PRESS INFORMATION

Supply, redefined: built for production, not for stock

Bristol, July 2026 – Supply has changed. In aerospace, material supply is no longer just about availability – it directly defines how stable, efficient and predictable production really is. Increasingly, manufacturers are no longer asking when material will arrive, but whether it fits seamlessly into their processes. “Customers don’t need more material – they need fewer problems,” says Mark Roberts, Global Sales Director Aerospace at BIKAR. “They need supply that fits their production – not the other way around.”

BIKAR’s answer is a different supply model: instead of delivering standard stock, the company provides production-aligned solutions – aluminium plates, extrusions and sheet products that are cut to size, pre-machined and ready for immediate use. Combined with synchronised, high-frequency deliveries and digitally integrated processes, this reduces handling, shortens lead times and significantly improves planning reliability. “We don’t just deliver material – we manage availability,” Roberts adds. “Material should arrive in a way that makes the next step easier – not more complex.”

From material supply to production-ready solutions

This approach is already being applied across multiple aerospace programmes in Europe and beyond – including GKN Aerospace in the Netherlands, Sonaca in Belgium and many other exciting projects around the world. At GKN Aerospace’s Filton site in the UK, BIKAR assumed full material supply in January 2026 for aluminium plates, sheets and heavy extrusions. From the outset, the objective was clear: align supply closely with production and ensure a stable, predictable material flow. “From the beginning, we worked very closely with GKN Aerospace to align processes, ensure transparency and prepare for a stable ramp-up,” says Lee Bridges, General Manager Bristol Operations at BIKAR. The transition was supported by dedicated project teams and structured coordination. In selected areas, BIKAR provided targeted support ahead of contract start, enabling early validation of processes under real production conditions. “As a result, we were fully prepared from day one and quickly achieved the required performance level in production,” Bridges explains.

Following the transition, BIKAR established a high-frequency supply model aligned with production requirements. Today, this includes the supply of approximately 4,000 tonnes of aluminium per year to GKN Aerospace. Materials are delivered multiple times per day, supported by defined logistics runs, pre-machined stock and coordinated inventory strategies. They are transferred directly into work-in-progress, ensuring fast and reliable availability for machining operations with minimal handling. “At this level, supply becomes part of production,” Bridges says. “Our role is to ensure a continuous material flow, so that production can run smoothly and predictably.”

Built for real production environments

Behind this is a coordinated system combining processing capabilities, inventory strategy and digital integration. BIKAR’s in-house developed ERP system NEXT enables automated order processing, EDI-based data exchange and real-time monitoring. This ensures high data accuracy, reduces administrative effort and allows rapid response to changing demand. “Visibility and control are critical,” Bridges adds. “If you understand demand in real time, you can respond before issues arise – not after.” To support increasing demand, BIKAR has expanded its aerospace operations in the UK. The Bristol site now produces more than 1,000 machined parts per week across around 300 part numbers, supported by a team of over 50 employees and multi-shift CNC operations. The team supports a wide range of aerospace and commercial customers, ensuring flexibility and resilience across programmes. Combined with additional capacity across BIKAR’s European operations, this setup provides a high level of supply security and responsiveness at all times.

“This is how we create value,” says Alexander Bikar, CEO of BIKAR AEROSPACE. “By combining local execution with broader group capabilities, we ensure reliable performance for our customers every day.”

From supplier to production partner

As aerospace programmes continue to scale globally, expectations on supply are changing. The focus is shifting from availability to stability. From delivery to integration. From supplier to production partner. BIKAR is positioning itself accordingly – with a clear objective: to make material supply a reliable, predictable part of production.

About BIKAR AEROSPACE

BIKAR AEROSPACE is the aerospace division of the BIKAR METALS Group, specialising in high-performance aluminium solutions and precision-machined components. Founded in 1962, the BIKAR Group employs around 1,200 people across its international operations in Europe and Asia. Over decades, the company has built a strong reputation in metal distribution and processing, combining deep material expertise with continuously evolving manufacturing and digital capabilities. BIKAR combines material supply, machining and digital systems into efficient, reliable processes – designed to meet the demands of high-performance industries.

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BIKAR AEROSPACE METALS plant in Bristol