

The international guide to business airports, FBOs and ground support partners

Business Airport

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

January 2019

Discover new partners, routes and destinations

SINGLE PILOT OPERATIONS

Can advanced technologies improve the safety of solo flights?

In this issue

Young achiever

BAI talks to Dreams Soar's Shaesta Waiz – one of the NBAA's Top 40 Under 40

Revenue generation

Do empty legs represent an opportunity for growth or a recipe for disaster?

Location focus: Australia and New Zealand | Interview: Luxaviation Helicopters
City guide: Seoul | Event preview: Schedulers & Dispatchers 2019

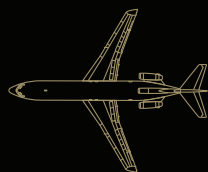
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THE JET CENTRE BY I.A.M

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Welcome

Back in 2012 I received a letter from the university I graduated from asking if I could share my career story in its newsletter. The theme of the issue was to be "inspiring the next generation of students". I remember thinking at the time that it was odd asking me to contribute. After leaving university I had several short-term jobs until I finally settled at UKi Media & Events, where I forged my career as a journalist. Although I am extremely proud of my achievements, I didn't think my career path was much to shout about.

I agreed to take part in the newsletter and it made me realize that inspiring the younger generation isn't about telling them how to make their millions or how to become the next president of the USA. It is about encouraging them to believe in themselves; to do and become whatever they want. From a young age I wanted to write, and thanks to strong mentors throughout my education and early career I was able to achieve this.

In the business aviation sector, one individual that has dedicated much of her career to inspiring the next generation is Shaesta Waiz, founder of Dreams Soar. Waiz set up Dreams Soar just over two years ago, with a focus on inspiring students to consider a career in STEM and aviation (to read more about her story, see *Living the Dream* on page 18). One of Waiz's key aims is to encourage more women to enter the business aviation sector.

"The number of women entering the business aviation sector has grown significantly over the past five years," she says. "However, there still need to be more women in executive positions and in the pilot seat. A lot of efforts are being made to change this, but I believe these efforts need to be doubled."

Waiz's story is certainly inspirational. In 2017, for example, she became the youngest woman to fly solo around the world in a single-engine aircraft. Her solo flight also highlights another key topic covered in this issue – single pilot operations. In *Go It Alone* (page 40), Gary Reeves, airline transport pilot and master flight, instrument and multi-engine instructor at PilotSafety.org, says that single pilot operations are on the rise as a result of the pilot shortage, but he emphasizes that the correct training is essential to keep these flights safe. "Training is the silver bullet," he says. "The pilots who do more than the minimum, who seek out events like NBAA and Oshkosh and who invest in more training, are safer pilots because of their mindset."

Finally I would like to mention that 2019 represents 10 years of publishing *Business Airport International*. The magazine has gone from being an annual to a quarterly publication, supported by a daily news website. We plan to continue covering all the latest news from the business aviation sector, so make sure you keep us up to date on all your developments!

Helen Norman, editor

"The number of women entering the business aviation sector has grown significantly over the past five years"

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JET AVIATION TO EXPAND AND RENOVATE FBOs ACROSS THE USA



“We’re investing in our customers to ensure our FBOs have the capabilities to deliver the best service”

David Paddock, senior vice president and general manager, regional operations USA, Jet Aviation

Renovation work is underway at Jet Aviation FBOs in the USA as the company begins its wide-scale upgrade projects taking place across the country. Expansion and revamp work has started at FBOs in Van Nuys, California; Teterboro, New Jersey; Dallas, Texas; and West Palm Beach, Florida.

The biggest project is taking place at Van Nuys, where Jet Aviation is completely replacing the FBO and hangars. The new FBO will include 10,000ft² (930m²) of space for customer services and the new hangar will span 42,250ft² (3,930m²). There will also be an additional 10,000ft² (930m²) for offices.

An adjacent hangar for Gulfstream operations will be 40,000ft² (3,720m²), plus offices measuring up at 20,000ft² (1,860m²). A new fuel farm already in operation will more than double in size with the addition of two more 30,000 gallon (136,000 liter) tanks and a 12,000 gallon (55,000 liter) tank.

Upon completion – which is projected for summer 2019 – the new Van Nuys complex will span over 122,250ft² (11,360m²).

Elsewhere, a 40,000ft² (3,720m²) hangar is being constructed at Jet Aviation’s Teterboro FBO, which is set to include tenant offices. The hangar has been designed to accommodate large aircraft and will provide additional ramp space for customers.

Above and right: **The new complex in Van Nuys will feature an expanded fuel farm and new hangar**



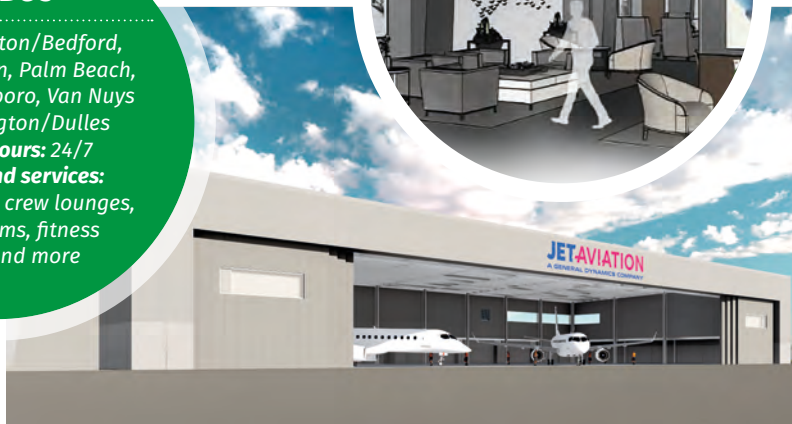
Right and below:
The Teterboro
revamp will feature
a new hangar to
accommodate
large aircraft

US FBOs

Location: Boston/Bedford, Dallas, Houston, Palm Beach, St Louis, Teterboro, Van Nuys and Washington/Dulles

Opening hours: 24/7

Facilities and services: Passenger and crew lounges, snooze rooms, fitness spaces, and more



While the hangar is under construction, the adjacent FBO will be renovated in time to open by early summer 2019.

In Dallas, the first floor of the FBO will be completely rebuilt to Jet Aviation's current design and finish standards. The customer service desk and surrounding area will also be expanded to provide additional lounge and seating space for passengers. That will also improve access to restrooms.

At West Palm Beach, the company is partnering with sister company Gulfstream on hangar expansion to support its increasing MRO operations. As Gulfstream expands these operations, Jet Aviation will construct a 40,000ft² (3,720m²) hangar featuring 30ft-high (9m) doors and 5,000ft² (465m²) of tenant office space.

David Paddock, Jet Aviation's senior vice president and general manager, regional operations USA, said, "We like to say we're investing in our customers by ensuring our FBOs have the space, fixtures and capabilities to deliver the very best service to owners, passengers and flight crews – and their aircraft – no matter where their business or leisure flights take them. Our current expansions and renovations are designed to do exactly that.

"Our customers will find the most complete, convenient and comfortable facilities and services at all of our locations as we continuously improve and upgrade our FBOs and hangars. There will be minor and temporary impacts to customers during construction, such as the use of temporary buildings in Van Nuys. But those impacts will be minimal and we will work to keep them as brief as possible."

Jet Aviation is continuing to add to its US FBO offering, with the latest locations including Washington Dulles, Burbank and San Juan. The company also recently completed the refurbishment of its new Boston/Bedford FBO and added a new Duncan Aviation satellite avionics shop in the on-site hangar. ○

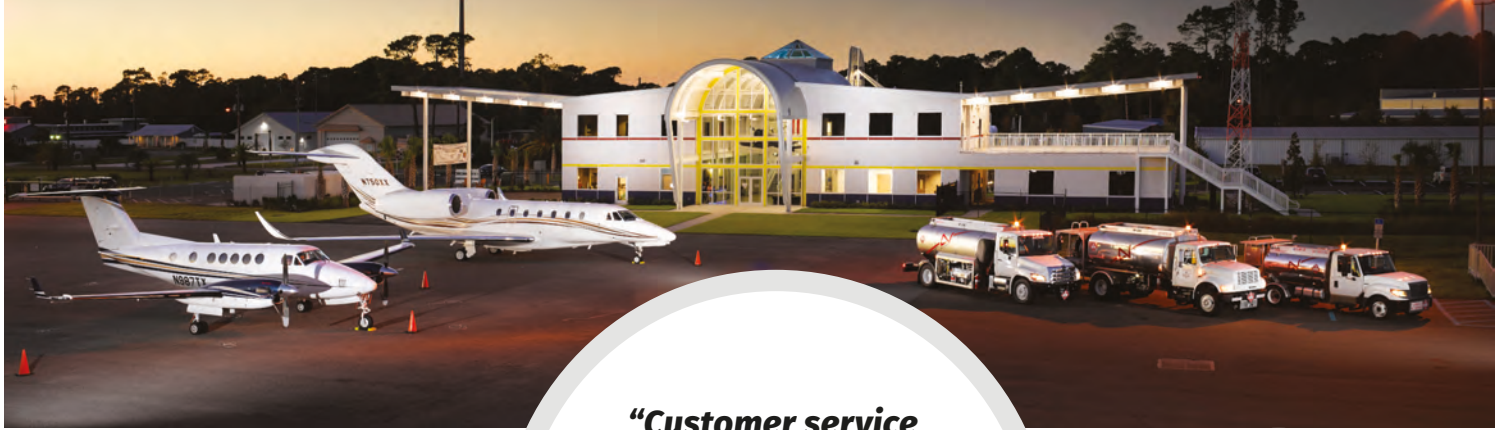


Above and left:
Jet Aviation's
Dallas and Palm
Beach locations
are also being
refurbished

Swiss delight

Jet Aviation has extended its expansion projects to Europe with the opening of a new wide-body hangar in Basel. Named Hangar 3, the new state-of-the-art 93,650ft² (8,700m²) structure provides increased capacity for wide- and narrow-body maintenance, completion and refurbishment projects across the site. It can accommodate up to two wide-body aircraft simultaneously. In addition to a 53,820ft² (5,000m²) tarmac extension, Hangar 3 also features a further 21,530ft² (2,000m²) of space for shops and offices.

BENT WING FLIGHT SERVICES OPENS FOR BUSINESS AT FERNANDINA BEACH AIRPORT'S NEW US\$4.8M GENERAL AVIATION TERMINAL



“Customer service representatives work from a custom-designed reception desk created from the fuselage and wing flap of a 1943 T-6 aircraft”

Key features

Location: Florida, USA
FBO opening hours: Every day from 7:00am to 7:00pm. After-hours service upon request
Runway lengths: 4/22 – 5,300ft (1,615m); 13/31 – 5,150ft (1,570m); 8/26 – 5,000ft (1,525m)

Bent Wing Flight Services has started operations out of its new permanent home at Florida’s Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport’s new US\$4.8m general aviation terminal building.

The new terminal was designed to represent the F4U Corsair aircraft in honor of the World War II pilots who flew the Bent Wing Bird airplane from the US Navy’s Outlying Forward Field, which became Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport in 1946.

The new building features a nose section, skylight cockpit and tail, and distinctive inverted gull wings from which the Bent Wing Bird earned its nickname. A museum-quality, half-scale replica of the F4U Corsair is suspended from the terminal’s skylight.

Aside from the historically themed aesthetics, the new terminal features a fully equipped flight planning room, pilot lounge, zero-gravity massage chair, reclining seating and an 80in-screen television. There

The history

Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport was developed as a training facility by the US Navy during World War II, serving as Outlying Field Fernandina Beach to the Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville complex. The airport was transferred to the City of Fernandina Beach in 1946 and is designated as a general aviation reliever airport for Jacksonville International Airport. It is still occasionally used as a practice airfield by US Navy helicopters from NAS Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport, the US Coast Guard, and Florida Army National Guard helicopters from Cecil Field.



The terminal was designed in honor of WWII pilots

are also two executive conference rooms on-site that can accommodate up to 15 people, while the adjacent large meeting room provides seating for 55 people.

The kitchen and breakroom area provides customers with a comfortable dining space in addition to after-meal entertainment with a Tomcat F-14 themed pinball machine and an arcade Pac-Man games table. The boutique shop provides pilot supplies, aviation-themed clothing and accessories, and unique gifts created by local artists.

Kathryn Echard, co-owner of Bent Wing Flight Services, said, “Customer service representatives work from a custom-designed reception desk created from the fuselage and wing flap of a 1943 T-6 aircraft. The large desk even features LED-lighted strips of Marston Mat, the perforated steel planking used to create temporary landing strips during World War II.

“Bent Wing Flight Services recognizes the importance of its role in welcoming visitors to the beautiful destination of Amelia Island. The airport is ideally located in the center of the island, approximately two miles from Ritz Carlton Amelia Island, five miles from the Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort, and four miles to the idyllic Victorian downtown of Fernandina Beach.” ○



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WORLDWIDE GENERAL AVIATION ASSOCIATIONS UNVEIL RECOMMENDED BEST **BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR FBOs**



Six major aviation associations have released the Know Before You Go list of best business practices for FBOs to follow. The document details a series of communications best practices such as publishing an online list of potential prices, fees and other charges that pilots may expect when landing at an airport.

While retail fuel prices are readily available to aircraft operators online, it is currently not common practice for FBOs to publish other prices and fees. However, by making this information available online, FBOs can improve customer service by increasing cost transparency for business aviation users.

The associations linked to the Know Before You Go release are NBAA, AOPA, EAA, GAMA, Helicopter Association International and NATA. These organizations collectively represent individuals and businesses comprising the vast majority of the general aviation community.

The joint release calls on FBOs to “move expeditiously to implement these practices”, but recognizes that certain providers may need time to implement them. The recommended best practices are detailed here. ○

Above: It is hoped that publishing details such as fuel costs online will reassure FBO users

Right: Communication between FBOs and customers prior to visiting is encouraged

FBOs will make current applicable retail charges and fees, and details on what they are for, accessible to aircraft operators online in a user-friendly way and with sufficient clarity. This is so that a pilot operating a general aviation or corporate-configured aircraft type in routine personal or business use can make an informed decision. This online information should eliminate any misunderstanding or miscommunication on fees and charges related to the products or services that FBOs provide.

FBOs should provide all general aviation and corporate-configured aircraft types in routine personal or business use with a description of available services and a listing of current applicable retail fuel prices, fees and charges. This includes FBO fees and charges for services, pre-planned special events, infrastructure, facilities, ramp, parking, handling and security, as well as airport pass-through fees.

FBOs should quickly implement these recommended practices. Some FBOs may require greater flexibility and – depending on their individual circumstances – may need more time to develop online display capabilities or develop appropriate alternatives.

FBOs will invite and encourage customers to contact them prior to visiting, so that customers can ask questions, know and evaluate their options, and make informed decisions.



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**HONEYWELL'S ANNUAL BUSINESS AVIATION OUTLOOK
PREDICTS US\$251BN WORTH OF AIRCRAFT DELIVERIES IN
THE NEXT 10 YEARS**

Honeywell has released its 27th annual Global Business Aviation Outlook, which predicts strong growth for the business aviation industry in the short to medium term, supported by several new airplane models coming to market and an improved used aircraft environment. *Business Airport International* highlights some of the key findings of the report. ○

7,700
new business jet
deliveries worth
US\$251bn (£195bn)
from 2019 to 2028

Operators plan
to make new jet
purchases equivalent
to 20% of their fleet
over the next five
years

45%
of purchases
in Europe
scheduled for
2022 and beyond

14%
of new business jet
purchases expected by
end of 2019, 16% by 2020
and 24% by 2021

3-4%
average annual
growth rate
expected 2019
to 2028

14%
of respondents in
Middle East and Asia
will replace or add to
their fleet with new
jets over the forecast
period (2019 to 2028)

24%
of purchases in
Latin America
planned between
2018 and 2020

Larger cabin aircraft
(super midsize to
ultra-long range) account
for 87% of business jet
purchases in next
five years

61%
of global demand
from North
American operators
in next five years

13%
improvement on
overall used aircraft
inventory levels in
2018 compared
with 2017





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Adam Twidell, CEO and founder of PrivateFly

When PrivateFly launched in 2008, the on-demand charter broker industry was a very different place to today. While there were pockets of best practice and some strong business models, the role was viewed with little understanding.

Technology has changed all that, and the value and awareness of the broker is greater – and more global – than ever before. But with that greater awareness comes greater responsibility.

A good charter broker is not a salesperson in a sharp suit, but a valuable and well-informed ally to both customer and operator, helping them to navigate a myriad of fragmented options and to market themselves more efficiently.

Given that position of trust, we need to aim higher if our role is to continue to grow.

International standards have been applied to other subsectors of business aviation such as the IS-BAH for FBOs and IS-BAO for operators, so why not the charter broker?

The good news is it's already happening. Industry bodies including NBAA, EBAA and BACA are pushing charter broker standards closer to the top of their agendas. Argus's and Wyvern's broker certification programs have brought a welcome extra level of scrutiny.

Of course, there are regional and national distinctions to take into account, and at PrivateFly we are well aware of the need to have localized strategies in each international market. But that's no reason not to strive to define underlying best practice standards that can apply globally.

Charter

Is it time the charter broker industry introduced an international standard?
Two industry experts have their say.

"The customer is already protected thanks to extensive safety management and a regulatory framework"

Oliver King, CEO at Avinode Group

Right: Avinode is a marketplace to buy and sell air charter



"There is no reason not to strive to define best practice standards"

Adam Twidell, CEO and founder of PrivateFly



Left: PrivateFly is a global private jet charter broker company based in the UK

broken?

Oliver King, CEO at Avinode Group

Registries play a valid role in industry regulation where there is a high risk to consumers or serious consequences from market failure. Business aviation is not characterized by either of these factors, so I believe the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) was right not to establish a registry of air charter brokers.

The air charter broker market is highly competitive. Over the past decade, new players have flooded the market, competing to take a share. Thanks to the internet, customers have greater access to reviews of these companies than ever before.

This competition means that poor service or contractual failure will quickly become known to other customers and operators. As a result, market forces will lead to sanctions against a business more quickly than any registry could enforce.

Additionally, there is no requirement for a registration authority to adjudicate on issues

– we have the courts for this. A clear contractual relationship exists between customer and broker. Where disputes arise regarding the delivery of service, all parties have access to an effective court system to resolve the relevant conflicts and seek redress.

There is sometimes an incorrect correlation made between broker registration and industry safety. In actuality, the safety of the customer is already protected thanks to extensive safety management and a regulatory framework governing the activities of Part 135 operators across the world.

In the majority, charter customers are wealthy individuals, corporations and government bodies, all of whom can conduct due diligence before purchase and take legal action if problems arise. The USDOT (Part 295 Air Charter Brokers) added additional requirements for brokers to follow, and it is for the courts to enforce them. There is no need for a registry. ○



“The use of business aircraft provides an enormous benefit for companies and communities alike”

David Krane



Harris Insights & Analytics' senior consultant discusses the current health and value of business aviation across the globe

Business aviation is a vital industry, both across the USA and around the globe. It is also an industry that has contended with lingering after-effects from the global economic recession of a decade ago. However, a recent study adds to the growing body of evidence showing that business aviation remains as important as ever to companies and communities.

In October, the NBAA held its annual Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE.) Approximately 25,000 attendees from across the diverse spectrum of business aviation – including pilots, schedulers, service providers and manufacturers – came to Orlando, Florida, to learn about the latest products and services, and to network with peers about developments across the industry.

Throughout the packed exhibit hall, aircraft displays and education sessions, there was the palpable sense that this is one of the best environments for business aviation in decades. Flight hours are up around the globe, the size of the used aircraft fleet is down, prices are rebounding, and new aircraft models are being introduced. These are all signs of optimism that business aviation has regained its footing, and that – looking to the future – the role of business aviation will remain as important as ever.

