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Lauak Expands Capability with Advanced High-Pressure Forming

KENT Washington (June 14, 2007) - To meet growing demand for aeronautical components and assemblies, Groupe Lauak, Ayherre, France, is investing heavily in modern technology and equipment. Recently, the company ordered a large Flexform sheet metal forming press from Avure Technologies, the global leader in high pressure technology. When installed in 2008, Lauak will own the largest, highest tonnage forming press of any sub-supplier in Continental Europe.

Founded in 1975, Lauak maintains a 10,000 m² facility in Ayherre and a 3,000 m² operation in Portugal, providing ample space for production and assembly of large airframe sections for customers including Airbus, Bombardier, Dassault, Embraer, and other aerospace OEMs. With 2006 revenues of 29 million euros and more than 300 employees, the company has grown steadily through constant expansion of its in-house capabilities. Today these include metallurgical analysis, prototyping, tooling design, manufacturing, surface treatment and painting, assembly, and testing.

Expansion plans for 2008 include a 7,000 m² fabrication facility near the Biarritz-Bayonne airport where the new Flexform press will be installed.

In the past, Lauak had produced many of its sheet metal parts using low-pressure rubber pad presses. The purchase of the Flexform QFC 1.1x3-1000 fluid cell press will enable the precise forming of much larger shapes, up to 3m in length, as well as more parts per 1.5-minute press cycle. The flexible diaphragm exerts a forming pressure of up to 1,000 bar, five times that of the rubber pad presses. This permits the accurate forming of highly complex shapes, and the production of much deeper parts. Recent advances in fluid cell tooling achieve a significantly higher percentage of finished parts directly off the press, and an enhanced ability to meet ever-more-critical assembly tolerances.

Jean-Marc Charriton, President of Groupe Lauak, believes the new Flexform press will give his company a decisive competitive advantage. "This system gives us great flexibility", he says. "We can form very large panels and multiple small parts in all types of metals, including hard materials such as titanium and Inconel®. Our productivity will improve because of the press's larger capacity, short cycles, more finished parts per cycle, and a drastic reduction in hand work."

Groupe Lauak will be exhibiting at the Paris Air Show, June 18-24, in Hall 2B, stand H12.

For more information, visit www.avure.com, or contact Glenn Hewson in the U.S. at glenn.hewson@avure.com, or Sture Olsson in Europe at sture.olsson@avure.se.

About Avure Technologies, Inc.: Avure Technologies specializes in the design, manufacturing, installation, and global support of high pressure presses for sheet metal forming, densification of advanced materials and critical industrial parts, and high pressure pasteurization to keep food fresh longer and pathogen-free. The company has its headquarters in Kent, Washington (Seattle area), with significant operations in Vasteras, Sweden and Columbus, Ohio.