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**Flexible Additive Manufacturing takes flight at £32m aerospace facility in Bristol, UK**

Global engineering technologies company, Renishaw, has installed a RenAM 500Q Flex Additive manufacturing (AM) system at aerospace manufacturer GKN Aerospace’s state-of-the-art Global Technology Centre in Bristol, UK. Taking its place alongside the latest technologies and manufacturing processes for the next generation of aircraft, the RenAM 500Q Flex will provide valuable feedback on how to optimise AM for aerospace applications.

Renishaw first collaborated with GKN Aerospace in 2014 as a part of the Horizon project, funded by the Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI), that aimed to develop AM techniques into viable production processes for aerospace parts and components. Since then, GKN Aerospace has developed its understanding of AM and uses the process across all business streams, developing components for aero-engines, civil aero-structures and functional systems. After seeing the benefits of AM, such as part consolidation, shorter manufacturing value chain time and a reduction in defects, GKN Aerospace and Renishaw discussed how the aerospace manufacturer could benefit from the new Flex platform. New platform features include the ability to quickly change materials and do a powder count more easily than on a recirculating system.

“We wanted to find an advanced AM system to help us to develop a highly stable, highly repeatable and highly measurable manufacturing process that results in zero defects,” explained Bradley Hughes, Senior Research Engineer at GKN Aerospace. “While we knew the benefits of the existing RenAM 500Q, the Flex platform offers a variety of benefits that are not always possible in AM. The in-process monitoring capabilities, for example, enable us to monitor performance metrics that are essential for the aerospace industry. The system is also designed to enable material changes, something that is normally a complex process when working with AM systems, so it allows us to be more efficient when working on products using different materials.”

“Working collaboratively with customers enables us to understand their requirements and develop systems that provide flexibility and productivity levels they need,” explained Bryan Austin, Director of Sales in Renishaw’s Additive Manufacturing Group. “Collaborating with GKN Aerospace not only allows us to understand how the aerospace industry can benefit from the Flex platform, but we can also better understand the future requirements of the aerospace sector in additive manufacturing.”

“By engaging with the Renishaw team and collaborating during machine development, we can help them build a machine that really meets customer requirements,” continued Hughes. “Renishaw has been closely involved in the entire process of commissioning the RenAM 500Q Flex, offering support with installation, training and resolving any initial issues when learning to operate the machine.”

The RenAM 500Q Flex is a four laser AM machine that offers the same industry-leading optical, chamber and gas-flow designs as the RenAM 500 series, while providing additional flexibility when changing powders. Users can quickly change powders in-house to meet demand, while parameters and material properties transfer seamlessly between systems thanks to the common build environment.

For further information on the RenAM 500Q Flex system, visit [www.renishaw.com/additive](http://www.renishaw.com/additive)

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to editors**

UK-based Renishaw is a world leading engineering technologies company, supplying products used for applications as diverse as jet engine and wind turbine manufacture, through to dentistry and brain surgery. It has over 4,500 employees located in the 37 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations.

For the year ended June 2021 Renishaw recorded sales of £565.6 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, the USA, Japan and Germany.

Throughout its history Renishaw has made a significant commitment to research and development, with historically between 13 and 18% of annual sales invested in R&D and engineering. The majority of this R&D and manufacturing of the company’s products is carried out in the UK.

The Company’s success has been recognised with numerous international awards, including 18 Queen’s Awards recognising achievements in technology, export and innovation.

Further information at [www.renishaw.com](http://www.renishaw.com)