Companies of all sizes utilize business aviation for the safety, security and flexibility it provides, enabling them to better compete in the highly competitive global marketplace. For communities – many of which are not served by commercial airlines – the industry provides critical lift for such important

services as law enforcement, medevac and other community support operations. These important findings were underscored in a recent online survey conducted by The Harris Poll, which offers a data-driven look at the critical role of business aviation in the USA.

This survey was conducted on behalf of the No Plane No Gain advocacy campaign co-sponsored by NBAA and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. Since 2009, No Plane No Gain has utilized studies, data and real-world examples of the business aviation's value to the nation's economy and transportation system.

For this study, named *The Real World of Business Aviation: 2018 Survey of Companies Using General Aviation Aircraft*, The Harris Poll surveyed 202 business aircraft pilots and 276 passengers. The results confirmed that business aviation offers productive, beneficial and efficient transportation to companies both large and small, particularly those located in smaller communities with little to no commercial airline service.

For example, the study found that – on average – passengers say their companies utilize business aircraft primarily for the scheduling flexibility they provide. Business aviation missions often involve multiple destinations, with 52% of passengers stating that traveling on business aircraft enables them to keep business schedules that could not be met efficiently using the scheduled airlines.

Passengers also told us they're more effective and productive while on board business aircraft, spending an average

of 63% of their time on board business aircraft engaged in work, compared with 42% when traveling on airlines.

Most users of business aviation are small companies employing 500 or fewer workers, while 62% of pilots stated their companies utilize a single, turbine-powered aircraft. These aircraft are largely flown to towns with little or no airline service, with pilots reporting that, on average, 32% of their flights over the past year were to destinations lacking any scheduled airline service.

These aircraft also provide important emergency relief in times of crisis, with 38% of pilots surveyed having flown business aircraft on humanitarian missions over the past year, averaging three such missions annually.

These examples highlight the real face of business aviation – the airplanes they use, the airports they fly into, the passengers on board, and the destinations they visit on a given trip – and how the use of business aircraft provides an enormous benefit to companies and communities alike. ○

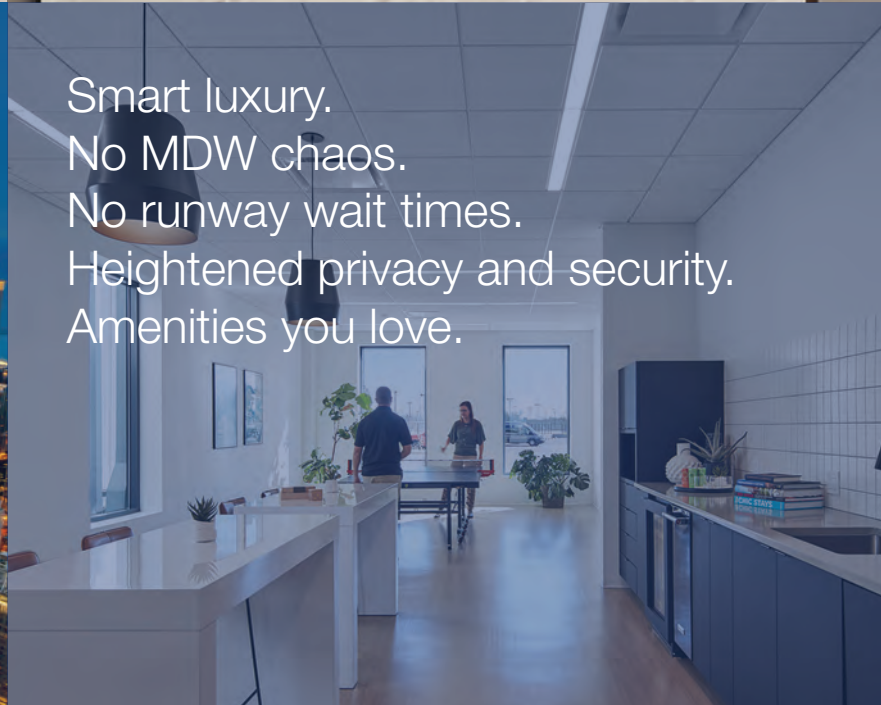
Below: Private jet users appreciate the flexibility business aviation provides



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No runway wait times.
Heightened privacy and security.
Amenities you love.



city **focus**

Seoul

Your guide to flying to
South Korea's capital

Words | Kirstie Pickering

Main airports in Seoul

Gimpo International Airport

Operating hours: 6:00am-11:00pm

Facilities: Ground handling by Universal Aviation, 77 parking stands, hangars, VIP lounge, crew lounge, customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) control, and private meeting rooms.

FBOs: Korean Business Air Service, Asia Air Jet, Jetex, UBjet Aviation, and more.

Runway length: 14R/32L – 3,200m (10,500ft);
14L/32R – 3,600m (11,800ft)

Distance from Seoul: 10 miles (16km)

Incheon International Airport

Operating hours: 24/7

Facilities: Full ground-handling services, passenger and crew lounges, restaurants, and aircraft parking for up to 72 hours. Airport slot bookings and parking permits are mandatory.

FBOs: Jetex, ANC International and Flightrans Jet. Maintenance provided by Korean Air Maintenance & Engineering.

Runway length: 15R/33L – 3,750m (12,300ft);
15L/33R – 3,750m (12,300ft);
16/34 – 4,000m (13,100ft)

Distance from Seoul: 30 miles (48km)



Seoul Gimpo Business Aviation Center opened in 2016 as the nation's first dedicated business aviation services facility. The offering features an executive terminal and 12,490m² (134,500ft²) of hangar space that can accommodate up to eight G550 or Global 6000 simultaneously.

The terminal and 5,721m² (61,580ft²) of the hangar space are directly managed by KAC, and the remaining maintenance hangar area, spanning 6,769m² (72,900ft²), is managed by Avjet Asia.

Incheon International Airport



Incheon is the largest airport in South Korea and the fifth busiest in the world. The airport was rated the best in the world by Airports Council International for 11 consecutive years from 2006 to 2016.



Seoul

Gimpo International Airport



City perks

Seoul is famed for its skyscrapers, temples and love of futuristic technology. The city is South Korea's largest and most densely populated metropolis. Here are some of the most popular sights to see in Seoul:

Bukchon Hanok Village

Translating as 'north village', Bukchon is home to Seoul's largest concentration of traditional Korean homes, some 900 of them. Get lost in the atmospheric streets and enjoy an authentic Korean experience.

Changdeokkung

One of Seoul's five main palaces, Changdeokkung is a World Heritage site. The palace was built in 1405 and was the primary royal residence until 1872. English tours run twice a day.

Gwangjang market

This is Seoul's busiest food market, with over 200 stalls. Authentic Korean delicacies are on the menu here, including dumplings, pig's trotters and makgeolli – milky rice wine.



Korean potential

Anthony Boocock is flight support manager at Avjet Asia, the home of South Korea's first and only FBO. He believes the business aviation sector in the country is strong, with the future looking promising.

"Business aviation has experienced solid growth over the past couple of years in South Korea, with an increasing number of private jets arriving in the country," he comments. "The vast majority of the aircraft are either long range or super large jets, with about two thirds being business travelers and the other third coming for tourism purposes, typically

from Asia. Seoul is the hub for business aircraft traffic," Boocock adds.

"Gimpo Airport offers quick access into the city and has the country's only VIP terminal, allowing passengers to move from airside to landside within 15 hassle-free minutes. According to the Korea Airports Corporation (KAC), business flights at Gimpo Airport are predicted to rise to 2,150 in 2030 from 1,150 in 2016. This is up from just 180 in 2005.

"While most of the traffic has been from international arrivals, we forecast that there could be a domino-type demand for charter

flights from within Korea, as well as a need for aircraft management services.

"Avjet Asia operates Korea's only full-service FBO and has the largest and most experienced staff on hand 24/7, ready to support flights at any of the 15 airports throughout the country. Our hangar is capable of holding six G550s and we have business jet-dedicated GSE. Avjet Asia is based at the Seoul Gimpo Business Aviation Centre (SGBAC) and has been at the heart of the growth of business aviation since its founding in 2008." ○



Living the dream

In October 2018, Shaesta Waiz, founder and president of Dreams Soar, Inc., was revealed as one of the NBAA's 2018 Business Aviation Top 40 Under 40, which recognizes young business aviation professionals for their career accomplishments and dedication to the industry. Waiz's story to date is an impressive one.

Born in a refugee camp in Afghanistan in 1987 in the middle of the Soviet-Afghan War, as a young girl Waiz fled the country with her family as refugees to the USA. She went on to become the first certified female civilian pilot from Afghanistan and in 2017 became the youngest woman to fly solo around the world in a single-engine aircraft, which she did with support from the business aviation community. Through Dreams Soar, a non-profit organization she founded in 2014, Waiz is now using her experience and life lessons to inspire young people to pursue a career in STEM and aviation.

Waiz admits that during her younger years in the USA she was terrified of airplanes: "Part of the reason for this was that my family came to the USA as refugees during war – a war that included air strikes," she explains. "I didn't know anyone involved in the aviation industry. The only time I heard about airplanes or pilots was on the news when there was an accident. Back then, I believed aviation to be very scary and dangerous."

Shaesta Waiz, founder of Dreams Soar, shares her story as she is recognized by the NBAA's Top 40 Under 40 as one of the most inspiring young professionals in the business aviation industry

Words | **Helen Norman**



Ashley Buckley, Indie Atlantic Films

Career highlight

Shaesta Waiz highlights one event that proved both challenging and rewarding during her solo flight around the world

"During my trip I attempted to cross the North Atlantic Ocean from Canada to the Azores, a series of islands off the coast of Portugal," she explains. "About 300 miles across the ocean, one of my radio antennas sheared off, slammed into the airplane, and was just dangling off the aircraft. It was a very dangerous situation because this antenna was long enough to wrap around my control surfaces or it could have interfered with the propeller and jammed it, which would've caused me to do a crash landing into the ocean. I turned the airplane around and landed on an island called Saint Pierre and Miquelon off the east coast of Canada. I was able to take the antenna off and I had to then fly to another airport to get it fixed."

"During the second attempt to cross the North Atlantic, I looked out of the window and realized there was nobody else flying. This is a route that airliners typically do not fly. I looked out for any sign of life like a bird or a boat, but it was just me and the ocean, 5,000ft above the water."

"As I was writing my fuel calculations, it hit me that in the history of aviation, there had only been seven women who had crossed that ocean by themselves in a single-engine aircraft. I would have never guessed that a girl from Afghanistan who left her country as a refugee would be the eighth woman to fly across that ocean. It was a moment of history for me, and a celebration that aviation, especially for women, is changing. It was about challenging myself and doing things that other people don't do, so that one day it becomes the norm and it is more accepted."



Dreams Soar, Inc

Above: Shaesta Waiz showcased the Dreams Soar initiative at NBAA 2016 in Orlando, Florida

Left: Waiz's Beechcraft Bonanza

Below: Waiz receiving the National Air and Space Museum 2018 trophy



Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

"During this time, I also struggled in education. My parents came to the USA with the idea that they were going back to Afghanistan once the war ended," Waiz continues. "Because of this we didn't really immerse ourselves in the American culture. We couldn't speak English in the house, it was always Dari and Pashto – two languages spoken in Afghanistan. We also had to dress conservatively. Throughout the years, my parents realized that the war wasn't ending any time soon, so they allowed my five sisters and me to embrace the American culture. The problem was that English was my third language, so it was difficult for me to feel a connection with education."

First flight

Waiz had settled on the fact that her future lay in her home town of Richmond, California, where she was expected to get married at a young age and start a big family. This all changed when, aged 17, she took a flight from California to Florida just after she graduated high school. "I was terrified," Waiz comments. "I just remember finding my seat on the airplane, buckling up and preparing for the worst. However, as the aircraft gently lifted off the runway and made its way into the sky I started to feel curious and excited. I wanted to know how the plane was flying, how was this piece of metal carrying all of these passengers, and how are the pilots navigating the skies."

"My aunt picked me up from the airport in Florida and asked me what I wanted to do during my visit. I told her I wanted to stay at the airport and learn how to fly. From that moment on, my interest in aviation grew," she adds.

Waiz went on to get bachelor's and master's degrees at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Florida. She completed her flight training to become the first certified female civilian pilot from Afghanistan. "During my training,



Dreams Soar, Inc

Above: **Waiz meeting children in Dubai as part of her solo global flights**

Below: **Waiz traveled to Montreal-Trudeau Airport in March 2016 to give a special presentation on her work to the ICAO Council**

I wanted to find a woman who had a similar background to me and was successful in aviation," says Waiz. "I was looking for inspiration. I reached out to the Afghan government and shared with them the fact that I was going through flight training and I was looking for a mentor. I asked for a list of female pilots from the country. After a couple of months, they wrote back and said the government had no history of there ever being a certified civilian female pilot. They said because I was born in Afghanistan and I had to leave because of the war, if I got my license they would recognize me as the first female civilian pilot of Afghanistan. That's all I needed to hear – I knew there needed to be a role model for Afghan women in aviation."

Solo journey

Waiz wasn't interested in flying commercial airliners and at first she wasn't really interested in business aviation. "I wanted to use my experience to talk to younger generations about their dreams and inspire them to go after careers in STEM and aviation," she explains. "That job description didn't exist, so I created it and set up Dreams Soar."

Dreams Soar is all about education and connecting with young people to inspire them to achieve their goals. This is achieved in many ways and Waiz plays a leading role, including undertaking 33 speaking engagements in the past year since the conclusion of her solo flight around the world

"I wanted to use my experience to talk to younger generations about their dreams and inspire them to go after careers in STEM and aviation"



Dreams Soar, Inc



skylink



Skylink Services Ltd is well-established and well known for the provision of ground handling services for Executive and Military Aircraft in Cyprus. It began operations in 1998, filling the gap in the Executive Aircraft ground handling market at both Larnaca and Pafos International Airports of Cyprus.

Over the last decade the company has grown significantly in size and reputation. Skylink Services owns and operates the only FBO facility at Larnaca Airport offering around-the-clock professional VIP aircraft and passenger handling services. Currently representing over 400 companies that own or operate executive aircraft worldwide, the company caters to aircraft ranging from very light jets to larger aircraft such as Boeing 747 and Airbus 340 and we are the preferred choice for most VIPs, celebrities and business persons travelling to or from Cyprus.

Skylink Services also manages and operates the Heads of State Lounge facility at Larnaca International Airport. This Lounge is used by all Heads of State visiting the Republic of Cyprus as well as a host of other visiting dignitaries. Optimum and problem-free operation is evidently crucial as over the past few years the General Aviation

Terminal was used by Pope Benedict XVI, on 6th June 2010, when he completed a historic official visit to Cyprus. In addition, the Terminal was used for the Heads of State during the second half of 2012 when the Republic of Cyprus was hosting the EU Rotating Presidency. Numerous Presidents and dignitaries have also used the terminal on official visits to Cyprus i.e Vice President of the United States Joe Biden, Former President's of the United States Jimmy Carter & Bill Clinton, President of Russia Mr . Medvedev, former EU commissioner Barroso and current EU commissioner Junker, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and many others.

Skylink Services Ltd, with its experienced personnel, discretion, high calibre of professionalism and its desire to strive for excellence, is the preferred ground handling provider in Cyprus.



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The future of business aviation

The NBAA's Top 40 Under 40 was revealed at the NBAA-BACE event in Orlando, Florida, in October 2018. The list included pilots, technicians, CEOs and marketing specialists, and acknowledged 40 young professionals shaping the future of business aviation. *Business Airport International* spoke to a few of the professionals featured in 2018's list...

Who: Adam Beckman

Position: Lecturer and director, Center for Aviation Studies, Ohio State University

Favorite aircraft: Douglas DC-3



Beckman began his business aviation career working for a small aircraft accident investigation company in Columbus, Ohio. "It was a great experience and taught me about the industry and the legal world," he says. Beckman went on to work for a fractional aviation company, and was asked to teach some aviation classes at local universities. "That blossomed into a full-time position at Ohio State University," he adds.

Beckman believes the biggest challenge facing the sector at the moment is the shortage of qualified individuals. "The sector needs to attract, mentor and maintain younger candidates to lead the industry into the future," he says. "In terms of future trends, VTOL aircraft and single-pilot operations will grow. These will change the industry and hopefully make it more accessible to all."

Who: William R Bohlke

Position: President and CEO, Bohlke International Airways

Favorite aircraft: Mitsubishi MU-2



When Bohlke took over Bohlke International Airways (BIA) as president and CEO two years ago, he gained nearly six decades of experience from his retiring parents.

"My grandfather started BIA in 1959 and then passed the business on to my parents," he says. "Flying and refueling airplanes were just part of growing up for me. I obtained my pilot's license at the age of 17 and joined the US Air Force in 2003, before joining the family business."

Some of Bohlke's fondest memories from his career are helping with medical evacuations and organ donor flights. "For example, we were able to evacuate families from Tortola in the Caribbean after Hurricane Irma," he explains. "Passengers were in tears of gratitude because we were able to get them out of desolate conditions."

Hurricanes have also left a lasting impact on BIA's FBO in St Croix. "We are currently rebuilding the facility we lost to Hurricane Maria and we are placing a great emphasis on modernization," he explains.

Bohlke believes that unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) will shape the future of the business aviation sector. "Therefore, BIA has proactively invested in a UAS department and several drone platforms to expand into this sector," he explains. "We are also watching the succession of vertical and/or short take-off and landing [VTOL] aircraft. In our Caribbean region, VTOL will be a tremendous opportunity to increase inter-island travel."

Continued on page 24



Dreams Soar, Inc.

"I visited 22 countries across five continents, traveling close to 25,000 nautical miles. We hosted 32 outreach events, connecting with more than 3,000 children from around the world"

in 2017. "Dreams Soar uses business and private aviation as a vehicle to go out and connect with people," Waiz says. "We're an all-volunteer team that is made up of seasoned professionals from the aviation industry who can advise Dreams Soar when needed."

Her interest in the business aviation sector grew when she began planning her global solo flight around the world, which was undertaken as part of Dreams Soar. "Between May 13 and October 4, 2017, I flew around the world in a single-engine Beechcraft Bonanza," she explains. "The entire trip took 145 days and the purpose was to meet and inspire the next generation of STEM and aviation professionals. I visited 22 countries across five continents, traveling close to 25,000 nautical miles. We hosted 32 outreach events, connecting with more than 3,000 children from around the world."

"As you can imagine, this trip was very expensive," she continues. "This is where the business aviation industry really stepped in. It helped provide funding, fuel, services – anything to help make this mission successful and get me flying around the world."

One example of how Waiz received support from the business aviation community was when she was in India and experienced fueling problems. "My aircraft isn't that commonly used around the world, so finding maintenance and fuel was a challenge," she explains. "When I got closer to India, I noticed that the fuel I needed came in large barrels and you had to hand-pump every gallon into the fuel tanks of the aircraft. Hand pumping is a tedious process and I was flying right in the middle of summer. The FBO crew on the ground were out there in the heat sweating with me and taking it in turns to pump the fuel, going above and beyond what they typically do."

Above: Waiz speaking to children in Montreal, Canada on May 15, 2017, on the third leg of her around-the-world solo flight



Dreams Soar, Inc

Other FBOs, such as Signature Flight Support, Sheltair, Atlantic Aviation and Cutter Aviation, donated fuel to Waiz's mission. "When I went to Signature, they went out of their way to help me," she continues. "They offered me a car for free to go and drive around the city I was visiting. Furthermore, Air Culinaire provided meals for every one of my international stops where catering was available. The whole business aviation industry came together to help me. These are competitors who put competition aside to help in any way they could to get me around the world."

Returning home

One of the key stops on Waiz's mission was Afghanistan. "I wasn't sure how I was going to be received, because sometimes refugees are viewed as people who escaped the hardship," she explains.

