

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

October 2017

*Discover new partners, routes and destinations*

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Planners reveal what heads of state really want from an FBO

### **Training**

Why attracting and retaining young talent will boost your business

# THE LANGUAGE OF LUXURY

How to create and maintain customer service excellence

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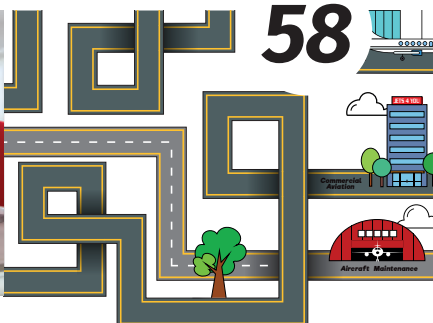
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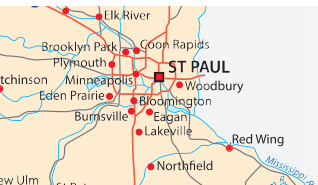
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# Welcome

At the time of going to press, the effects of Hurricane Harvey are still being felt in Texas, while the impact of Hurricane Irma in the Caribbean is still being assessed. The tragic deaths and suffering of those displaced by the storms and floods are regularly featured in TV news reports, as thoughts turn to rebuilding.

What isn't so readily reported, at least in the international press coverage, is the role business aviation has played in the response to the flooding. It's not unusual for companies to make financial or in-kind donations of aircraft and flight crew to move specialists and supplies into the affected places. Even so, the response to Hurricane Harvey in the Gulf Coast area was impressive, with operators, FBOs, airports, support companies, brokers, suppliers and even jet manufacturers pitching in.

This effort to help is a reminder of the integral role and value business aviation has in the USA's aviation network and is exactly the kind of positive image the sector needs to help recruit young talent. The article on page 58 finds that business aviation is making an effort to attract "highly skilled, technology-savvy" professionals to the sector.

Once recruited, employees need to be trained and, as our cover feature shows, customer service is an area that should not be skimmed on during induction or throughout a career. Business aviation customers expect high levels of customer service, and value highly the companies that provide it.

Elsewhere, the article on page 20 talks to the companies that deal with some of the most demanding clients in the world – heads of state. From flying the President of the USA to the Qatari Royal family, business aviation is expected to cater for these VVIPs' security needs – and their whims. We find out how FBOs and operators cope with these demands.

We also provide updates on aspects of the day-to-day management of business aviation. It has been three years since IS-BAH was introduced and on page 66 we analyze how the safety standards are being adopted and how they are developing. European security regulations are also covered on page 44 – an evolving set of laws and rules that can leave some operators and FBOs stumped.

On page 28 we also cover regulation – this time, of drones. Many in the industry want the regulations that are being devised around the world to reduce the threat of amateur piloting of drones. However, once these measures are established, some expect innovative business aviation companies will be able to turn drones into an asset. The kind of asset that would perhaps be used to provide supplies to people in areas stricken by natural disasters such as Hurricane Harvey.

**Ben Sampson, editor**  
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***"What isn't so readily reported, at least in the international press, is the role business aviation has played in the response to Hurricane Harvey"***

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**SHARJAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN THE UNITED ARAB  
EMIRATES IS PARTNERING WITH GAMA AVIATION TO  
BUILD A PRIVATE AVIATION TERMINAL**



**A** new private jet terminal is to be built at Sharjah International Airport near Dubai to take advantage of the growth in private aviation and the congestion at Dubai International Airport.

The first phase of groundworks for the new terminal is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Designs, studies and official approvals for the new terminal have all been obtained. The terminal is scheduled to be opened during 2019.

The US\$30m, 40,000m<sup>2</sup> development will feature two private jet hangars with a capacity for two large BBJs each, as well as a terminal for jet owners and crew members. The terminal will include resting areas, lounges and duty-free shops.

The project will also include an aircraft fueling unit, aircraft parking apron for business jets, and car parking spaces for the terminal users and guests.

