

TCR Establishes North American Presence

Over the past year, TCR has implemented start-up operations at DTW and BOS, while growing business on the continent in the midst of the pandemic.

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Having previously operated in other parts of the world, TCR has established a North American base.

TCR North America successfully implemented start-up operations at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) and Boston Logan International Airport (BOS) in late 2019 and has nurtured business since, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The company's official headquarters is located at DTW along with its own GSE maintenance workshop.

TCR appointed Jan De Leeuw as managing director for North America, who previously served the company as group commercial director. In a recent interview, De Leeuw said TCR's model of providing operating leases of GSE, including maintenance and fleet services has provided value to its customers in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

“We can be very flexible. In COVID days, for example, we are helping our customers match their GSE fleet and cost with their decrease in volumes, whilst supporting them when ramping up again as volumes pick up. This flexibility is a cornerstone of our model,” De Leeuw said. “There is a lot of GSE from our customers that they don’t need for the next six months, nine months, 12 months to come.

“Thanks to the fact that we have a big volume across different locations, we can try to find a different home for that ground support equipment, whereas in the ramp up phase, or when starting up new business, we can greatly support using GSE from our large inventory across the continent and globally.”

Since establishing a presence in North America, TCR has secured business relationships with independent ground handlers and airlines in addition to working with airports on potential GSE pooling projects.

“We’ve been working on the States for 2-3 years,” De Leeuw said. “We had questions coming to us from our global partners, global customers that are also active in the U.S. trying to look at a similar model as we were doing with them in other locations.

“We were then looking into some local opportunities with U.S./Canadian/North American operators,” De Leeuw said. “Bringing all that together, we then decided to effectively establish an operation in the U.S.”

According to De Leeuw, the key to establishing North American operations was making sure people understand TCR’s business model, see it function and gain trust in it.

“Historically, in the U.S., we’ve seen GSE set-ups that were totally different, and we still see a lot of self-handling operations – much more in the U.S. than in other parts of the world,” De Leeuw said, adding self-handling typically means that less GSE flexibility is required.

De Leeuw said its two locations at DTW and BOS is “only a start.” But he added there is additional interest from existing customers and new potential customers.

“On the back of the crisis, the situation has changed dramatically. The need for financing, the need for GSE transformation programs – meaning right-sizing the fleets – and the need for flexibility are even more apparent now than in the past,” De Leeuw said.

“A lot of talks are on-going with airlines, airline ground handlers and independent ground handlers to look into their GSE to do sale and leaseback operations, for example, and to also help them start up new operations,” De Leeuw said.