Waiz was greeted at Kabul International Airport by her father, who currently works in the Afghanistan government. "As I came out of customs I noticed there was a large crowd of around 300 people outside the airport. I asked my dad what was going on and he said, 'They are all here to see you!' As I went out into the street there were people playing music and dancing and the media was there asking me questions about the trip.

"During my short trip to Afghanistan, I got to connect with 300 children from Kabul. I spoke to them about the importance of education and I hope, as a young woman from Afghanistan, I inspired them to go out and achieve their goals. I also got to meet the prime minister and first lady of Afghanistan. It was an extremely memorable experience for me."

Since the completion of the global flight, Dreams Soar has partnered with an additional 29 organizations to continue its outreach efforts. "We've met another 8,000 children face to face," Waiz comments. "I plan to continue speaking to children to tell them that the world, the aviation industry and STEM needs them and they cannot let their current set of circumstances define who they are. I just hope that my story is an example for them to dream bigger and go after these exciting careers and not allow anything to hold them back." ○



Dreams Soar, Inc

Above: **Waiz honored Jerrie Mock**, the first woman to fly solo around the world, by making Mock's hometown of Columbus, Ohio, the first stop on her global journey

Below: **Waiz in Athens** on the eighth stop on her around-the-world flight

The future of business aviation

Continued from page 23

Who: Jessica Rowden
Position: General manager, Cutter Aviation
Favorite aircraft: The Pitts Special series



Rowden entered the business aviation industry in 2002 as a customer service representative at Jackson Hole Aviation, an FBO located at Jackson Hole Airport in Wyoming, USA. From there, she went on to undertake various roles at Cutter Aviation, including in customer service, FBO facility management and general management. "In 2014, I was asked to take over the original Cutter Aviation facility, which opened in 1928, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, as general manager," she explains.

Looking back over her career to date, Rowden says that one of her fondest memories was when she met Bob Hoover, a US Army Air Forces fighter pilot, flight instructor and airshow pilot. "As an aviation enthusiast, that was one of the best days of my career," she comments. "He was such a joy to be around – his stories and experiences unforgettable, his humor infectious."

Rowden believes that advances in technology will change how the business aviation facility operates in the future. "Technology has changed the reservation and scheduling process at an FBO. Programs such as FlightBridge, which is a technology platform that enables us to connect with our partners, has impacted the way our operation functions. It has streamlined the process and made information available and sharable with our clients and other facilities. We are able to track histories, for example, and have notes and reminders to ensure that the customer has the best experience possible. I feel that many flight departments and customers will be moving to these types of systems due to their ease of use, time saved, and accurate and immediate confirmation of services."

One of the key challenges that need to be addressed, according to Rowden, is coverage of FBO fees. "The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's recent publicity regarding user fees has been tough on the FBO operators," she explains. "While there are understandably many opinions on the matter, the challenges, security requirements, lease requirements and increasing costs facing the FBO industry have not been acknowledged by the association. It would be beneficial to both the FBO operators and their clientele to have balanced reporting on both user fees and the reasons behind them."

Business Airport International will be running a series of interviews with professionals from the NBAA's Top 40 Under 40 on its website over the coming weeks. Visit www.businessairportinternational.com to read more



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How are new technologies opening up the private and business jet market by making empty legs available to a whole new customer segment?

Words | Keri Allan

The leg





Research from Revolution.Aero has shown that advances in technology are set to make flying business aviation much cheaper and easier over the next five years. One area that looks set to improve dramatically, thanks mainly to a growth in apps, is the ability to book individual seats on private jet 'dead legs' or 'empty legs'. These are generally empty return flights or when an aircraft is returning to base or being moved to a different location. Just over half (51%) of the business aviation professionals questioned by Revolution.Aero anticipate that it will become easier to book dead legs at discounts on charter rates of up to 75%.



“A growing number of companies branch into flight booking solutions in order to turn these empty legs into revenue streams”

Saskia de Jong, director of sales Americas, Avinode Group

According to Robert Basha, founder and CEO of Takeoff360, the mobile app that connects consumers with private jet charters around the globe, “One out of three private jets do not have any passengers on board. Not only is this a big waste of fuel and money, but the carbon footprint to our environment is beyond staggering. Making these one-way legs available to consumers at lower prices helps address a major inefficiency in the air charter industry and is a win-win for all.”

Saskia de Jong, director of sales Americas at Avinode Group, believes that technology will help reduce the number of empty legs dramatically and that we’re now beginning to see “a growing number of companies branch into flight booking solutions in order to turn these empty legs into revenue streams”.

For example, in August 2018, VistaJet founder Thomas Flohr made the move into business aircraft leasing and flight booking technology as part of an expansion backed by a US\$200m investment by private equity firm Rhône Group. Flohr set up Vista Global Holding, which includes the original Malta-based charter business as well as a new leasing arm, Vista Lease; and TechX, a technology unit that will market an app-based booking platform to third-party operators designed to fill empty legs on positioning flights.

“VistaJet has developed the strongest and most reliable integrated end-to-end technology for managing complex fleets on a global scale,” says Ian Moore, chief commercial officer at VistaJet and Vista Global Holding. “When talking

with our brokers to understand their requirements, Flohr identified an opportunity for smaller operators to take advantage of the technology we have developed. This is where TechX comes in. Its mission is to shorten the distance between customers and fleet operator, improving quality of service and reducing prices across the marketplace.”

Brokers and operators now have access to a wide range of platforms that can help them fill empty legs. One of the most well-established technology firms in this area is Avinode, which has now built integrations with roughly 40 different scheduling systems. In addition to listing empty legs on its B2B platform, the company also verifies that these are ‘real’ empty legs available for sale.

“Sometimes an empty leg is scheduled, but the operator may not necessarily want to sell it – for example, it hasn’t been noted that this is an owner flight,” says de Jong. “That’s an additional step we’re taking, plus we also price up the empty legs.”

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Technology updates

Some of the latest technologies that are making it easier for passengers to access empty legs

Founded in September 2018, TechX is one of the four companies within the Vista Global group. As the technology pillar of the group, TechX has been developed to expand upon existing proprietary technology. Fifty developers are currently in place to work on how to eliminate process deficiencies, automate interactions, improve security and integrate all stakeholders involved in delivering a flight. The company’s mission is to create end-to-end services to allow companies to find customers, manage bookings, track flights and plan trips directly with operators – all on one platform.

Avinode recently upgraded its Empty Leg Search web app to make searching for dead legs even easier than before. Brokers and operators can customize the app to enable website visitors

to look for empty legs solely within their own fleet or across the entire Avinode system. The upgrade also provides the ability to monitor app activity, which will help companies review and revise their marketing strategies accordingly, maximizing the conversion of website visitors to customers.

In October 2018, Takeoff360 updated its app in a move designed to make private jet charters more accessible to a broader clientele. The 2.0 version of the platform is able to show travelers near-real-time data on the worldwide empty legs available from safety-certified, vetted operators. It also enables customers to secure online payment via Apple Pay. The app also provides photos of the jet, lists amenities, provides the aircraft’s safety certifications,

insurance coverages, and more, so consumers can make choices based on their preferences. Mobile features, like push notification, alert users when deals become available on their favorite routes.

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Left: Empty leg technology is opening up the business aviation charter market to a much wider audience



“It’s not IT holding things back; it’s the marketing of empty legs to the general market”

Patrick Margetson-Rushmore, chief executive, Luxaviation

Left: Takeoff360 is an easy way to find and book a private jet charter anywhere in the world

Below: Users simply download an app to find available empty leg flights in near real time

Optimizing potential

Technology is helping optimize empty leg potential in a number of ways, from using algorithms to help brokers see a larger number of potential flight routes, as well as developing apps that give consumers improved access to empty leg opportunities.

Returnjet, for example, streams approximately 2,000 live empty legs on its platform via API directly from operators’ scheduling software. Brokers can then take advantage of the company’s empty leg corridor technology, which matches any suitable empty legs to a broker’s searches based on the length and direction of flight and percentage of deviation required.

Talking about the Returnjet solution, CEO Mark Blanchfield says, “Let’s say you’re in London and you want to fly to Nice. The system looks at all the empty legs on offer and our algorithm draws a corridor around your trip. So, if an aircraft was going from Birmingham to Palma for example, that’s within the corridor and it’s a lot cheaper for the Birmingham airplane to fly to London and pick you up, drop you off in Nice, and then fly on to Palma. Historically, you’d only be able to see empty legs from London to Nice;

now you have a wider view on empty legs in the area, so we’re able to help more operators sell them.”

Returnjet, along with many of its competitors, also offers brokers ‘white labeled’ apps, which they can customize to their own brand. Potential customers can then use these on their phones to search for both charter flights and empty legs.

A 24/7 service

VistaJet’s Moore highlights that to manage empty leg bookings, operators and brokers need to be able to offer a 24/7 service that meets the expectations of the customer and the nature of this type of booking. “Digitally this is namely location, timely notification of offers, transparency of value in pricing, and first and foremost speed of booking. When booking an empty leg through our app, flight confirmation can come within minutes,” he explains.

“Ten years ago, there were maybe five apps focusing on the business aviation sector, compared with more than 50 now,” says Alasdair Whyte, co-founder of Revolution Aero. “Some 84% of business aviation professionals expect there to be even more private jet apps on the market by 2023, with one in three expecting significantly more.

“In this data and technology revolution, there is so much more that can be done to enable owners of business aircraft to make their assets more accessible to potential customers, further enhancing the income, or contribution to costs, they earn from them. This, coupled with the greater flexibility in how business aircraft can be chartered, will open up business jet travel for many more people,” he adds.

Takeoff360’s Basha believes technology like his, which includes an app to source, reserve and book air charter flights, brings private jet travelers closer to the digital experience they’re accustomed to on platforms such as Amazon, Uber and Expedia. “Consumers use cell phones for most forms of commerce and transactions today, but private jet charter has lagged in this area. I think companies that are investing in technology and who take the importance of user experience seriously will benefit from current trends,” he says.

Unique challenges

The empty legs market does offer many opportunities, but it also comes with its own unique challenges. Doug Gollan, editor-in-chief of Private Jet Card Comparisons, points out that it’s important to realize that not all empty legs are made equal. “For example, an empty leg positioning an aircraft from Westchester County Airport to Teterboro, or from Fort Lauderdale Executive to Miami-Opa Locka Executive Airport, probably isn’t going to be very attractive to sell because they are close together. Empty legs from South Florida to New York, or from Las Vegas to San Francisco, are a different situation,” he explains.

“On the whole, business aviation customers don’t use one flying solution 100% of the time. They look for a variety of options depending on their specific needs”

Ian Moore, chief commercial officer, VistaJet and Vista Global Holding



Another issue to consider is the risk that comes with booking an empty leg. Yes, customers can get some amazing deals on empty leg flights, but they must be willing to be flexible and accept any last-minute changes and cancellations can take place. This can narrow down the potential customer base.

“I would say the biggest challenge with an empty leg is aligning the needs and interests of the actual private jet traveler, as well as the broker, operator, pilots and the actual aircraft owner,” says de Jong. “Empty legs are obviously very discounted, but there are restrictions that come with that.”

Gollan continues, “Empty legs will always be controlled by the whims of the full-paying charter customer or owner of the jet. “When they change their mind, your empty leg changes or disappears, meaning the customer needs to be flexible. They also need to make sure they can cancel their rental car or hotel at the destination they are flying to, or be prepared to buy a last-minute airline ticket. And that’s part of the challenge. If your empty leg cancels, are you flying from or to airports that have convenient commercial airline flights, or are you going to have to get a taxi to go 50 miles to another airport to catch a flight?”

Diluting the benefits

Some may question whether the empty leg market actually dilutes the main benefit of business aviation – flexibility. However, industry experts believe that it does have a place, as customers will always have different needs.

“On the whole, business aviation customers don’t use one flying solution 100% of the time. They look for a variety of options depending on their specific needs for individual trips. Some may own an aircraft, have jet cards and hourly subscriptions, but will also look to on-demand flights in certain areas of the world. Other customers may be commercial first-class fliers who look for opportunities of an empty leg or charter flights with the best price every time with the knowledge that availability may change,” comments Moore.

“The industry not only sees the demand for flexibility – especially for core business fliers – but also certain ad hoc city-pairing flights, and this is where we see the potential for empty legs to continue being utilized,” he adds.

Patrick Margetson-Rushmore, chief executive of Luxaviation UK, concludes by saying that the biggest challenge now is to raise awareness of empty legs and their benefits to the wider market.

“I think the technology is really there now – these apps and websites give customers access to all the information. It’s not IT holding things back; it’s the marketing of empty legs to the general market. Finding the target market is probably one of the hardest things to do. More people need to be made aware of empty legs and what they can offer.” ○

Top tips

Three industry professionals share their tips on how to capitalize on empty legs and what to be aware of

“Ensure that customers understand the additional risk and complexity, but also that empty legs aren’t cheap. There is an expectation that empty legs are offered at a discounted rate, but it would be naïve to think that in some cases you might be able to fly for a few hundred dollars!”

Saskia de Jong, director of sales Americas at Avinode Group

“In many cases, passengers are focusing far more on the price available and not the safety and security background of the providers – the age and ownership of the aircraft, training of crew, or service standards. We urge passengers to ask the provider questions of who is flying them from A to B before they book.”

Ian Moore, chief commercial officer at VistaJet and Vista Global Holding

“When marketing empty legs through a platform, there are a number of best practices to keep in mind. First, the operator should verify the empty leg route with city pairs rather than leaving them open-ended with only the departure city and direction of flight path. Second, charter operators should include the best possible price, respond quickly to inquiries, and keep all photos and safety ratings as up-to-date as possible. Finally, operators should not depend on automatic scheduling software to post empty legs. Instead, they should verify and add them manually and be very clear with any specific details such as departure times and strict cancellation policies. In addition to this, those who deliver mobile-first digital convenience for clients will not only be able to serve existing clients better, but they will also be well positioned to capitalize on the millennial market and future digital native market segments.”

Robert Basha, founder and CEO of Takeoff360

“Making these one-way legs available to consumers at lower prices helps address a major inefficiency in the air charter industry and is a win-win for all”

Robert Basha, founder and CEO, Takeoff360





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PMG's 2018 *Global Customer Experience Excellence* report looked at the rapidly increasing pace of global change and the growing complexity of everyday life, and how businesses need to work hard

to deliver competitively superior customer experiences. The report states, "New experiences and new competitors are now continuously resetting customer expectations. At the same time, new technologies – artificial intelligence, machine learning, bots, predictive analytics and a host of others – are radically changing the way brands engage and interact with their customers. The customer relationship has never been in such flux. Deep, effective insights have never been more important."

It continues, "The very best brands for customer experience excellence are now starting to think of their customers as assets that should be protected, nurtured and invested in. They view their customers' loyalty as a form of equity in the company, as progressive CFOs increasingly take an interest in the long-term value of customer experience excellence."

Satisfied customers

Business Airport International explores how business aviation airports and FBOs can create the ultimate customer experience

Words | Hilary Robertson

Sky Valet's FBO network spans five countries, including its Ibiza facility

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Left: Sky Valet tailors its customer experience to reflect its locations

Sense of place

Sky Valet explains how understanding the specific requirements of each of its 25 locations is key to providing the right customer experience every time

The Sky Valet FBO network has locations in five countries – France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Bulgaria – and the company tries to create an experience for its customers tailored to each specific region. “We strongly believe that empowering our FBO management team is key to creating the local identity, authenticity and customized services that are appreciated by VIP passengers. For example, our FBO at Paris le Bourget is mostly dedicated to business journeys, so we always focus there on the most pragmatic and efficient approach for our customers, such as providing the shortest distance between the limousine and their aircraft,” says Jérôme Ferasin, chief commercial officer for business aviation at the company.

“However, at our Ibiza FBO, customer expectations are very different. We completely refurbished the terminal this year and our objective was to provide an ‘Ibiza’ feeling as soon as the customer arrives. The FBO provides a fancy, modern and bright atmosphere and our customers can contemplate fine art works, such as an original Andy Warhol painting, thanks to a

partnership with a famous local art gallery.”

For Ferasin, the best customer experience is often the one that goes unnoticed. “Most of the time, delivering bespoke services simply means that passengers will not even realize that they actually went through our facilities. We call it the magical transportation experience,” he explains. However, the company strives to provide any and all services a customer might request, even at short notice. “Once, one of our regular customers asked the Sky Valet team to organize something very special at aircraft arrival, as the secret purpose of the travel was actually to propose to his partner later that evening. He told us on the way back that she said ‘Yes!’”

The most fundamental aspect to ensuring the same high level of customer service across the network is employee engagement, according to Ferasin. “Empowering our employees, providing them with the strength of the network without the constraints, sharing best practices and giving on-site training at, as an example, luxury palaces in Monaco and the French Riviera, enables us to provide the best service we can.”

“Anticipate the questions customers might have and provide those answers in advance”

Patrick Margetson-Rushmore,
CEO at Luxaviation UK



Smooth and efficient

Experts in business aviation agree that the customer has never been more critical. “The objective of an FBO is to minimize the time one of our customers spends with them, and to make that time quiet, private and hassle-free,” explains Patrick Margetson-Rushmore, CEO of Luxaviation UK. “There are a number of people our customers interact with when they arrive to take a flight, and every one of them has to make sure it’s a smooth and efficient process.

“The chauffeur, reception staff, customs officials and people who take them to the stand are all vitally important in maintaining a relaxed environment for the customer. Business people and our wealthy customers want privacy and small FBOs can get busy – employees have to ensure that even on those occasions they still provide the highest-quality customer experience. Sometimes it’s as simple as remembering to smile.”

Margetson-Rushmore suggests personal attention to detail as one of the keys to unlocking the best experience: “Instead of asking if there’s anything someone needs, offer them a cup of coffee. Anticipate the questions they might have and provide those answers in advance. It can be helpful to point out all the facilities you know a customer will be looking for. At peak times it’s vital to have enough staff on hand and it’s always better to over-plan each stage. Complacency leads to mistakes,” he says.

Ongoing training

Some organizations train their people to provide a good customer experience, but the tools and techniques are not re-applied when new staff join or refreshed to ensure standards are maintained. Dave Murray, senior consultant at customer service training company DiJulius Group, believes training needs to be an ongoing process: “We go in and help a client create standards, ensuring they are then met consistently across the business,” he explains. “But



Left: Chauffeur-driven transport is a popular customer amenity at FBOs

“If everyone in your organization treats customers as if they care about them, they will keep coming back”

Dave Murray, senior consultant at DiJulius Group



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Above: Execujet's FBO in Zurich, Switzerland



"The ultimate customer experience is completely focused on the customer"

Blake Morgan, customer experience expert

Transforming Milan

Two new business aviation terminals are providing the ultimate customer experience for visitors

The city of Milan is renowned for its cultural and creative events, as well as being Italy's main industrial, commercial and financial center, and it is only right that its two main airports should reflect these elements. The first business and general airport in Italy, Milano Linate has been completely refurbished and reorganized and is now called Milano Linate Prime. Operator SEA Prime has also announced the opening of Milano Malpensa Prime, a brand-new terminal for business aviation passengers traveling to and from the intercontinental airport Malpensa.

Chiara Dorigotti, general manager of SEA Prime, explains, "After restyling the Milano Linate Prime terminal in 2015, we have developed new services including lounges, concierge services and a business center. There are also 10 hangars for aircraft and maintenance, with additional ones being built. The experience at Linate and the expected

traffic growth has inspired a similar project at Milan Malpensa, with the opening of the new terminal scheduled for June 2019."

An exclusive partnership with BMW is also helping SEA Prime raise its customer service game, according to commercial development manager Marco Funel. "Our partnership with BMW is an example of how we strive to provide the best customer experience," he says. "We use BMW's VIP vehicles to move customers between the terminal and the airplane, which provides the comfort people need."

