



# TCR seals big win in Scandinavia

Just as this Autumn issue of *Airside* was going to press, TCR International, the specialist in GSE leasing, announced that it had inked a significant new contract with SAS

The signing of the deal by TCR Denmark with SAS covers the purchase and leaseback of all the GSE used by SAS Ground Handling (SGH, part of the SAS Group) at the Danish capital's Copenhagen International Airport. The GSE, powered and non-powered, covers all types, everything from pushback tractors and de-icing trucks to high loaders and baggage tractors, carts and dollies. As a result of this latest agreement, a total of more than 5,000 pieces of GSE will henceforth be supplied by TCR to SAS, which will be operated by SGH at the majority of the big airports across Scandinavia. This agreement, says TCR, marks the culmination of the group's expansion strategy in the region.

Founded in 2008, TCR Denmark has been providing GSE for many years to Menzies and WFS, two other handlers operating at Copenhagen. But the new contract with SGH increases the volume of TCR-supplied GSE across Scandinavia by more than 1,800 units. According to the agreement, the Belgian Group will acquire all of SGH's GSE, as well as bring the handler's 56 technicians and employees within the TCR ambit – they will be employed by TCR while supporting the service for SGH. TCR will also build a new 4,000 square metre workshop at the airport.

Kjetil Habjorg, CEO of SGH, comments: "This operation makes our handling division much more flexible. We have transferred a significant structure to TCR, consisting of eight workshops, more than 100 staff and 5,000 pieces of GSE. We rent this back in a flexible form which allows us to easily adapt our GSE fleet to both increases and decreases in our operation.

"We have been working for more than two years with TCR to close this entire agreement. In our choice for TCR we valued a lot the fact that they are the world leader in terms of GSE services, with an excellent reputation in terms of customer service as well as a responsible management of their staff," Habjorg adds.

Tom Bellekens, TCR's chief operating officer, remarks: "Both companies chose a gradual implementation approach country by country. This has allowed SAS to see a proof of TCR's quality and reliability before entering into this last important phase in Denmark.

"SAS is the third big European airline (after KLM and Air Europa) to

outsource all its GSE, a trend that we expect to expand to other major carriers in their constant search for efficiency and flexibility improvements. The contract with SAS is a long-term one, foreseeing efficiency improvements over time as well as important investments (of between 50 and a 100 million Euros) in renewal of the existing GSE fleet."

TCR's first major contract in Scandinavia was signed in 2011 with the sale and rent-back of the entire fleet of Menzies' GSE at Oslo International Airport, this deal being closely followed by agreements with Aviator in 2012 and with SAS in 2014. In February this year, TCR launched its subsidiary TCR Sweden, based on a long-term agreement with SGH at three Swedish airports: Stockholm-Arlanda, Gothenburg and Malmö. The operation included three workshops, more than 1,200 pieces of powered and non-powered equipment and included the integration of 25 people in TCR's workforce.

#### CAPABILITY

TCR has a huge GSE inventory of more than 20,000 units, and no lack of experience in equipment maintenance and management. It now manages one of the three largest GSE fleets in the world, a capability that allows it to react quickly to customer demand and to absorb certain asset risks that its customers want to avoid.

Bellekens points to increasing liberalisation of handling markets right across the world, and points to a high correlation between that trend and the greater acceptance of the GSE leasing concept. The greater flexibility offered by the leasing model (as opposed to ownership) is especially beneficial in liberalised, dynamic handling markets, he says.

And Marc Delvaux, TCR's CEO, explains: "TCR perfectly meets the increasing expectation of airlines and ground handlers to get flexible and reliable GSE services. By having become the market leader, we now have access to the resources necessary to stay well ahead of the market in terms of flexibility, quality and reliability. Our intention is to keep investing in our personnel, workshops and systems to continue to meet the market's expectations, whilst proceeding our growth path in Europe and beyond." ■

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