

## COLLABORATIVE DESIGN AND FULL AFTER-SALES SERVICE

### The Challenge

What do you do when a supplier can no longer provide an after-sales service for critical safety equipment? This was a problem for a US helicopter engineering facility that had previously purchased access platforms from a French supplier, recommended by their Italian parent company. Unexpectedly, the supplier was unable to provide regular after-sales support in the US and as this was likely to be troublesome for the helicopter engineering facility, they decided to find a more suitable and reliable 'local' supplier.

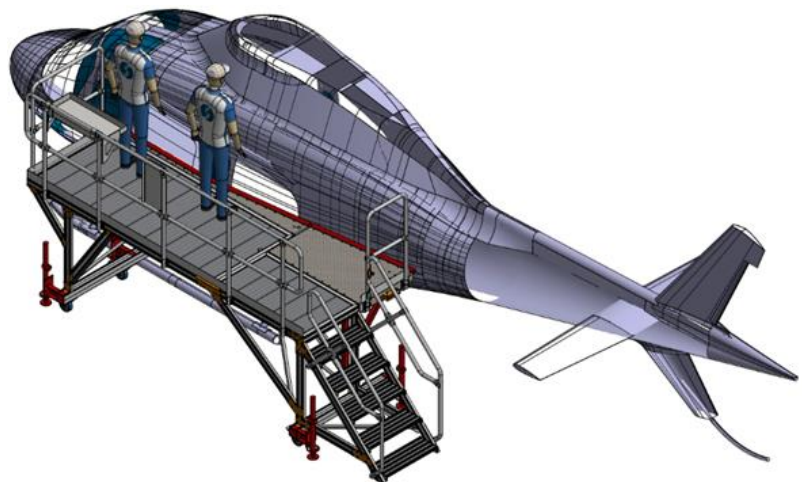
Their requirements had evolved too as they needed an engineering company with expertise in designing and manufacturing helicopter support equipment that could not only supply a quality product but also be capable of managing design change requirements, as well as providing 24/7 after-sales support. They also wanted to purchase equipment that could be easily repaired without the entire product having to be scrapped.

To find a suitable supplier, the company issued a tender and after due process, Semmco Inc was appointed.

### Solving the Problem

According to the helicopter engineering company, there was a distinct difference between Semmco and the other tendering companies. They particularly liked the fact that Semmco provided a full, bespoke design service, they liked the quality of the designs and professional approach taken by the design team. But most importantly, they liked the fact that Semmco was receptive to its customer's requirements and could adapt and modify designs to suit its customer's exact needs. This level of flexibility in today's 'off the shelf' world is unusual. Additionally, they were impressed with the range of products already manufactured by Semmco. The majority of the platforms are aluminium construction making them lightweight and therefore easy to move, and the designs incorporate a bolted and plated assembly system that means sections are interchangeable and can be replaced or repaired easily.

The immediate project was to design, manufacture and install access platforms for the AW119 helicopter. These platforms would provide all-round access for the engineers, enabling them to maintain and service the helicopter easily and safely. The helicopter company supplied Semmco with original drawings of the AW119 that Semmco uploaded to AutoCAD® so that the platforms could be 3D aligned alongside the helicopter.



This clever design capability ensured the platforms correctly fitted the helicopter before they were manufactured and installed avoiding the issue of products being built, installed and then having to be modified. This process was particularly useful too as these platforms were being developed during the Coronavirus pandemic when visits to facilities were restricted or not allowed at all.

### The Benefits

Semmco worked closely with the helicopter engineering company to develop a design exactly to suit their requirements. They developed the first design concepts and shared these with the customer. Following collaborative discussion, ideas developed and Semmco adapted and amended the designs until the customer was completely satisfied. This way of working was extremely important for the helicopter engineering company and provided a service that previously had been lacking.

The helicopter company also liked the fact that Semmco Inc was 'local' to their facility and therefore could provide a reliable after-sales service. But most importantly, the modular system – the bolted and plated design – meant that sections or parts of the assembly could be repaired or replaced easily and this was a big factor in Semmco being appointed.

The project was completed within the stipulated time frame and within budget and the bespoke designs now enable the maintenance engineers to work safely and efficiently around the helicopters. Because of the success of this project, the helicopter company is confident it will continue to work with Semmco for all its access and GSE requirements going forward.