For passengers or crew that want to shop, SEA Prime also provides a special service linked to the upscale shopping area at Monte Napoleone, a popular destination for both business and leisure visitors to the city.



"The experience at Linate and the expected traffic growth has inspired a similar project at Milan Malpensa"

Chiara Dorigotti, general manager at SEA Prime



Right and above: SEA Prime's Milano Linate terminal offering includes BMW VIP vehicles



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

their guests' preferences and travel plans before they arrive to provide the best experience. Aviation can learn from this by treating passengers like actual people instead of just numbers."

Morgan believes the increasing use of new technology such as chatbots and AI can help the industry find even small ways to go above and beyond what customers expect. "Customers want things to be as easy as possible and they want information quickly. They want to know the status of their plane, the location of their bags and how long it will take them to get where they need to go. Common questions at many airports are repetitive and could easily be answered via an app," she says.

"Above all, get to know your customers! We live in a world with so much data available that can be used to understand what customers want and need. Take surveys, connect with customers on social media and in real life, and find out what matters to them."

Service and safety

Aviation Business Strategies Group (ABSG) created the 'ultimate customer service training program' – Don't Forget the Cheese! – that aims to teach the skills needed to provide service and safety to customers. ABSG principal John Enticknap explains, "The measure of success is whether or not a customer will recommend an FBO to another aircraft owner or operator. FBOs should include this question on surveys and even ask customers before they leave: Did we meet your expectations and would you recommend us?"

"Most customers flying business class aircraft are accustomed to high-end service experiences. They stay at upscale hotels and resorts and dine at quality restaurants. Their expectations of service quality are usually very high and an FBO experience should not disappoint. We often recommend our FBO clients take their customer service

"Although some of these small touches are nice, the real customer service story takes place outside"

Ron R Jackson, principal at ABSG



"The measure of success is whether or not a customer will recommend an FBO to another aircraft owner or operator"

John Enticknap, principal at ABSG



Above: **Renovations at Milan Linate has inspired projects at Milan Malpensa**

Below: **Execujet's St. Gallen-Altenrhein FBO in eastern Switzerland**



team to a high-end hotel so that they can experience first-hand the expected level of service."

Fellow ABSG principal Ron R Jackson argues that anticipation could bring real success in customer experience: "Beyond basics such as fuel, auxiliary ground power and lavatory cleaning, many FBOs now offer concierge services for booking hotels and rental cars for arriving flight crews. Anticipating customers' needs means offering amenities such as wi-fi connection, conference room, pilot lounges, flight planning facilities and quiet areas for resting.

"Of course, others offer unique services such as valet parking, personal vehicle washing and detailing, game rooms with pool tables, pinball machines and workout facilities with showers and saunas. Although some of these small touches are nice, the real customer service story takes place outside, where the aircraft rubber meets the ramp."

Jackson continues, "At the end of the day, flight crews primarily care about one thing: peace of mind. They want to know that their passengers will be well taken care of and that their prized asset, the company aircraft, is in good hands. They notice if the marshaller is ready to guide the aircraft safely in, if the limo is waiting, cooled down or warmed up, depending on the weather. The list goes on.

"If you want to differentiate the experience and develop repeat customers who become loyal to your brand, it's important that the ramp side of the FBO business makes a first good impression. Then it's up to the rest of the team to cement the relationship by serving up a friendly course of customer service so that the customer wants to come back for second and third helpings," he concludes.

All the experts interviewed agree that the ultimate customer experience comes from anticipating needs and taking on board feedback – every step of the way. It's crucial to make passengers feel valued and appreciated with every interaction they have with business aviation. ○



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Go it

Illustration: Sean Rodwell

alone

Digital Co-Pilot ON

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Single pilot operations are notoriously difficult, but new technologies and enhanced training programs could go a long way to increasing the safety of these flights. *Business Airport International* investigates

Words | Hazel King

T

here were 1,982 single pilot business aviation aircraft accidents worldwide between 2010 and 2017, according to a recent study by Florida's Nova Southeastern University, and single pilot IFR (instrument flight rules)

operations have been described by some as the most dangerous type of flying. And yet, these types of operations are often the most common in the business and general aviation community, particularly in the USA.

"From the owner pilot perspective, single pilot operation is all about flexibility and it is understandable why most of them prefer to fly their business jets without a co-pilot," says Fabio Couto Bonnett, air safety investigator at Embraer Air Safety Department, in his article *Investigation of single-pilot operation accidents*. "The convenience of taking off when you want, staying there as long as you want, and all other aspects of operating your own aircraft, are at least a little more complicated when you need an extra pilot."

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact number of flights being flown by one pilot because national aviation administrations rarely separately track flights flown as a single pilot operation. However, FAA data shows that in 2016 there were more than 200,000 general aviation aircraft active in the USA and those aircraft were flown for more than 20 million hours during the year. The largest percentage of these hours are flown as personal flights, the majority of which are almost certainly conducted with a single pilot, according to The MITRE Corporation, which has developed software to improve the safety of single pilot flights.

"Within business aviation, a report by Breiling and Associates found that of the business turboprop fleet that can be flown as either dual or single pilot, these aircraft

"Although the data is quite sparse, it would follow that the majority of both personal and business general aviation flights that are flown under IFR are flown with a single pilot"

Matthew Pollack, co-department head and project leader, The MITRE Corporation



The first fatal flight

Famous American baseball player is first fatality of single pilot operations

On August 2, 1979, New York Yankees catcher Thurman Munson was killed when he crashed his Citation 501 aircraft at Akron-Canton Regional Airport in Ohio. Two other passengers on board the aircraft survived the crash, and the accident was widely reported in the national and international media.

However, it wasn't just the fact that the pilot was a famous baseball player that made the accident noteworthy – it was also the first fatal crash involving a single pilot certified light jet in the USA. According to the National Transportation Safety Board's final report, the probable cause of the accident was the pilot's failure to follow the appropriate checklist and to take action to maintain sufficient airspeed to prevent a stall into the ground during an attempted landing.



were flown single pilot a majority of the time – 67% – from 2011 to 2015," comments Matthew Pollack, co-department head and project leader at The MITRE Corporation. "Although the data is quite sparse, it would follow that the majority of both personal and business general aviation flights that are flown under IFR are flown with a single pilot."

According to Gary Reeves, airline transport pilot and master flight, instrument and multi-engine instructor at PilotSafety.org, the number of single pilot operations is on the rise and is being driven by the well-documented pilot shortage. "We're running out of pilots," he explains, "and so single pilot operations are very common. Somebody who flies himself is almost always flying single pilot IFR, even in the light jets. The commercial level – cargo and charter operations – increasingly have single pilot IFR. The airlines – the flag or scheduled carriers – are all restricted to a minimum of two-person flight crews, but that may change in the future."

Better training

With so many pilots now flying their aircraft solo, what can be done to increase the safety of these types of operations? "In most cases, I think single pilot IFR is very safe, but it all comes down to the amount of training the pilot receives," Reeves says. "There's a big difference between

Digital Copilot from The MITRE Corporation uses software algorithms to reduce solo pilots' workload

a scheduled airline pilot and a charter or private pilot. The airlines have a great safety record because they retrain their pilots every 6 to 12 months. They have a deep master-level understanding of the systems and know-how to work them all. For the other operators, the training is not always that in-depth, and that's the problem."

According to Reeves, the biggest issue at the moment with pilot training is that "new people teach new people". He continues, "One of the ways you build experience and hours to get to your airline job is you become a flight instructor when you're young, so by the time you start to build real-world experience, you're no longer teaching, and the next generation is. There are cases where your flight instructor took their first lesson just two years before you."

Brad Pierce, president of Restaurant Equipment World and an experienced solo pilot, agrees: "Many of these instructors are equipped with knowledge of avionics, flight instructions, teaching instruments, weather, etc, but are ill-equipped to teach distance flying or business types of operational flying. It's not a criticism of them; it's simply because they haven't done it themselves."

Reeves believes that more in-depth training for those going through flight instructor school, as well as encouraging a pilot preflight check, could alleviate many of the safety issues associated with single pilot IFR operations.

"Every pilot preflights the aircraft before every flight, checking 50 or 60 things on the airplane

Single pilot's perspective

Business aviation is key to operations across the USA

Brad Pierce, president of Restaurant Equipment World, is no stranger to flying single pilot IFR and has conducted 144 such flights in the past year alone. "My aircraft is like a forklift in my warehouse," he enthuses. "It's a vital tool for getting business done. It's very common for me to hop from city to city – and state to state – visiting three or four customer locations in a single day. Often, I'll also go for two- to three-week runs, and during those I'll have upward of 28 meetings across more than a dozen states in the course of the trip."

Pierce's main advice for pilots looking to fly solo is to build up their experience slowly to ensure these operations become second nature. "When I began doing these single pilot trips, I'd schedule to arrive the day before a meeting and depart a day after the meeting. I'd ensure there were zero flight pressures by having such a wide window before/after to do the flying. I'll still do this if there are weather

considerations. My biggest take-away when it comes to scheduling is this: no customer is worth dying for. That's a hard and fast rule for me – I will never, ever let external customer pressures dictate that I 'must' be at a certain place/time if it is not safe to do so."

With technology, Pierce cautions that pilots shouldn't become too reliant on systems in the cockpit. "Modern-day cockpits, and devices like iPads, provide a wealth of information that can be hugely useful, especially during challenging flight conditions. However, the amount of data being presented can be overwhelming to a less experienced or less proficient pilot. People get enamored with technology, but must understand it is simply a tool and should not be your primary focus – your primary focus needs to be flying the airplane."

Pierce has experienced numerous inflight emergencies over the course of his career, all of which he was able to overcome by

remembering his training. "The most dramatic emergency I've encountered was a complete loss of engine power. In that situation, my training kicked in and I remembered the golden rule: Fly the airplane. I dodged numerous vehicles, flew underneath half a dozen sets of power lines, and brought the aircraft to a safe stop."

"The best defense is a very strong offense – in this case, frequent training and proficiency," he continues. "When emergencies occur, there's often not time to pull out a checklist immediately; you need to go with your training and act. Of course, this is not a substitute for checklists. Always use them as time allows – even the best of pilots get 'lizard brain' when emergencies occur, so it's important to run through the checklist to ensure no vital step was missed along the way."

"My biggest take-away when it comes to scheduling is this: no customer is worth dying for"

Brad Pierce, president, Restaurant Equipment World



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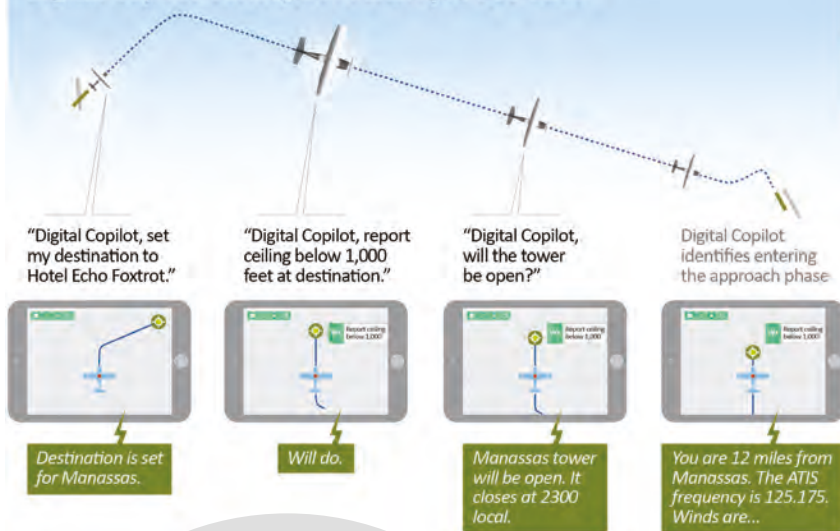
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Digital Copilot Concept: An Example Use Case



"Digital Copilot improves safety by bringing some of the benefits of a second pilot to small aircraft"

John Helleberg, human factors engineer and group leader, The MITRE Corporation



Group focus

Dedicated NBAA group is committed to single pilot safety

NBAA has a dedicated group aimed at improving the safety of single pilot operations. The Single Pilot Working Group of the NBAA Safety Committee was launched in 2008 and focuses on understanding the hazards specific to this segment of the business aviation community and creating resources to address those hazards in a way that is workable for single pilots. OEMs with single pilot business aviation aircraft, single pilot business aviators, consultants, and other individuals with experience in single pilot operations, are involved in this working group.

In 2018, the group held its 10th annual Single Pilot Safety Standdown event at

NBAA's Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition in Orlando, Florida. The event in October included interactive learning opportunities, expert speakers and lively peer-to-peer discussions. It provided single pilot business aviators with the knowledge and skills they need for single pilot operations and practical tips to enhance safety and risk mitigation.

Presentations during the event included detailed analysis of single pilot business aviation accident data; interactive discussions on mitigation best practices; and leadership briefings from NBAA president and CEO Ed Bolen, AOPA president and CEO Mark Baker, and EAA CEO and chairman Jack Pelton.

Left: **The speech-based interface allows pilots to ask questions directly to the Digital Copilot system**

to make sure it's safe to fly. The new emphasis of many aviation organizations is to get pilots to do that same checklist on themselves – a 25-point checklist such as do you have a headache, did you get enough sleep, have you eaten recently, etc, and look at the big picture on whether they're in a fit state to fly the aircraft," he explains.

Expanding this preflight training to flight instructor schools so they can pass it on to new pilots is being explored with input from industry bodies such as NBAA, AOPA and the National Association of Flight Instructors, according to Reeves.

Digital co-pilot

In addition to improved training, technology is also being developed to enhance the safety and efficiency of single pilot operations. One of the most notable is Digital Copilot from The MITRE Corporation, a set of software algorithms that act as a cognitive assistant to reduce the solo pilot's workload. The software works by inferring the pilot's intent, based on the flight context, and then determining when information is required and automatically providing it to the pilot at the appropriate time through a simple and intuitive speech-based interface.

"By understanding what the pilot is trying to do, Digital Copilot can offer radio frequencies when they are needed, monitor for weather events at the destination airport, or warn the pilot if they deviate from safe operations. This improves safety by bringing some of the benefits of a second pilot to small aircraft," explains John Helleberg, human factors engineer and group leader at The MITRE Corporation.

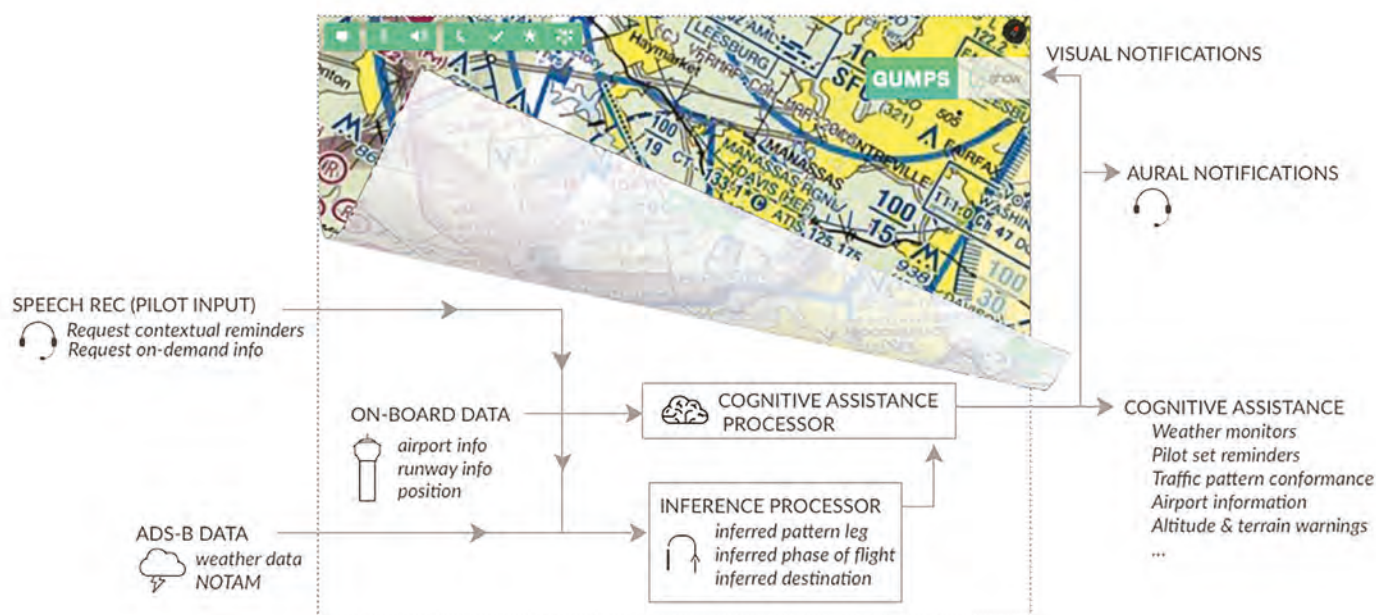
As well as inferring what the pilot intends to do during the flight, Digital Copilot also allows the pilot to request on-demand information directly. "For example, the pilot can ask 'Will the tower be open?' – to which Digital Copilot will verbally answer the question based on the current ground speed and provide an advisory if the tower closing time is within 30 minutes of the estimated arrival time," Helleberg says. "The reply is based on Digital Copilot's estimate of time to destination and the published air traffic control tower operating schedule, which is stored on the device. As a result, the pilot does not need to pull the appropriate book from the flight bag to get the tower closing time, nor is it necessary to calculate the time remaining to the destination and then determine whether the arrival will occur before the tower closing time."

Examples of other information that the pilot can request include information about the destination or other airports, approach altitude and direction, basic position information relative to the destination, and checklists, which Digital Copilot can also read to the pilot.

Utilizing technology

For PilotSafety.org's Reeves, there are several other technologies that are of paramount importance when flying solo – autopilot, electronic flight bag (EFB) and GPS.

"The old-style navigation used in the 1950s and 1960s is basically an FM radio transmitter that transmits a directional



Above: **Digital Copilot** gathers information from multiple sources to help single pilots during operations

aid,” he explains. “When flying from point A to point B, you used to fly set routes where you would fly from one beacon to another, and in between the course would be up to four miles deviation. Four miles is pretty good, but GPS systems such as Avidyne can pinpoint your location down to about 3m [10ft], so air traffic control knows exactly where you are. You couldn’t do single pilot IFR if you had to do all the old-style navigation.”

EFB systems, such as that from ForeFlight, enable pilots to do all the preflight planning such as weight and balance calculations, situational awareness and weather planning digitally, rather than using paper maps and manuals, as used to be the case. “When I was first starting out as a pilot, we carried 50 lb [23kg] of paper maps that changed every 28 days, preflight planning could take up to two hours, and it was all done by hand; now I can do all of that on my iPad in about 15 minutes. It’s changed the world,” Reeves enthuses.

Mark Larsen, senior manager, safety and flight operations at NBAA, agrees that EFBs are a welcome development for single pilots: “The advent of EFBs has been a huge boon to the single pilot business aviation community. As the capabilities of EFBs advance, combined with in-cockpit weather and traffic collision avoidance systems, cockpit terrain warning systems and enhanced vision capabilities, the functionality and safety of these operations has improved.”

The third technology – autopilot – is not legally required on single pilot IFR flights, but it can take the routine workload off the pilot and make the flight safer. “The new autopilot systems turn pilots into managers. So instead of just holding an altitude or course, I can now manage the big picture – I can look at the weather an hour in front of me and make a decision to go somewhere else. I can notice things changing within the airplane much faster, which is what makes it safer,” adds Reeves.

