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Rolls-Royce looks forward to more lucrative orders

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BRITISH engine and gas turbine specialist Rolls-Royce Plc, with a storied 36 years of presence in Malaysia, can expect more expensive orders from its big customers here.

The Defence Ministry, Malaysia Airlines and Malaysia International Shipping Corp Bhd (MISC), among others, are expanding their military and commercial fleets.

Given the close relationship it has built with these clients over the years, Rolls-Royce, whose aero engines first powered the country's Comet and F27 aircraft some 36 years ago, is in a good position to become one of the major suppliers.

David A. Jones, newly-appointed regional director for Rolls-Royce Malaysia, said MISC plans to buy five new vessels, while Malaysia Airlines as well as its subsidiary MasKargo are looking for a few more aircraft.

"MISC is procuring five new carriers. If it is looking for vessels powered by gas turbines, we have the product," Jones said in an interview on Wednesday.

Malaysia Airlines now operates a fleet of 15 Boeing 777 powered by the Rolls-Royce Trent 892 engine.

The national carrier's total planned 777 fleet is 17, said Jones, who is married to a Malaysian and conversant in Malay.

Rolls-Royce civil gas turbines also power Malaysia Airlines' Boeing 747s and a number of executive aircraft including the Bombardier Global Express used by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Gulfstream IV, he noted.

Jones said the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) will be taking delivery of six new Superlynx helicopters in 2003 which will be powered by the LHTEC T800 engine.

LHTEC is a joint venture between Rolls-Royce and Honeywell.

Rolls-Royce is a highly successful international engineering company at the forefront of technology for the aerospace, defence, marine and energy markets.

With customers in 150 countries, it is one of the UK's leading exporters and has current and announced orders in excess of STG16 billion (STG1 = RM6.00).

The group is one of the world's leading aero-engine manufacturers, providing power for over 500 major airlines, 2,400 corporates and utility operators, and 160 armed forces.

Its engines are also used on land and at sea, in power stations, for oil and gas applications and to power ships from over half of the world's navies.

In Malaysia, Rolls-Royce has products and projects in the aerospace, defence, marine and energy businesses.

In aerospace, Rolls-Royce provides both commercial and military aero engines.

According to Jones, the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) operates a fleet of 23 Adour-powered Hawk aircraft and eight Aermachi MB339 trainer aircraft fuelled by the Viper engine.

The transport arm of the RMAF operates a fleet of 19 C130H aircraft powered by the Rolls-Royce T56 engine.

As the world's largest marine system supplier, Rolls-Royce has various propulsion and stabilisation equipment on the new RMN frigates KD Lekiu

and KD Jebat.

In 1997, the world's largest ship-lift system was supplied, erected and commissioned by Syncrolift, a Rolls-Royce subsidiary, for MSE Sdn Bhd in Johor.

A similar system has also been installed at PSC in Lumut, Perak.

Additionally, Rolls-Royce supplies water jets to the Legal Malaysian Customs and has a significant presence in the commercial marine sector.

In the oil and gas sector, Jones said, a South China Sea gas platform that will aid Malaysia's demand for energy is to be powered exclusively by Rolls-Royce gas turbine equipment.

Rolls-Royce has contracts in place for a total of 10 Allison 501 power generation sets on offshore rigs to be located in the South China Sea.

The contract comprises four Allison 501-KB7 units, which are being supplied to Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd for the Angsi-A production platform. A further 6 Roll-Royce 501-KB5S units are being supplied to Esso Production Malaysia Inc (Epmi) for the Larut-A production platform.

Two Rolls-Royce RB211-powered Coberra 6000 gas compressor systems were also supplied for the Angsi production platform for Petronas Carigali Sdn. Bhd.

In late 2000, Rolls-Royce opened a new RM20 million industrial customer service support base for its rapidly expanding oil and gas business in the country.

The new facility at Kertih in Terengganu is jointly operated by Rolls-Royce's partner company Otec Kemajuan Sdn Bhd and serves existing customers throughout the region including Petronas, Epmi and Shell. The facility will initially service a range of existing Rolls-Royce engines and packages in Malaysia.

It is equipped with some of the latest state-of-the-art equipment which is provides comprehensive on-line monitoring of customer's equipment and now enables Rolls-Royce to assist them in solving equipment problems from onshore where possible.

Jones is optimistic of the future of the Rolls-Royce's businesses in Malaysia.

He hoped that his previous work experience with local industry and government agencies will help harness the strong relationships Rolls-Royce has established and maintained here.

"We will continue to apply the robust Rolls-Royce business model across all our business sectors, developing our technology and capability to create competitive advantage for our customers," he said.