



Supporting operational transformation across a defense program

A Boeing Distribution Services and Saab Case Study

Company Overview

Saab serves the global market with world-leading products, services and solutions within military defense and civil security. The company has operations and employees on all continents around the world. Their products are sold to over 100 countries and Saab currently operates in over 30 countries worldwide. Research and development is concentrated in Sweden and they have employees mainly in Europe, South Africa, the U.S., Australia and Brazil.

Saab is focused in five core areas.

- Advanced weapons systems
- Command and control systems
- Sensors
- Underwater systems
- Fighter systems

The Challenge

Saab was looking for an integrated supply chain risk-sharing partner to provide hardware components for the Gripen program. A partner who could successfully:

- Support the supply of components from the low rate of manufacturing test aircraft to a serial production program
- Supply a combination of customer designed and standard components
- Optimise the supply chain, enhance service levels and optimize costs.

Our Solution

Saab initially selected Boeing Distribution Services as a dedicated fasteners provider and this relationship has since developed into an operational solutions partner for the company.

Initially, in support of the project, Saab and Boeing Distribution Services collaborated to implement the following:

- Assembled a Boeing Distribution Services integrated program team dedicated to Saab
- Jointly worked with Saab to develop a working process that combined Saab-specific needs with our capabilities; candid and close communication formed the foundation of the process
- Executed a detailed value-stream map in conjunction with Saab to evaluate the process and provide recommendations for improvement
- Based on our extensive experience with suppliers in the aerospace and defense ecosystem, Boeing Distribution Services selected key manufacturers that were compliant with the Saab standards and had the capabilities to produce to the required standards
- As part of a long-term strategic partnership we, together with Saab, visited key suppliers to raise awareness about future Gripen potential, and also ensure parts were being produced in the proper manner to correct specification
- We tailored our inventory strategy to fit with Saab's initial demand and over the years it was constantly adjusted to the changing needs of Saab Gripen program evolution

- With the strong involvement of our technical support team, Boeing Distribution Services helped to convert a number of Saab drawing parts to standards, thus supporting cost saving and improved service levels
- Boeing Distribution Services took over the supplier management for the entire BOM (Bill of Materials)

How We Helped

Boeing Distribution Services has been accompanying Saab on their development journey for over 10 years; initially partnering during prototyping then to serial production of the Gripen program, which has since been extended to the T-7A platform. After years of learning and delivering solutions together with Saab in many areas - especially in the prototyping phase, Boeing Distribution Services has moved from an initial parts supplier to an operational solutions provider and now working as strategic and collaborative integration partner:

- Supported the Gripen program from prototyping to serial production
- For the T-7A program, we supported in the EMD (Engineering Manufacturing Development) phase, and now Boeing Distribution Services has been selected as a service provider for the serial production for fasteners, chemicals and electricals
- We are also now working with other Saab business units and supporting Saab's ecosystem, through collaboration with Gripen subcontractors and thereby, creating synergy

Benefits

- Strategic and collaborative integration partner providing single sourcing and effective supplier management for the company, thus allowing Saab to focus on their core business, with peace of mind
- Continual technical analysis for better standard of parts selection and greater cost optimization
- Cooperation with the Saab's R&D, supporting new product development
- Maintaining performance levels - Boeing Distribution Services achieved the highest level in Saab's approved supply chain partner ranking in 2019
- Increased Perfect Order Fulfillment (POF) by 23% in the first years of engagement and continue to maintain high levels for POF each year based on correct quantity, on-time delivery, correct documentation and correct condition parameters

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“The success of our partnership with Boeing Distribution Services helped to create an optimized supply chain by improving cost and operational performance. The investments from both companies has been significant and deepens our collaboration, creating a strong platform to support our programs now and in the future.”

Petra Sjögren

Vice President

Head of Procurement for Aeronautics

Saab

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