“The more technology that you have, that you know how to use, just makes flying easier, safer and more fun”

Gary Reeves, airline transport pilot and master flight, instrument and multi-engine instructor, PilotSafety.org



But does all this technology take away the enjoyment of flying? Absolutely not, argues Reeves. “Technology makes flying much more enjoyable and reduces fatigue. In my personal airplane I do not have an autopilot yet, but I’m putting in a new one. Flying single pilot IFR in my airplane is exhausting because I’m doing so many things at once. I’m a master flight instructor and very experienced; I can do it, but it is exhausting. The more technology that you have, that you know how to use, just makes flying easier, safer and more fun. Technology takes a lot of danger out of flying, but the caveat to that is knowing how to use it.”

And knowing how to use the technology is exactly what Reeves set out to do when he launched PilotSafety.org in 2012. “Training eliminates emergencies. The definition of an emergency is something you’re not prepared for. If somebody has a thorough understanding of the technologies – not just how to work an autopilot, but the theories behind it, how the system works, and how to react quickly in an emergency – it doesn’t become an emergency,” he argues.

NBAA’s Larsen agrees, adding that preparation is key to avoiding problems when flying single pilot IFR operations: “When we’ve looked at these accidents [from a recent study of single pilot business aviation accidents by Nova Southeastern University], we’ve found that most are really some form of a risk-management accident. Waiting until the true emergency situation exists almost always leaves the pilot without suitable options to get out of the situation. But looking ahead and coming up with alternatives that address areas of likely risk often affords many options that still mean the business objectives behind the trip can be met safely.”

For Reeves, the biggest problem is the pilots who don’t do sufficient training: “Training is the silver bullet. The pilots who do more than the minimum, who seek out events like NBAA and Oshkosh, who invest in more training, are safer pilots because of their mindset,” he concludes. ○

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Business Airport International takes a close look at the Australian business aviation market, its key trends, challenges and opportunities for growth

Words | **Helen Norman**

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WW

With a population of 25 million and a GDP of US\$77,000 per adult, Australia edged ahead of Switzerland in the Credit Suisse Global Wealth

Report to have the highest median wealth per adult in 2018. Furthermore, in 2017 Australia celebrated the 26th year since the country had a recession – the longest run of uninterrupted GDP growth in the developed world. This trend is expected to have continued through 2018 with figures so far showing a strong annual growth rate of 3.4%.

“Growth in the Australian economy has led to increasing confidence in the business aviation industry,” explains David Bell, CEO of the Australian Business Aviation Association (ABAA). “The main industries driving this growth are mining and resources. Also, immigration and natural population increases have contributed to strong infrastructure and housing growth. All this has in turn resulted in steady expansion in the business aviation sector.”

Currently the ABAA has 33 member companies that operate around 120 business jets, a few turboprops and some helicopters. “We also have 32 associate members including aircraft and equipment manufacturers, flight planners, FBOs, MROs and insurance, fuel and legal companies,” explains Bell. “Although the market is rather small when compared with the USA and Europe, it is in good shape.”

Darren McGoldrick, ExecuJet’s vice president of Asia-Pacific, also believes that the Australian business aviation market is strong: “Australia has a mature and well-developed business aviation industry relative to the rest of Asia-Pacific,” he says. “It has the region’s second-largest business jet fleet, with almost 200 business jets, and an increase of five aircraft was seen in 2017 – a 2.8% growth from 2016.”

According to Bell, overall Australian business jet numbers have doubled in the past 20 years. Speaking about the most popular type of aircraft in the country, he comments, “As an island continent, overseas travel is natural for Australians, who do so for both private and business purposes. Overseas business aviation flights are now commonplace, with almost 50% of the jets owned and operated by the ABAA members being capable of performing intercontinental flights. The increased availability and development of larger, long-range jets has contributed positively to this.”

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AUSTRALIA



Above & right: Melbourne Jet Base runs 24 hours a day and manages its own security, customs and immigration processes



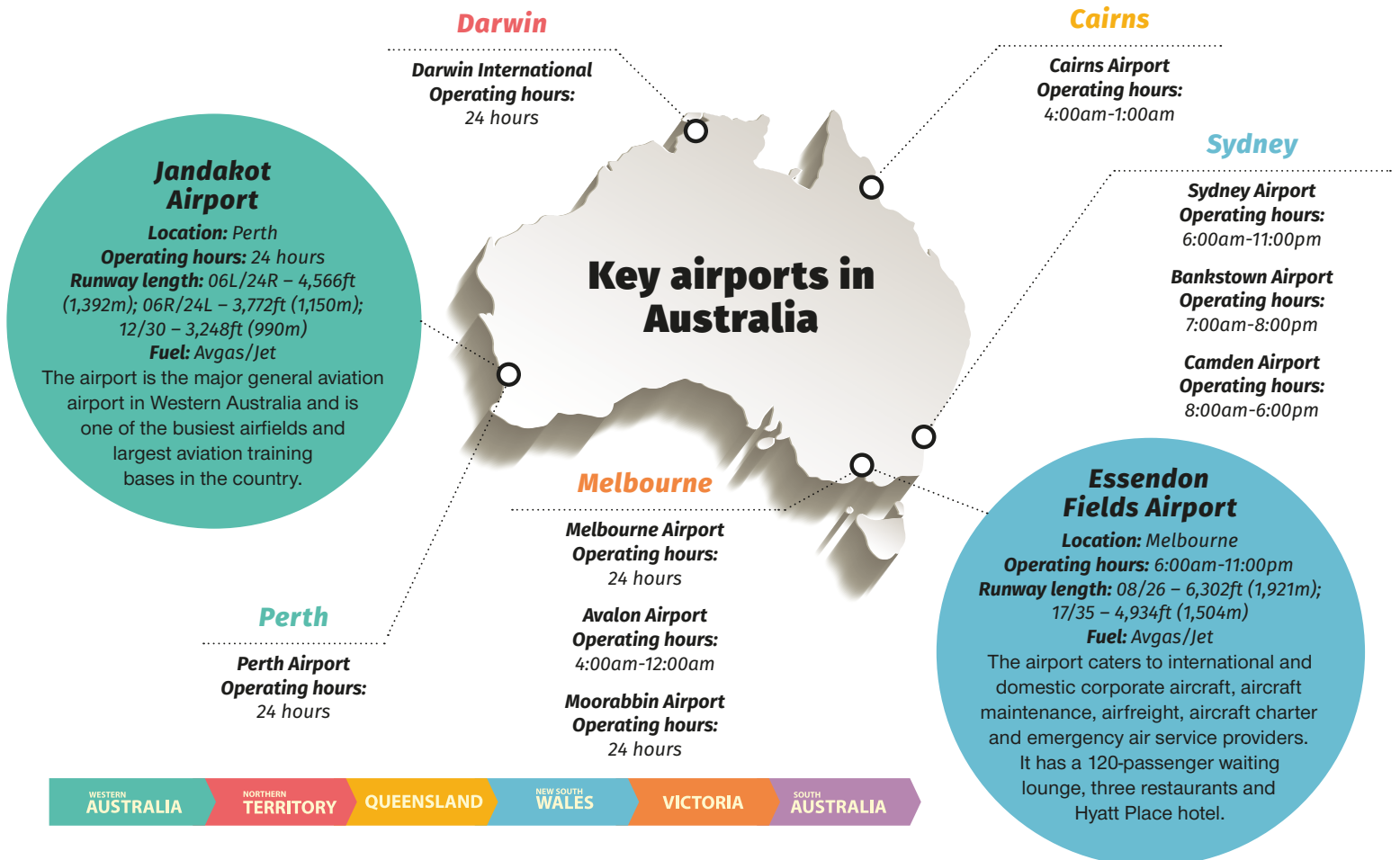
Infrastructure developments

Australia has a wide array of FBOs and MROs serving the business aviation community, most of which are at primary city airports – Sydney, Perth, Melbourne, Essendon, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Cairns and Darwin.

“There are 19 FBOs, eight MROs and 249 business jet-accessible airports supporting the operation of the business aviation industry in Australia,” says McGoldrick. “From a charter perspective, the market was somewhat flat for most of 2017 but it had a positive upswing in the last quarter of the year. Pleasingly this has continued into the early stages of 2018. Movements through our Sydney and Melbourne FBOs also reflect this increased activity, while our MROs in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth have had a continual stream of work. We are also seeing an increase in visiting international aircraft through our FBOs, mainly from Asia.”

A number of key infrastructure developments have taken place in Australia in recent years to ensure that the quality of the country’s business aviation facilities matches customers’ expectations. In October 2018, for example, an exclusive private jet terminal opened at Melbourne International Airport. The A\$100m (US\$72m) Melbourne Jet Base was specifically designed to attract private jets and charter flights.

The facility was developed by local businessman Paul Little, AO, who had the aim of developing a world-class travel experience to attract overseas jets away from other cities, including the curfew-constrained Sydney. “By



providing a destination that facilitates private aviation travel in such an exceptional way, we hope to see an influx of global VIPs visiting Australia to experience all we have to offer,” comments Little.

It offers travelers private customs and immigration screening, à la carte dining, a luxurious day spa, boutique hotel-style suites, helicopter transfers, and discreet arrival for chauffeur-driven limousines. For operators, the terminal offers crew recovery zones, hangars, refueling and maintenance. The facility, which is in a discreet location at Melbourne International Airport, is open 24/7 and is capable of handling 200 private aircraft per month.

Elsewhere in Melbourne, Essendon Fields Airport, which is Australia’s largest corporate jet base, being home to almost 60 business jets and handling approximately 50,000 annual aircraft movements, has been undertaking a number of developments with the aim of becoming the leading general aviation airport in the country. The main development is the A\$7m (US\$5m) modernization of its airport terminal and runway plaza, which will increase capacity to 200,000 passengers per year. The project includes new check-in facilities, a passenger waiting lounge, F&B options and eight refurbished commercial tenancies. At the time of going to press, the project was due to be completed in December 2018.

Essendon is also developing a new A\$60m (US\$43m) business park alongside the airport. The masterplan, named ARC, is set to become the biggest office building expansion for Melbourne’s northwest. The project will include three state-of-the-art office buildings totaling 20,000m² and generous parking options, and will generate 1,000 on-site jobs.

Other recent infrastructure developments in Australia include Hawker Pacific, part of Jet Aviation, opening a new FBO at Darwin Airport in early 2018. Hawker Pacific’s vice president FBO, Graham Owen, says the company has been looking to open a facility in Darwin for many years. “The growing demand from private and corporate aviation into Darwin, as well as our close relationship with a number of large operators in the region, gave us the impetus to open this facility,” he says. “Hawker Pacific operates the largest network of FBOs across Asia and Australia, and adding the Darwin FBO provides our clients with a choice for their first point of entry into the northern territory of Australia.”

Hawker Pacific is also investing A\$4.5m (US\$3.3m) in expanding its hangar facilities at Cairns Airport. The aim of the project is to help the company expand more into heavy maintenance work for the Oceania region.

Meanwhile in April 2018 ExecuJet, which is part of the Luxaviation Group, announced that it had become the first operator in Australia to achieve International Standard for Business Aviation Handling (IS-BAH) Stage 1 accreditation for its FBOs in Sydney and Melbourne. McGoldrick adds, “Our Sydney and Melbourne FBOs maintain exceptional operating procedures and rigorous safety standards across the board and we are delighted this has been recognized by the International Business Aviation Council [IBAC].”



Above: ExecuJet’s Sydney Airport facility

Right: Airflite’s FBO lounge at Perth Airport



“It is essential that any charter operator flying into the country familiarize themselves with current cabotage requirements”

David Bell, CEO,
Australian Business Aviation Association

Market challenges

There are a number of key challenges facing the Australian business aviation market, according to the ABAA’s Bell, including slot allocation, curfew requirements and cabotage regulations. “It is essential that any charter operator flying into the country familiarize themselves with current cabotage requirements,” he says. “The use of an international trip planner and handling agent is essential in achieving a good outcome. FBOs at Australian gateway airports are very experienced in handling international business aviation operations, including the provision of off-terminal clearances by the Australian Border Force and Department of Agriculture officers at most gateway airport FBOs.”

Currently cabotage regulations mean that it is prohibited for foreign-based charter operators to carry passengers or cargo within Australia. Permission for cabotage can be requested, however, through the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) via the landing permit process. There are no cabotage restrictions for non-revenue private operations. Commercial flights can be undertaken between Australian and New Zealand. Australia and the USA also have an open skies agreement easing cabotage restrictions. The



Above: Melbourne Jet Base has two expansive aircraft hangars

Australian government is currently in talks to relax cabotage regulations, but many in the aviation industry, including airline Qantas, are opposed to any changes.

One of the other key challenges, which the ABAA has worked hard to overcome, is slot allocation. Bell explains more: "Slot schemes operate at Sydney, Brisbane and Perth airports with mandatory requirements to obtain slots in advance for arrivals and departures at those airports. The ABAA has been working with the independent slot manager, Airport Coordination Australia [ACA] in recent years. This has led to an improvement in ACA's understanding of the requirements of business aviation compared with scheduled airline flights, which can be accommodated six months in advance. ACA now does its best to accommodate business aviation flights even in peak periods with short notice in many instances."

Bell believes curfew rules represent the biggest challenges to the business aviation market in Australia. "Curfews from 11:00pm to 6:00am local time are in place at Sydney, Adelaide, Gold Coast and Essendon airports. The ABAA generally accepts the restrictions at Gold Coast, however restrictions at Sydney, Adelaide and Essendon are not logical," he explains.

"The Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995 permits operations, during the curfew, of low-noise business jets with an MTOW of less than 34,000kg [75,000 lb]. This weight limit has not been increased since 1995, when the heaviest business jet in general use was the Gulfstream IV, at 33,800kg. This is despite several ABAA submissions to government over the past 12 years, pointing out that curfew operations should be based on noise, not weight.

"The ABAA was partially successful in 2015, when the deputy prime minister approved all business jets under 34,000kg [74,500 lb] MTOW and ICAO Chapter 3 or Chapter 4 noise compliant, allowing them to operate during the curfew at Sydney and Adelaide. However the approval for Chapter 3 noise-compliant business jets expires on December 31, 2022. Unfortunately the entire curfew issue is an overly politically sensitive matter, especially at Sydney and Essendon airports. Nevertheless the ABAA will continue to advocate for the weight limit to be increased to at least 55,000kg [121,250 lb], to accommodate today's larger, quieter business jets." ○

Flying to New Zealand

Neighboring Australia, New Zealand (NZ) has a growing business aviation sector. *Business Airport International* spoke with two experts from Aviation New Zealand, which represents the interests of the general aviation community in the country, to find out more

Interviewees: **John Nicholson**, chief executive (JN) and **Bill MacGregor**, executive officer (BM)

How is the market faring at the moment?

JN: The market in NZ is small and very seasonal in nature, with the high season typically from December through to April. Business in 2018 is ahead of 2017. Tourism is the major driver of growth in business aviation. Total arrivals into the country for tourism are expected to reach 5.1 million by 2024 – up from 3.78 million in 2018. Business jet customers traditionally come from the USA, Asia and Europe, but demand from India is also growing.

In terms of infrastructure developments, the main gateway airports in New Zealand (Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch) are all currently involved in expansion programs, including terminal upgrades and hotel developments. Considerable development is also being undertaken in regional New Zealand with a new terminal opened in Nelson in 2018, a new terminal in Tauranga scheduled to open by the end of 2018, and expansions underway in centers including Kerikeri (Bay of Islands), Napier, New Plymouth and Rotorua.

What are the key things operators should be aware of when flying into NZ?

BM: Private jets must land at an airport that is approved by both NZ Customs and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). If you are arriving at a customs airport, you must tell NZ Customs at least two – and preferably 24 – hours before you land. You must arrive during working hours unless there are extenuating circumstances. When you arrive, Customs and MPI biosecurity officers will come to meet you at the aircraft. Don't let any people, luggage or cargo leave the plane until the officers give you permission. Arrival cards must be completed for each person on the plane and you must provide evidence of clearance from your last port of departure.

If it is not possible to land at a Customs airport, or you're arriving outside working hours, you must get approval at least five working days in advance. And if you can't land at an MPI-approved airport you must get permission at least 10 working days in advance, unless there is an emergency.

What are the unique challenges facing this market?

JN: When compared with flight hours flown by Australian charter jets, New Zealand jets typically fly fewer hours in a season, making their hourly rate higher than for foreign aircraft. This can lead to a perception that New Zealand is expensive for charter. However, the exchange rate currently assists in mitigating this to a certain extent.

Another challenge is that some NZ airports can be resistant to business jet operations. Queenstown Airport, for example, is struggling to provide sufficient parking for business jets during peak periods and is turning aircraft away at times. Auckland Airport has not provided space for expansion of business jet operations and it is currently impossible to obtain land there to build a hangar. This is not expected to change before 2028. New business jet owners will want to have their aircraft hangared and the preferred airport is Auckland, so the constraints around new hangars is hampering growth.

What do the next few years hold?

BM: The outlook is positive. The 2018 Virtuoso Luxe report rated New Zealand third in top adventure destinations and fifth in top global destinations. The 36th America's Cup is to be held in Auckland in 2021, the UCI Track Cycling World Cup over the next two years, the World Ironman Championships in 2020 and other such events will give New Zealand international exposure and improve the prospects of further private jet flights to the country.

Below (left to right): **Bill MacGregor**, executive officer, and **John Nicholson**, chief executive, Aviation New Zealand





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Staying power

According to the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), retaining business aviation talent has never been more challenging. One reason is clear: the appeal of commercial airlines. A senior captain flying business jets will earn between US\$106,500 (£82,000) and US\$176,300 (£135,800) per annum. At American Airlines, a captain piloting a Boeing 737 or Airbus A320 averages US\$239,000 (£184,000). Although these particular remuneration imbalances relate to pilots, similar imbalances exist across the board. Furthermore, airlines offer consistent hours that help balance the demands of family, career and personal needs. This all plays out against the long-forewarned pilot shortage: according to a University of North Dakota study,

a 15,000-pilot gap is expected in the USA alone by 2026. How can business aviation compete?

Flexible workplace

"Competitive compensation is important, but it is not the only factor in making one opportunity more appealing than another," says Gregory Adams, director of operations at charter company Jen-Air, LLC. "Quality of life, opportunities for continuing education and professional development, and being empowered to contribute to the department in meaningful ways, are just some of the items other than compensation that can make a job more or less appealing."

"Most of us involved in business aviation realize we are not in a traditional 9 to 5, Monday through Friday career," adds Jim Sparks, a business aviation educator affiliated with Global Jet Services. "Some

organizations have businesses that function 24/7 and as such require a workforce with a willingness to adapt to scheduled times, plus fill in as needed around fluctuations in workflow. The business should in turn consider personal needs of employees and make provisions to accommodate the impact of day-to-day life in a frequently fast-paced and often high-stress environment. In other words, reasonable job flexibility is a good employee motivator. For example, when the aircraft is on the road and the work caught up, there is no need to be at the hangar."

In an effort to retain staff, a company can review its scheduling, training and benefits programs to see if there are opportunities to improve employee lifestyle which would heighten morale and retention. Some departments are already hiring additional personnel to improve the work/life balance of existing employees. Establishing a culture of independence can also have a positive effect.

"I believe that focusing on establishing clear direction, along with empowerment to make decisions, can provide a team member with a higher sense of value," explains Phil Suglia, sales manager at business jet support company Duncan Aviation. "It's important to find staff who have the integrity to support a self-reliant, self-motivated environment and then allow them to establish their own schedule, provided they can fulfill the requirements of the job and the goals put before them. This also requires investment in your leadership staff."

Below: **The difference in remuneration can make business aviation less appealing than commercial airlines to pilots**



adjustments in today's market, or suffer the consequences and costs associated with high turnover," says Jen-Air's Adams. "Evaluate the competition – namely airlines – and make adjustments to salary, bonus and retirement compensation to be more competitive. When managed appropriately, this likely does not mean matching dollar for dollar what a 30-year 777 captain is making today. Rather, you must consider all aspects of the risk/reward profile of leaving business aviation for an airline job and communicate those to your team."

