

# CARGO

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**PMT Aviation**  
**The Better Alternative**

# PMT Aviation

## The Better Alternative

In 2020 PMT's various business divisions were collectively presented as PMT Aviation. Cargo Magazine is intrigued as to the reason behind the name change and visited Tessa van Hulst and Dick Meijaard to discover more. Market developments and PMT's interaction with customers were also discussed during the conversation as was their vision for the future of training courses.

Text **Esther Kort-Boreas**

Photography **Jean-Pierre Geusens,**

**PMT Aviation**

Tessa begins: "The name PMT Cargo Security has been used for years. We had noticed that occasionally the name had led to some confusion amongst both existing and potential customers. After all, our company does so much more than just cargo security.

We provide training courses, we screen cargo with X-Ray and sniffer dogs, we have a DG section and our aviation security branch is active with both cargo and passengers, amongst other things.

We also undertake cargo screening on location for a number of Fortune 500 companies. We do this with our own EDD teams but also with the customer's own X-Ray equipment on the premises. Using only the X-Ray, PMT employees screen approximately 80,000 packages per week. In addition to this, we are always happy to visit a multiple user cargo warehouse at Schiphol or an individual forwarder to examine cargo there but then, obviously, using the EDD teams.

As we have so much more to offer, we felt that PMT Aviation was a better 'umbrella' covering us all. Along with our new name we also launched our new website which more clearly profiles us."

Dick adds: "31 years ago we began at Schiphol Airport offering aviation-related training courses. The focus on aviation has remained constant throughout the years."

### History

PMT has been an institution in the aviation world for over 30 years. Dick summarises their history in a nutshell: "We began with short training courses aimed at air cargo handling. One thing led to another: the Controller Aviation course we offered led to a request to provide air cargo screening. PMT Cargo Smartpoint was born. Our presence in the warehouse as well as on the platform led to further security requests, such as access control and the guarding of aircraft airside. PMT Cargo Security was born. By always listening carefully to the customer's wishes, we grew into being a serious player in the air cargo industry."



### MAA

The company considers it a great compliment that Maastricht Aachen Airport (MAA) chose PMT for the entire airport's security. "We are very grateful that Jos Roeven, the Director of MAA, chose to work with a medium-sized party, such as PMT,



rather than one of the multinationals which would be the traditional choice for airport security. Attractive pricing, our flexibility and customer focus are our strengths. Speedy decisions and short lines complete the picture”, Tessa says.

The minimizing of passenger flights led to a considerable decline in the deployment of security guards. On the other hand, growth in the number of cargo flights at MAA brought additional work. Security activities such as mobile surveillance, CCTV and staffing of entry/exit points contin-

ued as normal due to the high cargo volumes at MAA.

How passenger numbers will shape up is still unclear. In any case, the expectation is that more passenger flights from MAA will be possible this summer as the number of Covid-19 vaccinations increases. PMT is already actively recruiting personnel for this scenario.

“The obligation to retain the previous service provider’s personnel at MAA brought additional costs. At the same time, income decreased due to the reduced number of passengers. We sat down with the airport to discuss possibilities that would work for both of us. We’ve achieved this”, Tessa says. Dick adds: “We always think along with our customer. We have not stuck rigidly to the contractual hours, that is just not the way we play the game. The consequence of our approach is the absence of short-term profit maximisation. That weighs against, conversely, building a long-term relationship with our customer. We find this much more important.”

The Limburg airport is less extensive than, for example, Schiphol. In response to the question if a medium-sized company, such as PMT, can also serve larger customers, Tessa answers: “Our motto is ‘to be the better alternative’. The services we offer are not unique. Several parties offer security and training courses but we want to be the better alternative within that range of providers. Our focus lies in offering competitive rates in combination with a high degree of flexibility. Whether that is for a large, or a small, customer is not important to us.”

**Recruiting personnel**

In recent years the company has been growing on average 20% each year. Employee numbers are steadily growing in spite of the current situation. A growth spurt due to the activities at MAA, but a decrease due to Corona. It is anticipated that as summer approaches there will be growth again. “Notwithstanding the impact of Corona, there are always



✈️ strong fluctuations in demand in our business. Our recruitment section can, as required, quickly scale up or scale down personnel in order that our customers are served in the very best possible way,” Tessa says.

Cargo Magazine is interested in how recruitment is undertaken.

