LR SYSTEMS DEVELOPS STRIPPING, PAINTING ROBOTS

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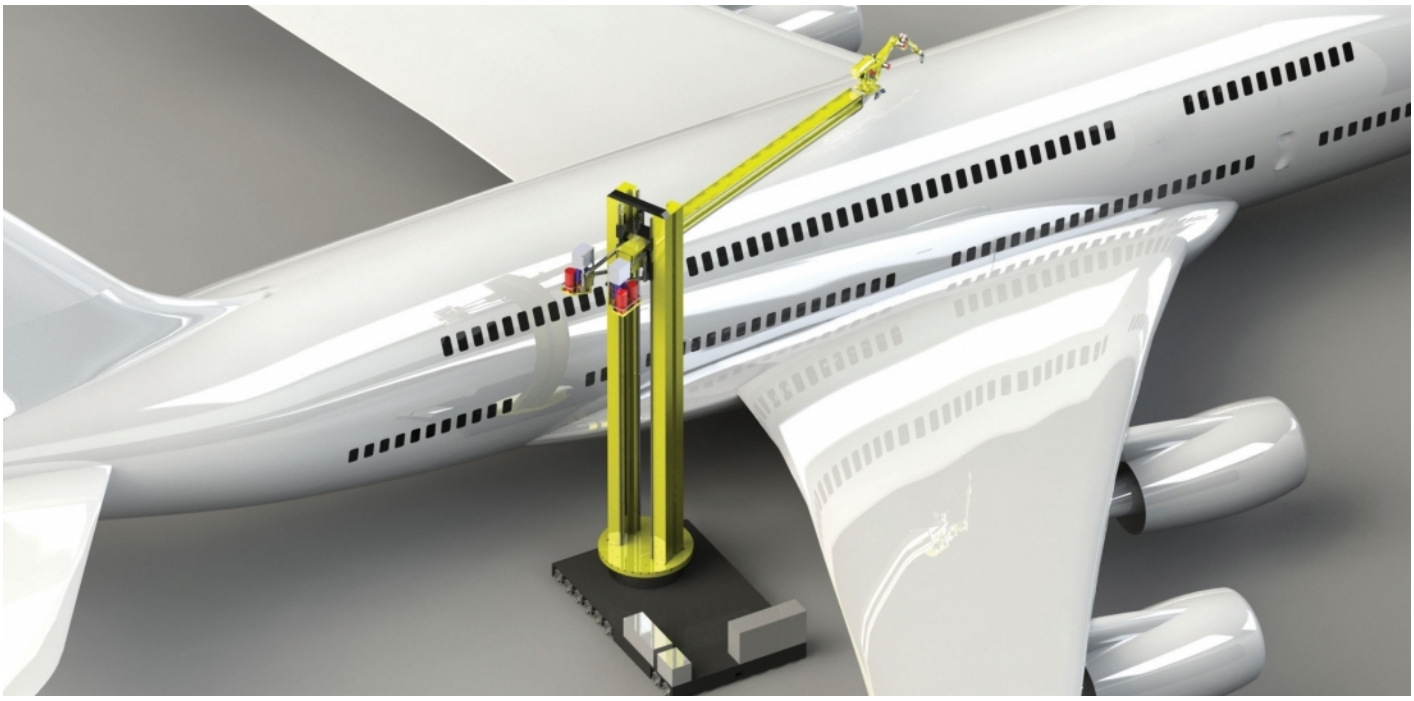

LR Systems (Stand 642) is here promoting its aircraft stripping and **painting robots**. The stripper version is to enter service in 2016. The technology will help cut costs, eliminate some dangerous tasks and save weight on the aircraft, according to the Netherlands-based company.

“Our 20-kilowatt laser makes stripping twice as fast as the current process,” program director Peter Boeijink told**AIN**. A widebody may thus be stripped in two and a half days. The system also eliminates chemicals and sanding, used for metal and composites, respectively. Because the laser needs cooling, the heat is reusable for other purposes, such as hangar heating.

After five years of development, LR’s first stripping robot is being put together and will enter service with Singapore Airlines Engineering Company (SIAEC) next year.

Meanwhile, the automatic painting robot is in development and may be ready in 2017, Boeijink went on. Thanks to its combined 10 degrees of freedom and inkjet printer-like system, it will be able to cope with complex liveries and logos. For plain painting on large surfaces, one stroke can be 30 feet long and 1.6 feet wide. Boeijink said the robot will make a more efficient use of paint and estimates the paint's weight on the aircraft will be cut by 25 percent–220 pounds on an Airbus A380.

To strip and aircraft, two robots are needed. For painting, the number depends on aircraft size–two robots for a narrowbody, four for a widebody. Full return on investment can be expected within two years for the stripping robot and three years for the painting one.

“It makes a lot sense for a UAE-based company to use our robots, as it permits self-sufficiency, as opposed to resorting to foreign workers,” LR CEO Paul van Ijsseltein emphasized.

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