Oliver Hewson, commercial manager for Gama Aviation in the Middle East, said, "The UAE is famed for its world class, 5-star hotels, so we have a very

Main image: **The new terminal will be finished to luxury 5-star hotel standards**

Right: **The Sharjah business terminal is catering for a growing volume of business aviation passengers in Dubai**





### Sharjah Airport

**Location:** 20 miles north of Dubai

**Operating hours:** 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

**Runway length:** 13,330 x 197ft (4,062 x 60m)

**Fuel:** Avgas Jet

***“We plan to include a helipad at the new Sharjah business aviation center, which will enable clients to hop over the Dubai traffic”***



### Middle Eastern promise

The Middle East and North Africa Business Aviation Association (MEBAA) predicts that the region will be one of the world's fastest-growing this year, at 9%.

Meanwhile, data from monitoring company WINGX shows that there were 2,568 business aircraft departures from the UAE in 2016 compared with 2,165 and 2,155 in 2015 and 2014 respectively.

This growth was led by Al Maktoum International airport at Dubai South, which is now the country's top airport for business jets. Departures at Al Maktoum were up 37% in year-to-date terms in 2016, to 763; compared with 2% growth at Dubai International, to 564.

Last year also saw the first private jet fly out of Dubai South's new VIP terminal.

The UAE accounts for 26% of the region's business jet fleet. However, the largest market is Saudi Arabia, which accounts for 35%.

discerning client base. To meet their expectations, our new facilities will be designed and finished to the highest-possible standard – the same as our current Sharjah FBO was designed and finished.

“We want to ensure that both the passengers and crew have all the comforts and amenities they require, with a few added extras.”

The current Gama Sharjah FBO opened in July 2014 and was the first dedicated facility for business aviation customers at Sharjah International Airport. Hewson said that Gama has always intended to build a larger facility within five years to accommodate anticipated growth in movement volumes.

“Dubai International Airport, being the busiest in the world for international traffic, has become challenging to use in recent years for business aviation due to slot restrictions, parking and hangar space availability, in addition to airway and taxiway congestion. We recognized there is demand for another option north of downtown Dubai.

“Sharjah International Airport is just a 35-minute drive from Burj Khalifa and Dubai's financial center. The performance of the Sharjah FBO thus far has been extremely encouraging. In the first quarter of 2017, we experienced an increase of over 40% in aircraft movements compared with the same period last year.”

### Middle Eastern hub

The UAE is being increasingly used as an important hub in the MENA region for business, tourism and transit air traffic. As a result, a growing number of business jets are based in the UAE, in addition to visiting aircraft.

The new terminal is part of Sharjah Airport Authority's strategy to develop the general aviation industry to accommodate this increasing growth.

## ARRIVALS LOUNGE

H E Ali Salim Al Midfa, chairman of Sharjah Airport Authority, said, “Our new partnership with Gama will add to our ability to provide the highest level of services to our customers in the private and business jet industry.

“This partnership is an important step in the process of developing the private aviation industry in the Emirate of Sharjah, by providing more exceptional facilities and services to jet owners who use their private jets to travel around the world.”

Hewson added, “Our new facility will meet the increasing demand for hangar and parking space, and we will be offering base maintenance for which, currently, there are not many options in the region. Many aircraft owners choose to have their base maintenance inputs completed in Europe, which obviously incurs heavy positioning costs, so we want to ensure they have a choice for local support.”



Above: **The hangars at the new terminal will have the capacity for two BBJs each**

The project is currently being designed to meet international operational standards to ensure the maximum level of convenience possible for business jet travelers. Customers at Sharjah include high-profile Emirati and expatriate families and businesses.

Hewson said, “We support a diverse range of clientele, including heads of state, corporations, government delegations, celebrities, sports personalities, air ambulance operators and charter operators.

“One of the main advantages we offer at the Sharjah FBO is anonymity. Our clients value their privacy, which we respect, and our facilities and services are designed to achieve discretion.

“Uniquely for the UAE, we can offer clients the ability to drive up to their aircraft steps. Sharjah Airport has no slot restrictions or taxiway congestion, so our aircraft are usually airborne within six minutes of the door closing. It is all about saving time for the travelers. With this in mind, we plan to include a helipad at the new Sharjah business aviation center, which will enable clients to hop over the Dubai traffic.”