Tessa: “It depends on the size of the project. If the project involves more than 15,000 hours annually then, in line with the collective labour agreement for the security sector, we are obliged to retain the previous provider’s employees. In this case, we usually have sufficient personnel immediately available for the particular project. We recruit ourselves for smaller assignments. We have seen that personnel who once left us, decide to come back, precisely because of our personal approach. Of course, we think this is great.”

“We are seeing huge differences in the period before and during Corona. In the past it was difficult to find good people and, due to there being high demand for personnel, there was some turnover. This changed with Corona. It has become easier for us to get well qualified personnel. Luckily, in spite of the damage caused by the Corona crisis, we have been able to avoid redundancies.”

**International activities**

For over 25 years PMT has provided training courses for Defence, including for the Navy on Curacao. PMT is also active in Germany for NATO at Geilenkirchen where the Awacs are stationed. In Cologne too where a few of the new A330s are located supplementing the NATO operational section in Eindhoven responsible for air refuelling. On a military base in Hungary there are three C17s which can be hired by six NATO countries. PMT provides training for both the flight and cabin crew.

As well as delivering training courses in foreign countries, PMT also arranges screening of cargo and luggage with Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD). This has been happening for some years now in Sweden and, very shortly, the first certified Croatian dog handler will be deployed in Croatia with their partner there.

The Norwegian government has given PMT permission to commence deploying sniffer dogs. Unfortunately, though, due to Corona, the certified teams have not yet been able to start.

**Corona opportunities**

“Despite the negative impact that Corona has had on society, there are also opportunities. At the moment experiments are taking place with Covid dogs. We all know the dogs that can smell drugs and explosives. There are also dogs that can smell Covid. Finland and Belgium, amongst others, are actively pursuing this”, Dick says.

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“Provision of this service has, however, two troublesome aspects: First and foremost, you can only train dogs using positive test samples. Obviously, it is very difficult not only to get hold of these but also to be able to use them. Extremely strict regulations have to be developed for this. Furthermore, Covid dogs are not (yet) controlled and certified by the government which is the case with EDD. Without this certification, anyone with a dog could stand at the gate checking passengers. In fact, the lack of certification is a far greater challenge than the first aspect. These obstacles are the reason why PMT will not be going down the track of Covid dogs. With 21 certified EDD teams, we are by far the largest in the Netherlands and we want to further evolve with the aim of going international.”

### E-learning, online and personal education

Due to Corona, there has been substantial growth in e-learning (independent digital training programs that an individual student can follow without the intervention of a teacher) and online courses (digital, virtual classroom). PMT has had to invest heavily in different techniques and classroom design. Whilst it is feasible for a trainee to undertake a half-day training course behind a computer, online lessons are less suited to

courses lasting several days. Classical education remains possible for longer interactive training courses where e-learning or online courses are a less suitable alternative. At the moment this is happening with a slimmed down format: there are no longer 18 students but a maximum of only six in a room. Financially this has had a considerable impact as the same course must be given three times to generate the same income, whilst costs have risen three-fold. Probably ‘blended learning’ will be the future: trainees initially receiving online lessons, or use e-learning, and finishing with a short period of classical lessons.



## PMT's core values

Tessa says: “In 2020 we formulated five core values that apply throughout the company and which we use as selection criteria for candidates.”

### Quality

“We ensure that staff are well prepared to commence their tasks. We agree performance indicators with our customers that they are able to monitor 24/7 on their own dashboard.”

### “Guestology”

“Walt Disney elevated this concept into a science. For us it means personal attention for and optimal facilitation of our customers. We go to great lengths for our customers and always take their wishes into account.”

### Pioneering

“We welcome every challenge and seize opportunities that others are not interested in. An example: steel barrels that may not be checked by dogs have to be screened by X-Ray machines. Conventional machines are not powerful enough to do this. Therefore, we acquired a very advanced X-Ray machine in 2020 which, with 320kV, can check these barrels.”

### Unity

“Close cooperation across our group, with our customers and partners is very important to us. We keep our promises. Our relationships are based on mutual respect and trust.”

### Pleasure in your work!

“This core value has an exclamation mark. We can only do our work if there is a good team spirit overall and everyone enjoys their work. We do everything we can to make our employees feel at home at PMT. We want to not only be the best, but also the nicest company in our line of business”, Tessa says in conclusion.

## More information

[www.pmt-aviation.com](http://www.pmt-aviation.com)