The large number of airline pilots reaching the age of 65 and being put into retirement in the coming years can be viewed as a boost to the business aviation potential workforce. All will be highly experienced, and some won't want to stop flying. Hiring a recently retired airline pilot, or indeed two, to fill one vacancy, thereby allowing them to ease into retirement, could yet be a boon to the industry.

What, though, of the other employees? While pilots may be seen as the kings of the air, other staff are just as keen to seek remuneration commensurate with their skills and experience.

Sheryl Barden, president and CEO of business aviation recruitment agency Aviation Personnel International, sees the bigger picture. "Rather than focus on discrepancy in pay, employers need to continue to sell the value of what they do against the value of an airline," she says. "Some people just want to show up, fly, and go home, but for those who want to grow professionally, there

The pay gap

Migration from business to commercial aviation has historically been the preserve of pilots, and the discrepancy of pilot pay remains a problem. With pilot shortages a very present issue, the option to make some kind of change – financial or otherwise – may help prevent any exodus.

"With pilots, you must take the time to evaluate your specific situation as it pertains to pay and expect to make

"It is essential that employers recognize the unique role technicians play in sustaining the global economy"

Jim Sparks, business aviation educator,
Global Jet Services



How to hold onto staff

Industry experts share their advice on how to keep staff happy

"Leaders and HR personnel must listen to the employees in the flight department, understand their concerns and not attempt to superimpose a rigid, corporate structure upon them"

Christopher M Broyhill,
SVP of strategic development,
Clay Lacy Aviation



"If business aviation companies pay more and allow for better time off, they'll go a long way toward keeping quality people"

Christopher M Broyhill

are exciting projects to work on plus greater potential for personal development. It's about understanding your employees and what they value. You're giving them something money can't buy. For those who gravitate toward the more unpredictable yet exciting world of business aviation, we need to retain their motivations. The kind of camaraderie you find in business aviation is rarely seen in large airlines. You can use that personalization to your advantage and make people feel valued."

The technician

Technicians involved in business aviation differ from most in the commercial field in that they take ownership of the aircraft entrusted to their care. Many, with the right company, appreciate the challenges and opportunities, and also enjoy functioning in what can be more of a family environment. Technicians generally appreciate that these machines require maintenance at inconvenient times and, since the buck stops with them, are bound to ensure that aircraft in their care are fit for mission.

"It is essential that employers recognize the unique role we play in sustaining the global economy and not begrudge technicians their due," comments Global Jet Services' Sparks. "The question should also be asked by human resource departments: Why is the person responsible for 24/7 airworthiness of the company's multimillion-dollar

"Meeting needs for the next generation of business aviation professionals will take energy and creativity"

Suzanne Kearns, University of Waterloo, Canada



aviation asset of a lesser value than the mechanic taking care of the boss's car? In short, retaining high-value employees is not magic. Fair treatment and periodic recognition are generally the lubricants that keep aviation maintenance running smoothly."

Next generation

Young adults place a high level of importance on work/life balance. To attract and retain this generation, a job offer might include a benefits package that has flexible allowances for lifestyle services such as gym memberships, massages and nutritionists. Flexible benefits packages and schedules that support desired lifestyles, as well as finding the kind of person who is passionate about this world, will aid recruitment and 'stickability'.

"Meeting needs for the next generation of business aviation professionals will take energy and creativity," says Suzanne Kearns, whose research at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, focuses on aviation human factors and pilot training. "Increasingly it should become a part of every organization's activities to participate in outreach to the next generation, whether via community airshows, engaging with youth on social media, or through student clubs or associations. It is crucial that young people understand the opportunities available. A particular challenge for business aviation is that young people don't always understand the roles of professionals in this sector

"Structure competitive compensation to include some kind of vested benefit or 'hook' one has to earn"
Sheryl Barden, president and CEO, Aviation Personnel International

"Group outings are something staff value and adds to a sticky culture. It shows appreciation and enhances camaraderie"
Sheryl Barden

"Communicating with staff and showing how much they are valued goes a long way"
Sheryl Barden



"If you can create a culture and environment that matches or even exceeds team member expectations, pay becomes less important"
Phil Suglia, sales manager, Duncan Aviation



"Employees are multifaceted humans whose needs and goals change. Keeping in tune with these changes helps managers meet their employees' needs. People can't be put in a box – by age, gender or role"
Jodie Brown, founder, Summit Solutions



"Add fun into the workplace"
Jodie Brown

"Without a clear vision and direction, people won't feel purpose in what they are doing"
Jodie Brown

“People have needs, wants and desires, both professionally and personally, and it’s up to companies to support that”

Phil Suglia, sales manager, Duncan Aviation

as, unlike commercial air transportation, they may not have experienced it first-hand. This should be central to the way the business is sold to the young.”

“Find out what they want from a career that isn’t just a job,” adds Suglia from Duncan Aviation. “Ask what day-to-day working life looks like to them. Companies need to ask such questions of current and potential employees to crack the code on hiring and retaining people. Business aviation is no different to any other industry. People have needs, wants and desires, both professionally and personally, and it’s up to companies to support that. When they do, employees and their families have more of a sense of loyalty toward that company. I have seen wellness programs, health clinics, lunch cookouts, team outings, flexible benefit plans, clear career paths, connected leadership, clear goals and self-policed schedules. Many of these support personal needs and include the employee’s family.”

Conclusion

Business aviation is more diverse than many realize. It’s not all about the pilot. Every project manager, sales person, leader, engineer and certification specialist must be valued. The opportunity to develop and maintain a challenging, rewarding and well-paid career that supports personal goals is clearly there, but will only be enhanced by competitive remuneration, flexibility and personal development. By such means, staff will stick around.

“Business aviation is exciting every day and those of us who know about it need to help others see what experiences await them if they challenge themselves to stick with it,” concludes Suglia. ○

Right: Aircraft maintenance technicians should be viewed as important members of the team



Aviation leadership for women

Hillary O’Connor Mueri, chief legal officer at Intrepid Analytics and retired US Naval Flight Officer, discusses how women need to be better represented in the aviation industry



What is your background?

I have worked ‘in the trenches’ across a broad swathe of the aviation industry for the past 20 years. After graduation, I became a Naval Flight Officer with the US Navy. Simultaneously, I managed 30 aircraft mechanics and trained other aircrew in fighter weapons and tactics. After the Navy I went to law school, then practiced defending major aviation manufacturers after mishaps. Currently I work with Weisser Pardo AG in Zurich, providing consulting and legal services to aviation and technology clients. Based on my experience, I advocate for active efforts to improve the representation of women in aviation leadership, not only for the benefit of women, but because it is in the best interests of the industry.

How would you summarize attitudes to women in the aviation industry?

Beyond the different standards that women face across all industries, I believe women face additional difficulties in aviation, arising from our culture. Aviation is still seen as a manly endeavor, one where ‘the right stuff’ is a magical, mystical, intrinsic quality possessed only by certain men and necessary for business success. We live in a world where people will de-plane rather than fly with a woman pilot, and where a major aviation executive this year publicly ‘joked’ that his job is too difficult for a woman. Think-pieces abound on how women are destroying aviation culture and camaraderie. One need only peek at the comments section of any article on women in aviation to see derision and outright hostility to efforts to increase the number of women in the industry, complete with unfounded accusations of lowered standards or capitulating to political correctness at the expense of safety or profit.

How can the representation of women in aviation leadership be increased?

Aviation companies need to recognize and communicate the fact that increased representation of women

in aviation leadership is good for business. They need to treat diversity as a business strategy instead of a burden or charity, and make the proper investments in attracting, retaining and advancing female talent. Companies with more female leaders outperform those without them on return on equity, share price, net income growth, and price-to-book value. No matter how large or small an aviation company or department is, it stands to benefit from increased representation of women. Teams with more balanced male-female ratios produce results that are more sustainable and predictable than unbalanced teams, are more engaged, produce more satisfied customers, and generate greater profits. In addition, the industry must address the internal structural barriers that prevent women from rising to leadership positions in aviation. Women make up about 40% of the aviation sector workforce, but just 16% of board seats, 11% of executives and 3% of aviation CEOs – worse than the representation of women in general business leadership.

What can the industry do to help develop and advance women leaders?

Reducing or eliminating internal structural barriers for women in the aviation industry includes addressing pipeline barriers to women. A comprehensive program will necessarily include plans on how to develop and advance them and will need to address the many facets that make up pipeline barriers (including clustering women into non-leadership track positions and lack of advancement support, such as mentoring, training and career development opportunities). In addition, aviation companies should provide high-potential women with networking opportunities, particularly ones that break the barriers between company divisions and/or seniority levels – or, even better, ones that allow rising leaders to interact with clients, suppliers and other professionals outside of the organization.

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First lady

Charlotte Pedersen, CEO of Luxaviation Helicopters, speaks to *Business Airport International* about her career with the Royal Danish Air Force, her goals for Luxaviation Helicopters and the impact of new flying innovations on business aviation

Words | Kirstie Pickering





“There were female officers in the Danish military in the late 1980s, but no female pilots before us”



When Luxaviation Group launched its helicopter company in February 2017, selecting its head was a natural choice for CEO Patrick Hansen. Charlotte Pedersen – previously chief operating officer at Luxaviation Group – was named CEO of Luxaviation Helicopters, a credit to her long and successful career in the aviation industry.

“I started my career in aviation by pure chance,” reveals Pedersen. “I was at school and there was an advertisement in the newspaper saying the military was looking for female applicants. I applied, went through all the testing, and I qualified as a pilot in the Royal Danish Air Force. There were many young people who started the training with me initially, but at the end of the first week of testing, there were only two of us who passed everything, the other person also being female.”

Pedersen and the other female pilot recruit went on to start their first day in the Danish Air Force together. As the first female pilots in the Danish military, the twosome attracted media attention and Pedersen was interviewed on multiple occasions.

“There were female officers in the Danish military in the late 1980s, but not female pilots before us,” says Pedersen. “There was a trend that if you were a female officer, you had your hair cut short and looked and acted almost the same

“In the 100 years since aviation began, the sector has developed significantly, but not as quickly or as much as it is developing today”

Above: Pedersen flew search and rescue helicopters for the Royal Danish Air Force

as the males. We were a little bit different. I kept my long hair and I was still very feminine.

“During all the military training, we had to do exactly the same things as our male counterparts and pass the same exams. We were very much welcomed, but there was a lot of attention on what we did, to check we were capable of fulfilling the task. We were quickly accepted by our colleagues. They were around the same age as us, which meant they had also grown up in an age where women could do the same things as men. For the older generation, we were accepted as being part of the team as soon as we performed well. It was a matter of showing you could do it and then you were in.”

Pedersen was with the Danish Air Force for 17 years, a time that she reflects upon fondly. “I couldn’t have wished for better education and training,” she says. “In the military, you get close with colleagues who then become friends. We worked with all of the people we studied with, so we knew each other very well and the level of teamwork performance was excellent.

“There is one moment I will always remember. I was flying search and rescue helicopters in the Air Force, and we had flown a very sick two-year-old boy to get medical treatment. Two years later, I was grocery shopping and there was a lady who I recognized. She came over and asked if I was a pilot and when I said yes, she hugged me. It was the mother of the little boy we saved and she remembered me. It was so good to hear that he survived

and all our efforts to help him were worthwhile. I was so touched that she remembered me.”

Career change

In 2006, Pedersen’s husband received an assignment to work with NATO in Belgium for three years. As their children were about to start school, she decided it was the perfect time to take leave from the Air Force. The family moved abroad and, when the three years were over, moved again, to Luxembourg. Here, Pedersen became a flight inspector for the country’s Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Pedersen always had a desire to study for a master’s degree in business, and took the opportunity the free time offered her to gain the qualification. Luxaviation Group’s CEO Hansen, having met Pedersen and learned of her achievements, asked her to join the company as COO. She accepted.

“For me, it was an opportunity to not simply stay in expert aviation, where my career had been until then, but to go out into the business side of the industry,” says Pedersen. “In my new role, I helped Patrick Hansen establish Luxaviation Group. When I joined him, we had four jets and 60 employees. Three-and-a-half years later, we had 1,700 employees.

“In 2016, when our global group was established with a solid structure in place, Hansen asked me if I wanted to look into the helicopter world to develop that side of the business. This is how Luxaviation Helicopters came to be.”

Progress report

As the company nears two years since its launch, Luxaviation Helicopters is striving to become the preferred helicopter company worldwide. Pedersen is aware such success requires constant development, responding to customer feedback and learning from outside influences, but she is undeterred in her mission.

“I feel we have found a niche in the market at the right time,” she says. “We understand our clients’ needs and we have flexible solutions that suit them. There is a growing need for VIP helicopters around the world and an increasing interest in helicopter management.

“The number of high-net-worth individuals is expected to grow by 30% over the next five years, and the number of helicopter deliveries is expected to soar to reflect this. There is an additional demand for helicopters on yachts, an area

A timeline: Luxaviation Helicopters

In the two years since it launched, the helicopter company has evolved through partnerships, acquisitions and a growing fleet.

February 2017 – Luxaviation Helicopters launches

Present in key locations spanning Luxaviation Group’s worldwide operations in Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, the Americas and the Middle East, Luxaviation Helicopters manages VIP and VIP helicopters for private and business clients.

May 2017 – First strategic partner
The company partners with Azur Hélicoptère to bring private helicopter and jet experiences to clients visiting the South of France.

September 2017 – The big acquisition
Luxaviation Helicopters buys UK-based Starspeed, a global helicopter management, charter and training company. The company incorporates Starspeed’s 23 helicopters into its own fleet, taking its total offering to 42 aircraft.

June 2018 – A new partnership with HeliFlite
The company enters its first international partnership, with HeliFlite, a premier VIP rotorcraft operator in the USA.

October 2018 – Latin America partner
The helicopter firm creates links with Latin America with a new partnership with Brazil-based rotorcraft operator Icon Aviation.

where we also operate, and we are constantly exploring ways we can offer more to our clients.”

Aside from its corporate activities, Luxaviation Helicopters is also involved in consultancy projects around the world. “There are many countries where governments and organizations want to establish helicopter operations for medical, offshore and search and rescue purposes, but they lack the understanding and resources to make this a reality,” says Pedersen. “We help in these sectors by establishing the desired business model and we then often work with fellow helicopter companies in the region to develop the project.”

Change of norm

Constructing and developing a new business has made Pedersen aware of the trends and challenges that could impact her company. She believes new technology will completely revolutionize the century-old aviation industry, creating a new normal, and requiring existing businesses to keep up with the times.

“The development of new flying vehicles, electric aircraft and drones is going to be the biggest impact on aviation since airplanes were invented,” says Pedersen. “If you look back over the 100 years since aviation began, the sector has developed a lot, but not as quickly as it is developing today.

“We still have airplanes with wings and helicopters with rotors, and now we’re looking at something completely new that is game-changing. It’s a challenge, but also just simply a different means of transportation. Air charter is currently performed by helicopters and jets, but there will likely be a third product within a decade. In my mind, this is part of normal evolution.”

Despite this, Pedersen is concerned about the lack of regulations surrounding new innovations that are already flying in the skies.

“These flying vehicles, and the operation of them, must fall under experienced companies in the sector. You need a commercial aviation company and AOC just like now in order to operate passenger transportation. Otherwise, I fear that the last 100 years of learnings in aviation safety will not be used for the benefit of the safe flying of new vehicles.

“This is important. Even though it is something that can probably be controlled by a computer, it is crucial that the companies and people with the right knowledge control the operation of new flying innovations.”

Booming success

Looking forward, Pedersen is intent on maximizing the potential of Luxaviation Helicopters. With partnerships with US rotorcraft operator HeliFlite and Brazil-based Icon Aviation, and the acquisition of charter specialist Starspeed, already under its belt, the future looks promising for this young business.

“One of the highlights of my time at Luxaviation Helicopters was when we acquired Starspeed and integrated its team into ours successfully,” concludes Pedersen. “It was very important to me that they felt happy about us taking over their company and moving it forward.

“What makes me the happiest is when I have great feedback from both clients and our employees. This means the day is a good one for me, and I go home smiling.” ○



What:

Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference 2019

When:

January 29 - February 1, 2019

Where:

*Henry B González Convention Center,
San Antonio, Texas, USA*

Texan

hospitality

**Top 5 attendee
titles**

- **Flight coordinator**
- **Scheduler/dispatcher**
- **President/CEO**
- **Manager**
- **Pilot**

**2,900+
attendees**

**50 US states
represented**

**47 countries
represented**

**580+
exhibitor booths**

NBAA's annual Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference is the place to be to discover the latest operational information, learn about new products and technologies, and socialize with peers within the business aviation community.

The next few pages will provide you with everything you need to know to enjoy this year's event in Texas

Words | Hazel King

**Visit Business
Airport
International on
Booth 1839!**

Unmissable conference sessions

Business Airport International has picked six not-to-be-missed conference sessions taking place at S&D 2019

Beyond the buzz: How technology is changing business aviation

When: Wednesday, January 30, 1:00-2:30pm

The future is here and it's affecting everything from flight planning to business transactions. Cut through the jargon and learn how unmanned operations, cryptocurrencies, virtual reality, alternative energies, and more, are impacting the industry.

Building morale: Bridging departmental divides

When: Wednesday, January 30, 3:30-5:00pm

Does your department fire on all cylinders? If not, it may be because team morale is negatively impacting performance. In this personnel-focused session, you'll learn how a culture of trust can help break down the partitions between pilots, maintenance and scheduling, as well as why a shared focus on work/life balance will help engage your team members.

Dispatch resource management

When: Thursday, January 31, 10:30-11:45am

Even in today's high-tech world, with computer programs automating many tasks, schedulers and dispatchers are central to the success of aviation operations. This session will focus on dispatch resource management tools and techniques to help your team enhance interpersonal communication, reduce stress and conflict, increase situational awareness, promote a culture of safety and service, and reinforce a philosophy of error-free performance.

Vetting your supplemental lift

When: Thursday, January 31, 1:00-2:30pm

Let's face it, not all supplemental lift providers are equal... or are they? Ensure that you are safeguarding your company's standards for safety, training and compliance as they relate to your crew and aircraft being utilized by a supplemental provider. This session will provide attendees with checklist information, important vetting considerations, and tips for speaking effectively with leadership if supplemental lift is required.

Continued on page 67

Exhibitor spotlight

Company: Gary Jet Center
Interviewee: Lynn Eplawy, president
Booth: 1616



What will you be showcasing at Schedulers & Dispatchers this year?

The Gary Jet Center will continue to share our story and showcase our world-class facility, which is just 25 minutes from downtown Chicago.

How important is the event in the business aviation calendar and why?

The NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers conference is the premier event for Gary Jet Center's FBO operations. The focused attendee list enables us to meet with the majority of our current customers and gives us the opportunity to share our story with hundreds of potential new ones. It has quickly surpassed the annual NBAA-BACE event as the most important show for our FBO.

What are you looking forward to seeing at this year's event?

As always, we look forward to meeting customers that we work with but perhaps don't see! In our business we see the pilots, so it's a great opportunity to build our relationships with the schedulers, dispatchers and customer service personnel who work to send aircraft our way. The ability to put a face to a name is something that makes a difference.

How has your business grown in the past few years?

The Gary Jet Center has had tremendous growth in recent years with the addition of another 40,000ft² (3,700m²) hangar in 2012 and a brand-new luxurious 8,300ft² (770m²) FBO last year. The addition of our new FBO has solidified our position as the Chicago metropolitan area's premier corporate and private aviation destination for both service and customer experience. Gary Jet Center is an aviation services business and we have had tremendous growth in our maintenance capabilities in the last year as well, becoming an avionics repair station with dealer agreements with Garmin, Rockwell Collins, BendixKing and GoGo, to name a few.

What areas will you be developing over the next year or so?