### Ground-handling deal

The terminal is one of two deals signed by Sharjah Airport Authority with Gama Support Services: one, to build and operate a new private jet terminal; and the other to grant Gama the right to provide ground-handling services to business jet owners, business jets and crew members at the terminal.

Gama Aviation has designed and built FBOs, hangars and maintenance facilities in the USA, the UK and the UAE. The company was founded 34 years ago and has said it will provide expertise in aircraft operations, ground handling and engineering for Sharjah’s new terminal.

Richard Lineveldt, general manager MENA for Gama Aviation, said, “This agreement with Sharjah Airport Authority will strengthen the company’s presence in the region. Gama Aviation took over the responsibility for handling all business travelers at Sharjah International Airport in early 2012, but the company has been present in Sharjah as a charter operator since 2006.

“Gama Aviation has established a successful relationship with the aviation sector, which has been further enhanced by the resounding success of its new FBO at Sharjah.” ○



Above and right: **The existing terminal, opened in July 2014, offers space to work**







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## ONLINE CHARTER MARKETPLACE AVINODE REPORTS STRONGEST EVER SUMMER FOR BUSINESS AVIATION TRANSACTIONS

# 112%

more charter flight requests were made in June 2017 compared with June 2016 in the USA



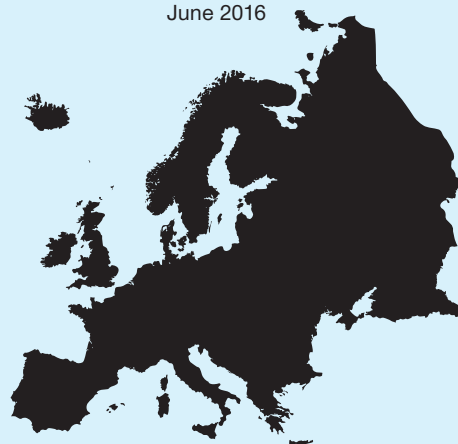
France is the number one country for business aviation demand,

# up 10%

this year in the Avinode Marketplace compared with June 2016

# 30%

increase in requested flights in Europe during June 2017 compared with June 2016



***“This is a very positive trend, it looks promising for the overall year”***

**R** requests for charter flights on Avinode’s online marketplace grew substantially this summer compared with 2016, indicating that there will be strong growth in business aviation this year.

June was a particularly strong month for buying and selling air charter on the company’s marketplace, surpassing half a million requests for charters for the first time since it was set up in 2001.

Annika Abraham, managing director of EMEAA for Avinode, said, “The summer peak in Europe started in May this year and really got going in June.

“Demand-side in Europe is driven by France and Spain, as well as the UK, because there is a high density of brokers there. We also saw demand increasing in a new country, Malta, which was up 300% compared with 2016, driven largely by operators relocating under the Maltese registry and increased tourism.

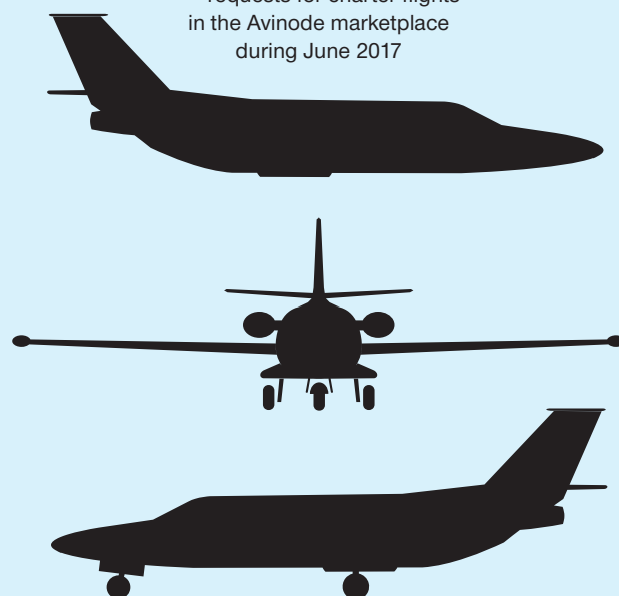
“During the summer we see the leisure-orientated airports in the UK and France such as Le Bourget, and Cote d’Azur, Ibiza and Mykonos being used. In winter it becomes more business-dominated and we see more flights to places like London Luton, Geneva and Zurich.

