Evidence of the strength in depth in the aerospace sector in southern France can be found at Aeroscote, a design and engineering house based in Toulouse, with offices in Seattle, US. The company has developed and stress-tested structural parts of some of the major aircraft programmes, including the Airbus A380 and Boeing 787.

The company’s clients include Aeronautica Milanese – for whom it designed the fuselage section 41 and auxiliary box on the Boeing 787, as well as the section 51 forward lower unit for the Airbus A380 and the upper deck cargo door on its freighter version. It was behind the wing box on the Alpha Aeronautica 1800 jet trainer and is developing the doors for the yet-to-be-launched Piaggio P180 jet.

It has 40 engineers in Toulouse, currently working on elements of the Airbus A350 for EADS, Boeing and Liebherr – the only Italian company, it says, to be contracted on the B787 programme. A German design centre will open next year, and Aeroscote is seriously considering a move into direct to the opportunities with Boeing.

Aeroscote’s work on the 787 has seen Ferrari turn its involvement in composites. With backing from the Campania region, it is investing $50 million ($96 million) in a new centre near Naples to produce composite structures. Particulars doors. It will open in 2012 and will mark the company’s first venture into actual manufacturing.