Over the next year we will continue to grow our aircraft management and charter divisions with a continued focus on customer care and experience. We currently have 10 aircraft on our FAA Part 135 Certificate and we will continue to pursue opportunities to add synergistic solutions for aircraft owners.

Bangor International Airport

As well as celebrating its 50th anniversary, Bangor International Airport (BGR) in Maine will be showcasing its competitive pricing and quick-turn capability at this year's Schedulers & Dispatchers event. The company is also hoping to promote the addition of its new Global ER-2875 de-icer, which has been specifically designed for larger aircraft such as the Airbus A-380, Antonov An-225, C5 and C17 military airplanes and similar cargo planes.

BGR loves attending S&D because it features key decision makers who have influence over where aircraft go for services. The airport is looking forward to the opportunity to share all that BGR has to offer with a robust crowd of operators, trip support providers and fuel managers.

Over the past year BGR has continued to hit record numbers on the domestic airside, but also hopes to see bigger numbers in the cargo arena over the next few years as it really begins to focus on all of its business sectors in a more strategic way.

Booth 531



Places to eat

San Antonio is a designated Creative City of Gastronomy and is part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), signifying its place as an international culinary destination. For visitors to Schedulers & Dispatchers looking to enjoy the culinary delights of the city, here are some of the must-visit restaurants in the area:

Mi Tierra Café Y Panadería

Opened in 1941, Mi Tierra Café is a world-famous landmark and the place locals and tourists go for authentic Mexican food and a warm Texas welcome. The restaurant is run by the founders' children and grandchildren and includes live mariachi performances.

Address: 218 Produce Row, San Antonio, TX 78207

From exhibition center: 1.2 miles (2km)

Cuisine: Tex-Mex

Opening hours: 24 hours



Madhatters Tea House & Café

Located in the heart of the historic King William neighborhood, within walking distance of the River Walk, and just minutes from all the San Antonio Missions, this tea house café serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Address: 320 Beauregard, San Antonio, TX 78204

From exhibition center: 0.9 miles (1.4km)

Cuisine: International

Opening hours: Monday-Thursday 7:00am-6:00pm;
 Friday 7:00am-9:00pm; Saturday 8:00am-9:00pm;
 Sunday: 9:00am-3:00pm



Booth 1612

Bent Wing Flight Services

Attending NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers for the first time will be Bent Wing Flight Services. Operating out of a brand-new US\$4.8m building representing the World War II F4U Corsair for which the airport was built, Bent Wing Flight Services is the only FBO at Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport (KFHB), Amelia Island, Florida. Bent Wing Flight Services prides itself on providing its guests with superior service. Certified trained line staff offer red-carpet service with both full-service and self-serve fuel. Professional customer service personnel are pleased to assist with a full range of concierge services including courtesy cars, Hertz rental cars, hotel reservations and catering services. There are two executive conference rooms on-site accommodating 8-15 people each, in addition to a large meeting room seating up to 55 people.

The two-story atrium lobby features stylish aviation-themed leather seating and a museum-quality half-scale replica of the F4U Corsair suspended from the glass 'cockpit' skylight. The World War II theme continues with the custom-designed reception desk, created from the fuselage and wing flap of a 1943 T-6 aircraft and featuring lighted strips of Marston Mat. The FBO offers a full range of amenities for flight crew, including a fully equipped flight planning room and a comfortable pilot lounge with a zero gravity massage chair. Passengers and crew will appreciate the Shopette boutique, featuring aviation-themed clothing and accessories, pilot supplies and artist-created gifts.

Bent Wing Flight Services welcomes the opportunity to introduce itself at S&D 2019 and looks forward to welcoming crew and passengers to Amelia Island.

Continued from page 65

Aviation emissions: Let's clear the air

When: Friday, February 1, 10:15-11:30am

Business aviation must adapt to keep up with complex and ever-changing carbon emissions regulations. The addition of SWISS-ETS and CORSIA to the regulatory landscape means there are now three separate programs affecting segments of the industry concurrently. This presentation will discuss these programs' regulatory requirements, applicable and exempt operations, monitoring methodology, available mitigation tools, and compliance deadlines you need to know about.

Recognizing talent and fostering growth

When: Friday, February 1, 1:30-3:00pm

Discovering hidden talents within your team and overcoming personality differences is critical to operational harmony and growth. In this session, you'll learn how a clear, integrated framework can help you get the most out of your team, as well as diving into best practices for mentoring, counseling and developing future leaders. Real work examples will bring these lessons to life to help you bridge the gap between your team's experience and potential.

**Information correct at time
of going to press**



Signature

Signature offers contemporary interpretations of classic dishes – fresher, brighter versions of traditional cuisine enlivened with Texas spirit. Local, organic and seasonal ingredients are used.
Address: 16401 La Cantera Parkway, San Antonio, TX 78256

From exhibition center: 18 miles (29km)

Cuisine: American

Opening hours: Signature Hour: Tuesday-Friday 4:30-6:00pm; Dinner – Tuesday-Saturday 5:30-10:00pm; Sunday – 10:30am-2:00pm & 5:30-9:00pm

Botika

Botika is a Peruvian-Asian restaurant serving Chifa (Chinese-Peruvian) and Nikkei (Japanese-Peruvian) cuisines, exploring the crossroads between South Asia and South America. The bar offers classic cocktails and a wide variety of rums, piscos and cachacas, while the restaurant features a sushi-ceviche bar, a cocktail lounge and late-night dining options.

Address: 303 Pearl Parkway, Suite 111, San Antonio, TX 78215

From exhibition center: 1.8 miles (3km)

Cuisine: Peruvian-Asian

Opening hours: Lunch – Tuesday-Sunday 11:30am-3:00pm; Dinner – Monday 5:00-9:00pm, Tuesday-Thursday 5:00-10:00pm, Friday-Saturday 5:00-10:30pm; Brunch – Sunday 11:30am-3:00pm

Green Vegetarian Cuisine

The restaurant's mission is to serve delicious and affordable vegetarian comfort food, providing a wide range of options for vegetarians, vegans and omnivores alike, to promote healthier choices in a fast-food world.

Address: 200 E Grayson, Suite 120, San Antonio, TX 78220

From exhibition center: 2 miles (3.3km)

Cuisine: Vegetarian and vegan

Opening hours: Sunday 9:00am-9:00pm; Monday-Thursday 8:00am-9:00pm, Friday 8:00am-8:00pm



Air Elite Network

Booth 900

Air Elite Network will be introducing two new members to its global network of independently owned FBOs at Schedulers & Dispatchers 2019. JetSet Services and Great Circle Flight Services joined the network in October 2018 and take the number of FBOs to 72.

JetSet Services is based at Athens International Airport (LGAV) and supports flights across 20 other main airports in Greece. The company offers bespoke VIP and handling services to its customers, as well as 24-hour operational assistance, airport lot coordination, PPRs and landing permits.

Great Circle Flight Services, a Ross Aviation FBO, located at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (PANC) in Alaska, offers a personal, attentive service to large business aircraft traveling between financial centers in the USA and Asia.

"We continually strive to find exceptional FBOs to enhance the network. JetSet Services and Great Circle Flight Services are a clear fit based on their elevated service philosophies and well-appointed



facilities. Our mission with the Air Elite Network is to provide business aircraft operators with consistent, elevated service at extraordinary locations. Wherever they fly around the world, they will get personalized services unique to their wants and needs. We look forward to delivering the Diamond Difference in Greece and Alaska," says Steve Drzymalla, Air Elite board member and SVP, business aviation bulk fuel sales at World Fuel Services.

Sonoma Jet Center

Booth 1400

At this year's Schedulers & Dispatchers, Sonoma Jet Center will be celebrating the news that it has become the first FBO in Northern California to achieve Stage II of the International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling (IS-BAH).

The certification demonstrates the company's commitment to safety and innovation for customers, employees and the public. IS-BAH Stage II certification is the second of three levels of the highest possible safety standards that an FBO can have.

Josh Hochberg, president of Sonoma Jet Center (pictured left below), said, "This is a huge achievement by a dedicated team committed to safety. We are very proud of this endorsement of our FBO, safety culture and processes. We want our customers to know that we are making an ongoing investment in safety that only a handful of other companies have done in North America thus far."

Sonoma Jet Center is an FBO at the Charles M Schulz – Sonoma County Airport (STS) in Santa Rosa, California. The company is an independently owned and operated affiliate of Signature Flight Support.



Exhibitor spotlight

Company: XLR Executive Jet Centers

Interviewee: Chris Beer, director

Booth: 923



What will you be showcasing at Schedulers & Dispatchers this year?

This will be the first time XLR Executive Jet Centers has exhibited at Schedulers & Dispatchers (S&D) and we are very excited to attend such a specialist exhibition that brings together key schedulers and dispatchers in one location. We will be showcasing our flagship Air Elite Diamond Jet Centre and operation, based at Birmingham Airport. Birmingham is the second-largest city in the UK and has many industries on the doorstep, as well as some of the country's biggest music venues within a stone's throw of XLR.

What are you looking forward to seeing at this year's event?

XLR is very excited about the larger cabin aircraft that are currently being produced. Gulfstream, for example, is revolutionizing the corporate market with the G500 and G600 aircraft and the ultra-long range G650ER. The smaller cabin G280 has had a facelift and is now an excellent contender in its field and XLR is seeing more of its customers choose these aircraft. XLR Birmingham also looks after a lot of larger aircraft charter traffic. This market shows no softening, and as such we're looking at improving customer experience by using bespoke

products such as automated passenger check-in. Our jet centers will soon be able to offer electronic boarding cards via passengers' phones and self-service kiosks, which will help streamline the experience. We're looking forward to discussing these developments at S&D.

What makes XLR stand out from its competitors?

The unique selling point for XLR at Birmingham Airport is our 27,000ft² (2,500m²) state-of-the-art heated hangar, which is fully equipped to allow easy movement/towing of aircraft in and out and reduces hefty de-icing bills during inclement weather. The hangar also provides discreet support for repatriation of passengers who require medical assistance on ambulance flights. The hangar is fully heated, with high-intensity lighting, which can give medical practitioners the time to carry out life-saving treatment, should it be necessary. The XLR hangar also provides a separate ambulance entrance that gives direct access out of and away from the facility, which helps when urgent transfers are required. XLR Birmingham is the only FBO at Birmingham with a hangar and towing capabilities for all corporate aircraft.

Awards
presentation**Business aviation
veteran to receive
Outstanding Achievement
and Leadership Award**

NBAA will present long-time business aviation volunteer Kellie Rittenhouse with the Schedulers & Dispatchers Outstanding Achievement and Leadership Award at the 2019 Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference in San Antonio, Texas on January 29-February 1.

Rittenhouse, a certified aviation manager (CAM), was one of the first women to complete CAM accreditation and holds an FAA dispatcher certification. She is now director of aviation for Hangar Aviation Management. Rittenhouse is a former S&D Committee member and chaired the 2004 Conference in Savannah, Georgia. After achieving her CAM accreditation, she served on the CAM governing board and continues to be a frequent presenter at NBAA and regional events.

Rittenhouse is the 11th winner of this award, which was created in 2008 and recognizes individuals who have shared their business aviation industry expertise, provided extraordinary service, exhibited leadership and made significant contributions to the scheduling and dispatching function.

"Kellie is the first flight department leader to be presented with this award, which is notable as companies see the value in having non-flying professionals as aviation directors," comments NBAA's senior director of educational strategy, Jo Damato.

**Signature Flight
Support**

Booth 611

Signature Flight Support will be promoting its full range of services at Schedulers & Dispatchers 2019, including its new partnership with Nexus Luxury Collection to create the Nexus Sky Lounges by Signature Flight Support in select major cities across North America.

A network of flagship and standard Sky Lounges will cover key locations for both personal and business travel within North America. The first flagship Nexus Sky Lounge by Signature Flight Support will open at Teterboro Airport near New York City in June 2019 and will feature a gym with locker rooms, a golf simulator, grab-and-go food and beverages, a Dylan's Candy Bar, a meeting room, a children's area and concierge services.

Current Signature Flight Support customers will be invited to join the Nexus Sky Lounge membership program. Lounge members will gain access to the new facilities as they come online and will enjoy a range of additional services, benefits and experiences offered by the company.

Exhibitor spotlight

Company: Avfuel

Interviewee: Marci Ammerman,
vice president of marketing

Booth: 1434

**What will Avfuel be showcasing at
Schedulers & Dispatchers this year?**

Avfuel will showcase more than 80 co-exhibiting FBOs, representing our network of 650+ branded FBOs. We'll be attracting attendees to Avfuel's aisles with the show's most highly anticipated promotion: Fuel Your Style. We'll be dedicating a booth to our sustainable alternative jet fuel initiative, which has been a major focus. And, of course, Avfuel will showcase its supply capabilities and array of solutions.

**How important is the event to
business aviation?**

This event is crucial for business aviation. It's one of the best opportunities for fuel suppliers, FBOs and airports to directly connect to fuel decision makers. That's primarily why our presence at the show continues to grow year after year. And the educational sessions are of great importance. Professional development is key to safety, growth and efficiency across the industry.

**What are you looking forward to
seeing at this year's event?**

The Avfuel team looks forward to seeing its long-time customers, as well as meeting new industry peers and potential partners. One of the best qualities of the aviation industry is how close-knit it is. Technology will never fully replace face-to-face

interactions – that is, after all, the business we're in. At the heart of it we connect people, businesses, governments and cultures.

**How has Avfuel grown in the past
few years?**

Avfuel has expanded globally, encompassing 650+ branded locations and 3,000+ contract fuel locations. We've expanded the Avfuel Training System to feature online FAA-approved fuel safety programs, customer service training and Avfuel program training via an intuitive learning environment for an exceptional customer experience. We've worked closely with software leaders to interface with pricing aggregators and scheduling systems to ensure flight departments have simple access to Avfuel pricing. And we also launched the Avfuel Blog to facilitate knowledge-sharing best practices.

**What areas will Avfuel be developing
over the next year or so?**

We will continue to focus on sustainable alternative jet fuel and the logistics required to make it available to customers. Furthermore, Avfuel is developing technology to streamline the scope of its services, including fuel and ancillary service purchasing, contract fuel, loyalty rewards, trip planning, marketing and training. These are in addition to business expansion on a global level. ○



Custom experience

With FBOs that combine luxury facilities with first-class operations in Van Nuys, Honolulu and Everett, **Castle & Cooke Aviation** offers international operators choice for customs on the Pacific Coast

When requiring US Customs along the Pacific Coast, discerning guests need look no further than Castle & Cooke Aviation, providing non-stop excellence and elegance for aviation customers for nearly 40 years. With three coastal locations, the company's dedicated staff awaits operators' arrival for efficient customs experiences.

Van Nuys (KVNY)

Castle & Cooke Aviation Van Nuys welcomes guests with amenities and services at one of the busiest general aviation airports in the world. Those requiring customs are taxied directly to the US Customs office, where the Castle & Cooke Aviation team meets guests with passenger cars or concierge vehicles for expedient service in the greater Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley area.

Those departing KVNY can make use of Castle & Cooke Aviation's luxury facility. From the elegance of the terminal to the personalized care each guest receives, the team at KVNY provides a lavish private aviation journey. With more than 210,000ft² (19,500m²) of hangar, 205,000ft² (19,000m²) of ramp, 45,000ft² (4,200m²) of office and shop space, and a premier meeting and event space – known as building 7501 – across the ramp from the FBO terminal, Castle & Cooke Aviation has everything to exceed expectations with a custom experience for international operators.

Guests to Castle & Cooke Aviation KVNY enjoy full FBO amenities and services, including fueling and ground handling, concierge services and catering, rental and crew cars, an elegant lobby and reception area, and an executive conference room – all available seven days a week.

Honolulu (HNL)

Operators looking for a memorable experience with a little respite may well choose Castle & Cooke Aviation's Honolulu facility. The HNL team is ready to handle the unique demands of international operations with a streamlined system in place for general



aviation customs, complete with a welcoming lei (Hawaiian garland) and car service. Customs clearance is handled on the private ramp adjoining the FBO facility. Customers can remain in their aircraft during the short process.

At its Honolulu location, Castle & Cooke Aviation offers all the amenities of its Van Nuys location, including 5-star facilities, top-of-the-line service from expertly trained staff, and concierge care and catering.

As Hawaii's premier general aviation facility, guests benefit from an FBO terminal complete with 17,600ft² (1,600m²) of hangar space and more than 7,000ft² (650m²) of space dedicated to customer care. The facility offers businesses 60,000ft² (5,600m²) of office space.

Everett (KPAE)

For those operators flying a northern route, Castle & Cooke Aviation's Everett

Vital statistics

Airports: Van Nuys in California, Honolulu in Hawaii, and Everett in Washington

Fuel: Partnered with Avfuel

Facilities: All aircraft support services, concierge services, rental and crew cars, aircraft cleaning and maintenance

Above: **Castle & Cooke Aviation** offers premium services across its three locations

Left: **Visitors to the Hawaii facility** are greeted with a native garland

team is situated in the Pacific Northwest. As a landing right airport – meaning international operators must be granted landing rights through customs – this Castle & Cooke Aviation location offers a more private customs experience than the congested airspace of Boeing Field King County International Airport, Seattle.

Along with a detailed customs clearing, guests will enjoy all the amenities expected of a first-class, metropolitan FBO. Such services and amenities include de-icing, cargo charter ground services, transportation, concierge care and catering, and an elegantly appointed FBO terminal and pilot's lounge.

For those looking to conduct business in Seattle or simply enjoy the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest, Castle & Cooke Aviation PAE is an exceptional choice for expert care.

Located on the same airfield as Boeing's manufacturing facility, Castle & Cooke Aviation is no stranger to handling the complex needs of large aircraft and their entourages. ○

CASTLE & COOKE AVIATION

To learn more about this advertiser, visit www.ukmediaevents.com/info/bai

Reader Inquiry Number 101

Millennial potential

Air Service Basel intends to start 2019 with a young, fresh and focused perspective, aware of the importance of hiring the next generation of business aviation professionals

There is a lot of discourse around millennials as the future users of business aviation. As a company with 30% of its employees under 35, Air Service Basel understands the benefits of actually hiring more millennials into the industry too.

Aliena Sütterlin is one of the industry's youngest continuing airworthiness management organization (CAMO) managers. Her career path goes against the norm: after a three-year apprenticeship in Germany training to be an aircraft mechanic, she spent just two years as a CAMO assistant before taking on Air Service Basel's CAMO management role.

"Aliena is a great example of the next generation of employees in business aviation," says Claudio Lasagni, Air Service Basel's CEO. "She has excelled in the takeover of the CAMO role this past year with her consistent hard work and dedication, and she's introduced some new digital methods that have streamlined internal processes too.

"Younger generations may not have as many years of experience, but they move through training and courses at a faster pace than ever before, are intelligent and motivated, and want to make positive changes. Our industry needs to be shaken up by people like that and I'm happy to see this happening within Air Service Basel.

"In saying that, I believe in hard workers, no matter who you are – or what your age. If you have the drive and motivation to keep a business like ours alive and moving forward, that's the most important thing," adds Lasagni.

There are many elements that attracted Sütterlin to her current role and to business aviation as a whole: "Our industry is small and niche, and I like the feeling of being part of something special," she comments. "I really enjoy having personal contact with operators, technicians and particularly pilots who care very much about their aircraft.

"This is often because they are fixed to their aircraft for long periods of time. I also like working with so many varieties



of single aircraft types and manufacturers rather than just one fleet. This way, I get to discover new things every single day."

Air Service Basel believes it is important to recruit more young people into the business aviation industry, a view that Sütterlin shares. "Our industry is exclusive for its clients and that will not change, but we need to be more open in terms of awareness about the things we do," she says. "This is so that people outside the industry know that while we do serve the rich and their luxurious lifestyle, we do many other things too.

