Gerald Ford was Commander in Chief when the newly graduated engineer Aage Madsen joined the Saab Draken fighter aircraft team at the leading Danish defense company Per Udsen. That same year Denmark decided to go for the F-16 as the country’s next generation fighters jets, a move that has formed Mr. Madsen’s life ever since:

- In November 1975 I was send to Fort Worth for the first time to present the aerospace technology of Per Udsen to General Dynamics. In one end of the assembly line was the last F-111’s bound for Australia and in the other end of the famous one-mile factory I saw the first Fighting Falcon’s, Aage Madsen, CEO of Atlantic Services remembers.

One year later Per Udsen was awarded the first contract for stabilizers and pylons for the F-16 program and the company has ever since been the supplier of those parts to the world’s most successful fighter jet program. Aage Madsen elaborates:

- The F-16 program was cutting edge technology and in the aerospace industry being a supplier to the Fighting Falcon was the best possible reference.

Continued on next page
The program brought technology, machining and training to Per Udsen and provided access to a variety of other customers and markets in both military and civilian aerospace.

**Becoming independent**
In the early eighties Per Udsen invested heavily in composite technology and has since been the supplier of the composite skins for the horizontal stabilizer on the F-16. Aage Madsen became the CEO of Per Udsen in 1989 and kept that position until the Danish defense contractor in 1998 became a part of Terma Aerostructures:

- I stayed on the Terma team for a couple of years, but then I decided to become an independent advisor and founded Atlantic Services, Aage Madsen explains. – I started advising Danish companies in industrial cooperation and became the Point of Contact for the Danish Joint Strike Fighter team, a group of Danish companies collaborating to become a part of the F-35 program.

**Joining forces**
Aage Madsen’s goal for Atlantic Services was to become the Danish representative for US defense companies. He soon landed contracts in that business area but the big break through happened in 2004, when Lockheed Martin Aeronautics signed on Atlantic Services as their representative in Denmark. With the F-35 main contractor came also Svend Hjort and his company svendhjortAGENCIES:

- Lockheed Martin wanted Atlantic Services to join forces with me on the F-35 program, since they saw a fruitful combination of Aage’s business experience and my many years in the Air Force. Since Aage and I have known each other for almost five decades that was an easy match and we instantly began promoting the Joint Strike Fighter in Denmark.

**Focus on certification**
Since 2004 Atlantic Services has not only helped the F-35 through two Danish fighter competitions but also strived to find Danish partner companies for Lockheed Martin and the other main contractors on the fifth generation fighter. After the 2016 decision by the Danish Parliament to acquire F-35 as Denmark’s next generation jet Atlantic Services has changed its focus a little, according to Aage Madsen:

- Atlantic Services is naturally not promoting the aircraft anymore but are putting more attention to expanding industrial cooperation beyond parts and services on the F-35. One of our focus areas is AS9100 certification, since we see a need for that in the aerospace industrial base in Denmark.

Today Atlantic Services also represents other defense companies, being Raytheon, Smiths Detection and QinetiQ UK. Aage Madsen underlines that although he has been a frequent guest at Fort Worth for more than 40 years retiring is not on the table:

– F-35 will be around for generations, there is lots of opportunities for Danish companies and Atlantic Services will do all that we can to support them.

**On September 15, 1977, on Edwards AFB Major Svend Hjort became the first non-American to fly the F-16. Hjort later completed several challenging verification tests on the Fighting Falcon and has accomplished more than 1,300 flight hours on the F-16 out of more than 5,000 flight hours in 33 different military aircraft.**

Svend Hjort is decorated four times for his military service.

svendhjortAGENCIES also represents other foreign defense companies such as Cobham Aviation Services, Eclipse Aerospace and Horizon Technologies.

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