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# Aero Norway targets Leap engine MRO from 2023

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Engine overhaul provider Aero Norway has studied the requirements of supporting CFM International Leap engines and aims to begin shop visits for the new-generation turbofan in 2023.

The Stavanger-based company specialises in CFM56 overhauls and repairs as an independent service provider, having previously been a Pratt & Whitney subsidiary.

Chief executive Glenford Marston has told Cirium that evaluations to extend capabilities to the Leap generation began in 2019, focusing on what would be required in terms of training, tooling, other equipment, and testing facilities. Though studies have largely been completed, the project was paused amid the pandemic and would still require approval by the facility's owner, Qatari businessman Tariq Al Jehani, to proceed.

Marston says "we've put everything on ice" for reassessment in 2022. "I'd like to be in position where, come 2023, we could start [servicing] Leap engines in some capacity," he says.

Part of the studies is to decide the level at which services would begin – ranging from Level 1 light services, via quick-turn shop visits, to full-scale performance restoration at Level 3.

"I think Level 2 is actually the winner right now," Marston says, adding that a decision is to be made in 2022. Ultimately, the company wants to build up its capabilities to Level 3 overhauls of both Leap-1A and -1B engines. The former is an option on Airbus A320neo-family jets, while the latter is the sole powerplant available on the Boeing 737 Max.

Marston acknowledges that gearing up for the Leap generation will require a "huge investment for us". But he expresses confidence that the required capital can be raised despite the effects of the pandemic. "The Leap will be our next model... That's something we agreed and will go ahead to do all the planning."

Perhaps indicating previous evaluations to branch out to other manufacturers' products, Marston says the company is "pretty much set on keeping this facility a CFM shop", citing interest from existing customers to direct Leap MRO requirements to the Scandinavian facility. "We have had enquiries from airlines and they are relying [on it]."

Marston notes that CFM approved Aero Norway's studies of a move into Leap repairs and overhaul, and says he expects no resistance from the manufacturer in establishing the required capabilities: "I don't see any reason why we wouldn't get a GTA [general terms agreement] with CFM to do the Leap."