncan Aviation's Lincoln, Neb., headquarters provides nose-to-tail support services to the most popular business aircraft in use today.

engine manufacturers, and avionics and instrument manufacturers. To expand its support specifically for helicopters, Duncan Aviation became a Thales authorized sales and service center last year. The move is especially beneficial to Aerospatiale AS-350, AS-355 and AS-365 helicopter operators and those flying fixed-wing aircraft equipped with Thales units, according to Detweiler.

"We are bringing in more tooling and we have set up some additional capabilities. Before, we may have done a half-dozen part numbers of Thales gyroscopes, where now we'll do all of them," Detweiler said. "So, we are expanding some in areas like that, taking what we already do but broadening it."

In addition, as an authorized service facility for Ultra

Electronics Flightline Systems, Duncan Aviation now provides technical support, service and repair for Flightline Systems' electromechanical (formerly Lewis Engineering) and mechanical (formerly Aero Mechanism) product lines for both fixed- and rotor-wing aircraft.

Building New Partnerships

Last year, Duncan Aviation signed an agreement with Honeywell to become the exclusive distributor for the AV8OR electronic flight bag.

Duncan also partnered with Rockwell Collins to offer performance solutions bulletins (PSB). The PSB program

Continued on following page



Jerry Bremer, gyro team leader for Duncan Aviation, utilizes his 30 years of gyro experience to calibrate a Sfena 803 horizon gyro.

DUNCAN AVIATION

Continued from page 43

increases performance and warranty coverage for some instruments, including attitude direction indicators, radio magnetic indicators and bearing-distance indicators.

As a Garmin Service Center, Duncan Aviation is capable of performing most repairs, including warranty work on units up to and including the Garmin 600 series.

Recently, the company added additional capabilities on the Universal Avionics flight management system product line, including more models and more software upgrades.

In addition, Duncan Aviation now has the ability to perform WAAS updates.

Along with avionics and instrument repairs for both fixed- and rotor-wing aircraft, Duncan Aviation provides full-service capabilities for business jets, including avionics installations, engine hot sections, airframe inspections and repairs, component overhauls and repairs,

interiors and aircraft painting.

“Our nose-to-tail service facilities can accommodate more than 70 aircraft at the same time,” Detweiler said. “We repair, overhaul and test more than 2,000 avionics, instruments and accessory units every month and sell or exchange thousands of parts each month.”

A Growing Components List

While Duncan Aviation might have started small in 1956, with just three employees, the company now boasts nearly 1,900 personnel and an ever-expanding list of services and capabilities.

“Our capabilities list for components repair has grown to more than 44,000 part numbers. As an approved service center for most of the major component manufacturers, there are very few components found on business aircraft or helicopters we can’t work on, or arrange for quick turns and lower pricing from the OEM,” Detweiler said.

Duncan Aviation’s 300-person Components Solutions team is charged with providing the repair, overhaul and purchase solutions for all avionics, instruments, acces-

sories and parts. Detweiler said the components group is continually adding new technologies to its capabilities for repair, overhaul and exchange, adding hundreds of part numbers per year.

“If we have customers requesting capabilities that we currently do not have, we will do our best to add those capabilities to the list, he said.”

A Successful Formula

Duncan Aviation has been voted the No. 1 avionics service provider in the *Professional Pilot Magazine* PRASE survey every year for nearly 25 years. The airframe service shop in Lincoln has been voted No. 1 for more than 20 years.

According to Detweiler, Duncan Aviation’s success can be attributed to experience, training and customer-driven service.

“We don’t cut corners. All our work is done ‘by the book’ using quality OEM parts whenever possible. Although our competitors like to tell customers this makes us higher priced, our prices are surprisingly

competitive,” he said. “We participate in every factory training opportunity we can find or is offered. Training is a very, very, high priority at Duncan Aviation.

“Many of our technicians in the Components Solutions team have been working on components at Duncan Aviation for more than 25 years. This experience helps with faster troubleshooting and higher quality repairs and overhauls,” he said.

With access to thousands of avionics systems, instruments and radios, Duncan Aviation offers an extensive free loaner program to help keep customers’ aircraft flying while their component is being repaired. Plus, a 24/7/365 go-team is ready day and night to provide component customer service and sales.

“We don’t use an AOG hotline that wakes someone up from bed or have to call someone out. We are awake, on the job, and ready to take a phone call any time. Our customers’ needs are our first concern,” Detweiler said. “We don’t tell the customer what he needs. We let the customer tell us what he or she wants, and we bend over backwards if necessary to make it happen.” □