



## Press release

Charleroi, July 11, 2018

# **Sabena Aerospace and Brussels South Charleroi Airport become privileged partners**

**This new Belgian partnership aims at mutually strengthening both companies, increasing the attractiveness of the site and further consolidating the Walloon knowhow in aeronautics.**

Today, Stéphane Burton, CEO of Sabena Aerospace, and Jean-Jacques Cloquet, CEO of Brussels South Charleroi Airport, have presented their partnership as well as their ambitions for the future. Sabena Aerospace recently opened a brand-new maintenance station at Brussels South Charleroi Airport in order to reinforce the services offered to the airlines present on this airport site. Sabena Aerospace has invested one million euros in this project. The new station currently has fourteen technicians who take care of the maintenance of long-haul carriers. In the next months, the team will be expanded in order to propose maintenance services for all types of aircraft. On the long term, both parties intend to take full advantage of their joined forces and to develop new activities. Sabena Aerospace also has recently established the subsidiary *Sabena Aerospace Technologies* at Gosselies, that aims to take part in multiple initiatives related to Research & Development. In the next 5 years, Sabena Aerospace plans to expand its teams based at Brussels South Charleroi Airport and to hire an additional 50 to 70 staff members. The responsible Minister for Airports, Jean-Luc Crucke, attended to this press conference as well.

The recent opening of the brand-new maintenance station of Sabena Aerospace at Brussels South Charleroi Airport marks the start of a long-term collaboration for both companies. The station has currently 14 technicians and is specialised in long-haul carrier maintenance of the Airbus A340 type. The first models of this aircraft are operated by the new airline Air Belgium.

For its new maintenance station, Sabena Aerospace invested 1 million euros, which were dedicated to the new facilities, the industrial equipment's and the training of the staff.

For the upcoming year, Sabena Aerospace plans to recruit new profiles as well. The objective is to have 20 permanent workers at the station by 2019 and to propose maintenance services for all types of aircraft.



Currently, Sabena Aerospace carries out the maintenance of the *Air Belgium* fleet, which recently launched the first long-distance flights in the history of Brussels South Charleroi Airport (destination Hong-Kong). Three aircrafts are currently operated and a fourth will be operational as of September.

In addition to its maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) activities, Sabena Aerospace intends to **develop new services** in the aeronautics field and to **intensify its partnerships with multiple players located around the Charleroi airport**, such as:

- The partnership with **WAN** regarding the training for aeronautic areas of expertise; the latter would be in charge of the theoretical training whereas Sabena Aerospace would ensure the on-the-job training. The training is now also available both at Brussels and Charleroi airport.
- The partnership with **SONACA and STEMME** for a development project from Temploux;
- A **partnership project** with multiple regional actors with respect to **aircraft dismantling and recycling**.

In general terms, Sabena Aerospace intends to take part in **any other partnership project in aeronautics which will be launched within the Cluster Aviation** under development.

In this context, Sabena Aerospace has set up a subsidiary, bearing the name of ‘**Sabena Aerospace Technologies**’ at Gosselies to take part in multiple Research & Development initiatives. Sabena Aerospace has the ambition to set approximately 50 to 70 workers to work at Charleroi within the 5 next years through its different aeronautics activities.

**Stéphane Burton**, CEO of Sabena Aerospace: *“The investments in the Charleroi airport are fully in line with our company’s long-term strategy. It is our objective to be operational at all major airports in Belgium. Given that we were already present at Brussels, Liege and Antwerp, Charleroi was the logical next step. The fact that we have the honour to be the maintenance solutions provider for the first long-haul flights that departed from this airport, is only the start of a long history. Our business plan focusses on setting up many projects in close collaboration with Charleroi airport and the regional aeronautics players in order to develop new activities in this field.”*

**Jean-Jacques Cloquet**, CEO of Brussels South Charleroi Airport: *“This collaboration is definitely a marvellous Belgian story and places Charleroi airport on the map as main hub for long-haul flights. We are delighted with the presence of Sabena Aerospace, who will undoubtedly convince many other airlines to come to Brussels South Charleroi Airport both for long-haul flights and short- and medium-haul flights. In addition to that, this partnership creates employment opportunities and moreover is an additional proof of the quality of the aeronautical expertise and knowhow in Wallonia.*



### **About Sabena Aerospace:**

Sabena Aerospace is an **independent, internationally active Belgian company**, offering **maintenance, repair and operations solutions for military and civil aircraft**. The Sabena Aerospace activities are organised around **4 Business Units**: Engineering & Training, Operational Support, Components and Defence. Sabena Aerospace has some **400 employees**. From the historical headquarters located at Brussels Airport, the company develops its activities through its subsidiaries established in 9 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, Italy, Tanzania, Congo RDC, Congo Brazzaville, Zimbabwe and Mauritania). Its international commercial motto summarizes accurately the corporate strategy: ***“Keep on flying, we take care.”*** For more information: <http://www.sabena-aerospace.com>

### **Latest news:**

- 2017: conclusion of a new contract to carry out the Heavy Maintenance of military transport aircraft (C130) on behalf of **NATO** at Brussels Airport;
- 2017: start-up of line maintenance activities at **Kinshasa** and **Brazzaville** for multiple international clients, amongst which Air France;
- 2017: opening of a new maintenance station at Antwerp airport to carry out the maintenance of the VLM aircraft;
- 2017: opening of a **new storage building at Nossegem** (in the vicinity of Brussels Airport) within the context of its “Hold & Repair” activity for the European players in the field of aircraft dismantling;
- 2018: opening of a **new station at Nouakchott** (Mauritania) as part of a joint venture with Mauritania Airlines;
- 2018: start-up of the **joint venture “Ignition!” together with Sonaca** in order to offer a new approach in the field of operational support for military aircraft;
- 2018: opening of a **new maintenance station at Charleroi airport** to carry out the maintenance of the Air Belgium aircraft;

### **About Brussels South Charleroi Airport:**

Brussels South Charleroi Airport is one of the two airports in Belgium serving the city of Brussels. BSCA has received multiple awards for its services and infrastructures and has a comprehensive operational experience and a thorough knowledge of the sector. In 2017, approximately eight million of passengers departed from BSCA towards over 170 destinations located in Europe, North-Africa and the Middle East. Brussels South Charleroi Airport has seven partner airlines, i.e. Ryanair, Wizz Air, Pegasus Airlines, TUI fly, Air Corsica, Belavia and Air Belgium.