"We also need to be more accessible to students and graduates by providing courses and training. In CAMO, for example, it's difficult to recruit people



Above: **Claudio Lasagni**, CEO at Air Service Basel

Vital statistics

Airport: Basel Airport, Switzerland
Operating hours: 6:00am-10:00pm (extended upon request)
Services: Maintenance, snooze room, conference facilities, hangar and apron parking, CAMO+ program

Left: **Aliena Sütterlin** believes young people can make a positive impact on business aviation

when you need to have decades of technical experience and qualifications. I think we need to become more open-minded as an industry and give chances to people who are motivated to learn regardless of how many years' experience they have, like the chance that was given to me," says Sütterlin.

"We can overlook the younger generation's lack of experience because of their competence, willingness to learn and motivation. These younger people bring fresh new perspectives that many people within the industry no longer have because of their many years of conditioning to it," she adds.

Sütterlin is optimistic about the future of business aviation and the fresh new talent it will attract. She also believes the industry will become more accessible.

"I think business jets will follow a very similar story to the car," she says. "Cars were originally only for the elite, because at that time, there was no need for the average person to travel long distances. Today, nearly everyone owns a car or uses public transport to get to work.

Commercial flying is giving people access to places all around the world through low-cost carriers.

"Globalization is enabling operators to do business everywhere, and business still works best in person. Business aviation can facilitate this.

"The industry is already seeing companies like NetJets and Stratajet shaking up tradition by allowing clients to share the space," Sütterlin concludes. ○

AIR SERVICE BASEL

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 Reader Inquiry Number 102

Fueling conversation

Avfuel explains why sustainable alternative jet fuel (SAJF) is beneficial to business aviation and what the industry can do to support the initiative

The buzz around sustainable alternative jet fuel (SAJF) has grown to an all-time high in 2018, picking up momentum following the release of May's *Business aviation guide to the use of sustainable alternative jet fuel*. While business aviation operators wait for the product, Avfuel's experts in alternative fuels confirm that progress is being made and SAJF should remain a priority.

The benefits

Because SAJF is derived from renewable feedstocks, its entire lifetime produces a net benefit for the environment. For carbon footprint conscious companies with flight departments, the availability of SAJF is one more way to reach corporate environmental sustainability goals.

In conjunction with such goals, using SAJF benefits a brand's image to the public. Those that choose to be on the cutting edge of sustainability may receive a fair amount of media, which could make the extra cost per gallon of SAJF pay for itself in addition to savings through incentives being considered at both the state and federal levels.

SAJF supply

According to Avfuel, availability is the most pressing issue hindering SAJF's widespread adoption. SAJF is a concentrated product, which is then blended with standard petroleum-based jet fuel to create a product that meets the ASTM D1655 standard. There is not yet enough concentrated product to serve the entire aviation community.

Beyond supply, the logistics of blending, storing and transporting the product are intensive, with an array of considerations, including where to source SAJF and the standard petroleum-based jet fuel, where these products will be stored, at what point they are blended and tested, and to whom these products will be delivered.

Avfuel efforts

To bring the product to market for business aviation, Avfuel's team has been working to secure more reliable sources. Its agreement with Gevo – a leading next-



generation biofuels company – was a first major step.

Avfuel is working diligently to determine the most effective logistics plan – in terms of safety, cost and time – to source SAJF and the jet fuel with which to mix it, blend it and define the optimal locations to store it for distribution.

To help encourage producers to increase SAJF outputs, Avfuel is also acquiring commitments from customers to purchase the blended SAJF product. This means the company can then share a more accurate understanding of demand with producers.

Furthermore, Avfuel is working with aviation organizations on an event to reaffirm general aviation's commitment to SAJF. The event – Business Jets Fuel Green: A Step Toward Sustainability – is scheduled for January 17, 2019, at Van Nuys Airport, California, and will demonstrate that SAJF can become a mainstream, drop-in alternative for today's general aviation aircraft.

Flight operator support

Bringing the fuel to market will require efforts on the part of the producer, supplier and end user. Avfuel asserts

Above: **The logistics of blending, storing and transporting SAJF are intensive**

there are many actions flight operators can take to support the initiative.

Flight operators can inquire about their role in reducing their organizations' greenhouse gas emissions. Then, they can decide whether or not the company wants to become an early adopter. Operators can then formalize commitments to purchase SAJF with their home bases or fuel suppliers, helping to provide a more accurate sense of demand, further promoting production.

With this in mind, flight departments should communicate their needs, including an ideal timeline for supply, the volume of product needed, if their home bases would be interested in a steady supply of SAJF, and the cost to – or perhaps not to – commit to using SAJF.

With some of the industry's most dedicated minds behind the task, and with the key support of flight operators, Avfuel is confident business aviation will benefit from the availability of SAJF in the near future. ○

Vital statistics

Fueling locations: 3,000+
FBOs: More than 650 branded FBOs across North America and Europe
Services: Fuel supply, contract fuel, loyalty rewards, trip planning, alternative fuels and much more

AVFUEL

To learn more about this advertiser, visit
www.ukimediaevents.com/info/bai
Reader Inquiry Number 103

Boosting potential

XLR Executive Jet Centres has expanded its original Liverpool facility offering with the addition of three new locations – and more set to be announced next year

March 2018 saw another positive chapter in XLR Executive Jet Centre's success story, with the opening of its brand-new, state-of-the-art FBO facility at Liverpool John Lennon Airport in the UK. This followed the company's successful opening of its Birmingham FBO and hangar in 2017.

Having already developed a successful FBO base at Exeter Airport, XLR is proving to be more than a match for the big FBO providers, offering a unique and sophisticated service. Proof of this is seen in its newly launched Pet Travel Scheme, which means that XLR Liverpool is now able to support the movement of pet animals to the UK without the need for quarantine, providing they meet certain conditions such as having the correct documentation, identification, vaccinations and treatments.

Service offering

XLR Executive Jet Centre is the corporate aviation brand of Regional & City Airports, which is part of the successful Rigby Group of businesses. Customers using the XLR FBO facility at Liverpool John Lennon Airport experience a high-quality offering – benefiting from great customer service in a beautifully designed and spacious facility.

Conveniently located to the west of the passenger terminal, with easy access from public roads, the FBO offers a new purpose-built terminal, and car parking in a secure environment. It is also located close to key North West networks such as the M57, M62 and M56 motorways.

The recent opening of the new Mersey Gateway crossing has greatly improved access to the airport from Cheshire and

North Wales. XLR Liverpool is also easily accessible from all parts of Manchester.

The FBO facility offers dedicated passenger and crew lounges, in addition to a crew rest area with complimentary refreshments and dedicated apron parking. XLR's stands are very close to the FBO and access to airside is available through the adjacent security point.

As with the company's other FBOs, the team is fully competent in providing weather and operational briefings to pilots and supplying local information to clients. The team can also provide negotiated rates for catering, chauffeur-driven cars, refueling and corporate hotels.

Steve Barker, XLR Liverpool's executive aviation manager, says, "This is an exciting episode in the development of XLR. Our decision to establish a base in Liverpool in 2018 came following research into the

Above: **The Liverpool facility is just one of XLR's locations**

Below: **The FBO is a gateway to the UK via the northwest of England**

Vital statistics

Airports: Liverpool, Birmingham, Exeter and Solent, with more to be announced

Owner: Rigby Group

Services: Dedicated passenger lounge, crew rest facilities, private parking area for business jets



opportunities and demands of this sector. We've seen the corporate aviation sector growth at the airport and decided the time was right as part of our expansion plan to create a new FBO center. Our aim is to position XLR's FBO at Liverpool John Lennon Airport as the FBO of choice for those wishing to use northwest England as their gateway to the UK."

Chris Beer, director of XLR Executive Jet Centres, added, "The launch of XLR Liverpool in 2018 was another exciting chapter in the XLR brand expansion. We knew from the outset that the proposal to establish an FBO at Liverpool John Lennon Airport with a dedicated corporate aircraft base was the right decision. Its future is very bright."

While XLR Executive Jet Centres is small in numbers by comparison with other major FBOs in the UK, what the organization lacks in size, it makes up through its attention to customer service. XLR has its eye firmly on the future – plans are afoot to develop more FBOs across the country, adding to its national presence and customer offering. ○

XLR EXECUTIVE JET CENTRES

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Reader Inquiry Number 104

Cypriot haven

The only FBO in Cyprus, **Skylink Services** discusses its customer offering, serving high-profile clients, and its industry-recognized accreditation

Vital statistics

Airports: Larnaca and Paphos International Airports

Founded: 1998

Services: Customs and immigration, aircraft handling, car rental, catering, ramp transportation



Skylink Services is the owner and operator of the only FBO in Cyprus, at Larnaca Airport. Since the commencement of Skylink's operations in Cyprus in 1998, it has filled the gap in the market of executive operations ground handling at both Larnaca and Paphos airports on the island by offering a high standard of service to all its customers.

Skylink continues to offer a 24-hour service, providing a stress-free experience to all crew and passengers arriving and departing Cyprus via the 17,222ft² (1,600m²) FBO in Larnaca. Aside from an FBO, Skylink offers all services linked to the company at Paphos Airport, too.

Currently representing more than 400 companies worldwide that either own or

operate executive aircraft, the company caters for aircraft ranging from very light jets, to B747 and A340 offerings.

Head of State Lounge

Skylink Services manages and operates the Head of State Lounge on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus. The company holds sole responsibility for the building, management and operation of this facility, maintaining high standards and quality of service at all times.

The first visitor to the facility was His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in 2010. From this historic visit onward, every head of state and dignitary visiting Cyprus is handled via this lounge. During these high-profile events, Skylink Services

Above: **Skylink's executive terminal at Larnaca Airport**

Below: **The company prides itself on its facilities and customer service offering**

ensures that the increased traffic created by visiting delegates and heads of state is handled smoothly. Passengers and crew using this lounge are always escorted through the terminal to provide convenience, safety and efficiency.

Diamond service

Skylink is a member of the Air Elite Network of Diamond Service Locations. To qualify for membership, each FBO member has to meet a number of airport facility and service quality standards and criteria. At the last network meeting, Skylink was proudly awarded second place as the 2018 International Diamond Location of the Air Elite Network.

Excellence rewarded

Skylink is also the only holder of IS-BAH Stage I accreditation on the island and is in the process of being audited and receiving Stage II accreditation. The company has a very strict quality and safety policy and continues to offer the highest levels of service and quality that are paramount to Skylink Services. ○

SKYLINK SERVICES

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Reader Inquiry Number 105



Changing expectations

Rockwell Collins explores the importance of staying connected for private jet users in the modern day, and the challenges this creates for operators

With the continuous robust growth of charter aviation, operators are looking for every opportunity to distinguish themselves from competitors while implementing solutions that elevate their flight departments.

Today's business jet travelers expect a seamless experience. They want to be connected for the entire trip, have full use of their phones, have the best entertainment options, and not have to worry about the security of their information. Pilots need integrated efficiency to achieve greater situational awareness and optimal aircraft performance. Flight departments require tools that are fast, functional and built for growing fleets.

Growing a business in a hyper-competitive industry like charter aviation requires all of an operator's attention. Finding one provider that can tackle these challenges across their operations can be a huge advantage.

Connectivity

Gone are the days when passengers had no choice but to accept slower and often interrupted wi-fi while flying. Today, they expect the seamless high-speed connectivity and global coverage provided by services such as Inmarsat's Jet ConneX (JX). With 15Mbps speeds and the only committed information rates in the industry, JX gives them everything they want – internet, email, video, voice over internet protocol (VoIP), teleconferencing and virtual private network (VPN).

A seamless journey for passengers often comes down to being able to do what they do every day on the ground. This could include using their mobile devices to get things done, such as a VoIP application that keeps their smartphones as functional mid flight as they are when on the ground.

For pilots, it's all about having the right information at their fingertips at all times, such as flight plans and real-time weather information through an iPad app. Other apps now give operators the ability to perform flight operations, international trip support, network analysis and data management tasks.



With the sheer amount of information flowing to and from a business jet these days, securing personal data is a big part of the passenger experience whether it's noticed or not. Making financial transactions, video conferencing, chatting, texting, watching movies, using social media, and essentially using the internet in any way creates vulnerabilities.

Cybersecurity is a fundamental concern for connectivity providers. They can monitor data flow and touchpoints around the clock, helping to keep all unrecognizable traffic from entering the aircraft without their permission.



Above: Passengers want to stay as digitally connected in the air as they are on the ground

Below: Technology offerings in flight boost the customer experience

Passengers want entertainment content at the ready just like they have on the ground. Providers offer thousands of movies and shows, news, sports and weather that passengers can view on their own devices. Operators can optimize the available bandwidth, enabling all passengers to watch live TV at the same time through a single ground connection while still controlling the number of streams to prevent devices from maxing out available bandwidth.

Flight operations

Simplifying the complexity of the operator's workflow is the name of the game in flight operations. Operators need flight planning, datalink and international trip support information all in one place to increase efficiency, reduce costs and serve passengers more effectively.

Cloud services are now providing next-generation infrastructure environments. Their performance, scalability, reliability and security help deliver instantaneous responsiveness for common user tasks, such as building trips and quotes. ○

Vital statistics

Clients: Commercial and military

Founded: 1933

Location: Offices worldwide including Chile, Australia, USA, Canada, Mexico, India and Singapore

ROCKWELL COLLINS

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Reader Inquiry Number 106

Bangor International Airport showcases its new de-icer equipment

Bangor International Airport (BGR) has ordered a Global ER-2875 de-icer, specifically designed for larger aircraft such as the Airbus A-380, Antonov An-225, C5 and C17 military airplanes and similarly large cargo planes.

Manufactured by Global Ground Support – one of the world's leading makers of aircraft de-icers – the ER-2875 has the longest side reach and highest cab/nozzle height of any mobile de-icer in the world, bringing the operator's eye level as high as 78ft (24m).

Using a hydraulically driven centrifugal compressor mounted on the operator platform, the de-icing system uses forced air – either alone or in combination with de-icing fluid – to remove all forms of frozen contamination from the critical surfaces of the aircraft.

“What this allows is better visual inspection of the aircraft when cleaned and, from the pilot's standpoint, a speedier de-icing process and turnaround,” says James Canders, assistant airport director. “The extra 10ft [3m] of boom will be particularly valuable on larger military and cargo aircraft with a T-tail configuration.”

Located on the USA's northeastern seaboard, Bangor International Airport is the US port of entry closest to Europe, providing



Above: The de-icer expands the range of aircraft the airport can assist

a wide range of commercial and general aviation services. Non-stop, affordable flights to New York, Orlando/Sanford, Philadelphia, Tampa/St Pete, and Washington DC are supplemented by seasonal flights to Charlotte and Chicago. BGR is currently served by Allegiant, American, Delta and

United. The airport is a leader in transatlantic tech stops, as well as a strategically important location for the military.

BGR is an enterprise-funded entity operated by the City of Bangor and is supported solely through the means of airport-generated revenue. ○

BANGOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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Reader Inquiry Number 107

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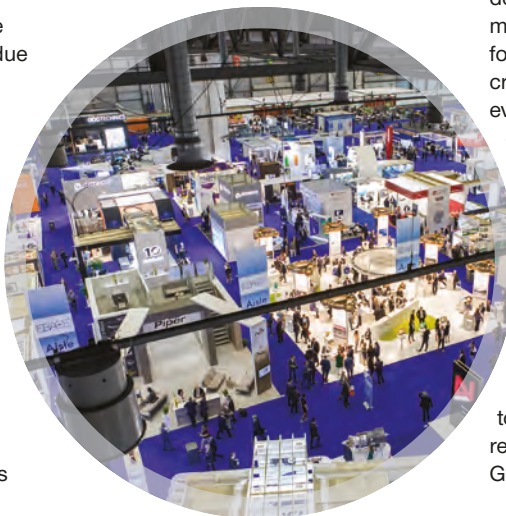


BUSINESS AIRPORT INTERNATIONAL EXAMINES THE REACTION TO LUXAVIATION'S OPEN LETTER ANNOUNCING **EBACE 2019 SNUB**

Patrick Hansen, CEO of Luxaviation, has published an open letter announcing the company's absence from EBACE 2019 due to the rising cost of the Geneva event.

In the letter Hansen said, "Attending EBACE can easily cost businesses hundreds of thousands of euros in direct and indirect costs. We believe that moving EBACE to a less expensive city would undoubtedly bring huge cost savings to exhibitors and attendees. The time has come for EBACE to change. The event must respond to economic realities and EBAA should ask itself if an event in this format is truly representing the many facets of business aviation, as claimed by its Expanding Horizons campaign."

An EBAA spokesperson exclusively told *Business Airport International*, "The European Business Aviation Association regrets Luxaviation's



decision to limit its presence at EBACE 2019. It is our mission to enable responsible, sustainable growth for business aviation, enhancing connectivity and creating opportunities for our members. EBACE is an event that we consider to be a physical manifestation of our mission. It is the opportunity where our industry meets and shares knowledge, and where we engage direct with our membership.

"During the many successful years of organizing EBACE in cooperation with the NBAA, we have recognized the need for unceasing improvement and are working hard toward continuously meeting the needs and expectations of both the attendees and the exhibitors."

Business Airport International took to social media to ask if EBACE events should be relocated to a more affordable European city, or if Geneva really is the best place for the show. ○

Your views

"I completely agree with Patrick Hansen. The big shows feel like they've not really evolved over the past few years and I'd be interested to see figures on attendance both from attendees and exhibitors. Two of the best shows I've been to this year have been Schedulers & Dispatchers in Long Beach, California, where everyone gets a booth the same size and the whole place stops for a sit down lunch every day, and Air Charter Expo at Biggin Hill, UK, which was a well-attended one-day event. I'd love to see more of these."

Miles Bailey, director of supply chain services at Aviaa

"I totally agree EBACE should move to a city that is more cost effective. The major trade shows have gotten more and more expensive, from the badge cost and booth space to catering and hotel rooms. As businesses, we do not get to increase our prices on every product every year, but the aviation trade show industry seems to do just that.

"Specific to EBACE, the hotel room expenses and availability have been an issue and is increasing as the hotels know they have a captive audience and the prices go through the roof. Even the local pubs change their prices during the peak days of EBACE, because they know they can charge crazy high prices as we are locked in Geneva. I am not overly opinionated on where EBACE should move to – more along the lines of having an international airport and a large enough city so that there will always be ample hotel rooms to make prices stay competitive. Another alternative is changing some of these major shows to every other year. Savings have to be found to keep the aviation businesses healthy."

Stephanie Jordan, vice president of sales and commercial operations at World Fuel Services

"Just a one hour drive from Geneva is Lyon in France. The business airport Lyon-Bron is right next to the convention center. I inspected

the site myself several years ago as an alternative for a conference. It is definitely worth looking into and considering for EBACE."

Bud Slabbaert, chairman of the Caribbean Aviation Meetup conference

"It will be a shame to see EBACE price itself out of the market! It's always a great show to attend, from both a personal and a business perspective. Geneva, although a great location logistically, is maybe not the best place. Possibly a change of venue/city could help save this event?"

Andrew Wilson, business aviation technical services consultant at PJ Tech Corporate Aviation Consulting

"Of course exhibitions are expensive – Geneva significantly so. But they are also pretty tired – same format, structure, benefits. Luxaviation is right to challenge the EBAA, but what we would love to see is some more creative and innovative formatting of the event that better reflects the way

today's industry does business. The event is about networking with existing and new partners, but also about connecting, maximizing and influencing – we use digital marketing to drive this further and beyond the event. We would welcome anything that reduces the huge cost of Geneva but also new initiatives to engage those exhibiting and attending."

Oliver King, CEO at Avinode Group

Your comments

Should EBACE move to a more affordable European city? We'd love to hear your thoughts on this or any other topic affecting the business aviation industry, so visit www.linkedin.com and search *Business Airport International* to join in with the debate.

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