AIR NEW ZEALAND TO 3D PRINT ITS OWN AIRCRAFT INTERIOR PARTS

News / Airlines

Air New Zealand is embracing the future of aircraft interiors by successfully producing 3D printed components for its Business Premier cabins.

The airline has been working with Auckland University of Technology to manufacture the fold down cocktail trays that form part of its award-winning Business Premier seat using innovative 3D printing – also known as additive layer manufacturing technology.

Air New Zealand Chief Operations Officer Bruce Parton says the move into 3D printing is one of many innovative moves the airline currently has underway.

“Aircraft interiors are made up of tens of thousands of parts. Not only can’t we hold stock of every replacement part we might need, we often only require a small number of units which can be really expensive to produce using traditional manufacturing methods and can involve frustrating delays while a replacement part is delivered,” Mr Parton says.

“A big advantage of 3D printing is that it allows us to make cost-effective lightweight parts

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ourselves, and to do so quickly without compromising on safety, strength or durability."

Air New Zealand hopes to start installing the 3D printed cocktail trays on aircraft in the coming weeks, pending final regulatory approval.

Mr Parton says Air New Zealand is exploring opportunities to introduce further 3D printed components. "It seems the possibilities are limited only by our imagination."

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