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AZUR'S VISIT TO VEXCEL IMAGING IN GRAZ : written by MICHELE STEIJL

Towards the end of October 2016, I visited Graz for two weeks for the purposes of (a) testing our newly-acquired UCX, and (b) learning how to use the equipment, as well as familiarizing myself with the variety of software and applications that support the operation of the UltraCam.

I worked closely with the Vexcel Support team and in particular Markus, Thomas, Mario and Leo. Martin and Helmut were also close by if we needed them, although Andy was away working off-site over that time.

I have, in the past, flown with a number of other Ultracam clients' crewmembers. Each of them had told me about this team of Vexcel professionals to be contacted at support@vexcel-imaging.com. I even kept their phone number listed in my mobile's contacts (+43 1 2676 0400).

On the few occasions that I was able to observe the crew troubleshooting UltraCam problems, I recall being a little in awe of all the technology, as well as feeling the frustrations that go with repeated ground-test failures. Often it would be a Saturday or Sunday and the pressure to "fix it and start flying" would be great. Once the decision to contact Vexcel Support had been made, the relief all round was palpable. Still, the troubleshooting steps would then be repeated and I'd passively watch and listen to the Vexcel Support member patiently help the crewmember identify and find a solution to their problem. Bear in mind that English is seldom either party's home language. Nevertheless, we would soon be flying again, and the gratitude to the Support team was felt for a long time afterwards. On each occasion I remember thinking to myself, "These Vexcel support people in Austria are magicians with the patience of saints".

So, when the opportunity arose for me to personally visit Vexcel in Austria, I resolved that I would like to meet and take home with me a photograph of these "technical magicians". It was a pleasant surprise to learn that these selfsame professionals would be the people assisting me in my training and tests. Needless to say, the two weeks were packed full with information and exercises and it was difficult to cover all that we had hoped to do in the time available. However, all members of the Support team worked together to ensure that I was given more than adequate exposure to, and practice in, the application of each module that we were able to address. Their knowledge was extensive and I came home with the conclusion that these people were not only technical experts, but also very successful and patient teachers.

During my fortnight in Graz, I met many other Vexcel employees and was made to feel welcome and at home by each one of them. My overwhelming impression of Vexcel Imaging GmbH is that it is a company formed by a group of highly skilled, competent and friendly professionals, which offers a far-reaching vision for the future while proudly presenting a successful past.

Thank you to you all for the training, advice and experience you afforded us.