“This is a very positive trend, but it has just been peak season. Still it looks promising for the overall year.”

Meanwhile in the USA, requests increased by 112% over June 2016. Per Marthinsson, executive vice president, Americas, Avinode, said, “The growth in the USA is driven by an increase in charter activity for the US market and a shift in the sourcing process from phone to the Avinode Marketplace. Operators have also dramatically improved how quickly they are responding in the system, with one-third quoting back within 45 minutes.” ○

# 532,000

requests for charter flights in the Avinode marketplace during June 2017





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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PRESSURE GROUPS PLEDGE TO CONTINUE FIGHTING FOR NOISE ABATEMENT AT **EAST HAMPTON AIRPORT, NEW YORK,** IN A PRECEDENT-SETTING CASE



**E**ast Hampton, New York City officials are continuing to pursue the enforcement of curfews and bans on noisy aircraft at its local airport, despite recently losing a bid in the US Supreme Court for them to be upheld.

The East Hampton case is precedent-setting because the court said airports were governed by federal rules, regardless of whether or not they still accepted federal funding.

According to city officials, it is now considering several options, including the imposition of the curfews and bans through Federal Aviation Administration procedures.

“We continue to see the airport as an asset,” said a city official who wished to remain anonymous. “But we also have a responsibility to protect the public from increasing aircraft noise.

“This is not just a problem for the town of East Hampton; it’s a problem for all of Eastern Long Island. We think this year will be a record for noise complaints and there is a growing cry to shut down the airport.

“We need to find a solution or risk getting to the point where the community can’t tolerate any more and we’ll have to close the airport when the final federal grant expires in 2021.”

The town of East Hampton is working with its Congressional delegation on special legislation as part of FAA reauthorization legislation due to pass

***“We need to find a solution or risk getting to the point where the community can’t tolerate any more and we’ll have to close the airport”***

### **Vital statistics**

**Location:** 3 miles west of East Hampton, New York

**Operating hours:** Daylight hours, 365 days a year, except holidays

**Runway length:** 10/28 – 4,255ft, (1,297m) 16/34 – 2,060ft (628m)

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, Jet-A

before the end of the government’s fiscal year on September 30.

It is also developing a passage of a Continuing Resolution to fund the agency until reauthorization can be passed next year. However, the last reauthorization legislation took a number of years to pass.

Town officials are also exploring making a Part 161 application, an FAA procedure, which would limit aircraft noise and access to the airport.

The official also pointed to a negotiated settlement between the FAA and Santa Monica Airport (SMO), which won the right to shorten its runway, effectively banning as much as 44% of its traffic, as a course of action East Hampton’s local government might pursue to limit activity at its airport.

Despite this, Santa Monica is moving ahead with its US\$3.5m plan to renovate its runway and is closing the airport between October and November to do the work. Pro-aviation lobby groups, who view SMO as a critical reliever airport, have so far failed to obtain a stay, but did win recognition that the settlement should be reviewed by a merits panel.

### **Precedent setting case**

The decision by the US Supreme Court earlier this summer not to hear East Hampton’s two-year-old case effectively ended the year-round curfew at East Hampton Airport (ETO) between 11:00pm and 7:00am daily and a year-round extended curfew for so-called



## Legal background

In June 2015, Federal District Court Judge Seybert approved all but the town's proposed summertime limitations. However, the appeals court then overturned Seybert's decision, agreeing with the ETO's supporters that the limitations violated the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990 (ANCA), governing noise and access at public-use airports. The appeals court granted a preliminary injunction against all three restrictions. Airport opponents also argued the restrictions were supported by a 1998 court-sanctioned settlement between the FAA and the Committee to Stop Airport Expansion, on which the restrictions were based. The 2014 settlement, said the Quiet Skies Coalition, rolled back four FAA grant assurances and legally restored the town's right to govern the airport. Quiet Skies said FAA's failure to support the restrictions renege on this agreement and assurances it gave local congressional representatives.



noisy aircraft from 8:00pm to 9:00am daily. East Hampton also wanted a summer-time, one-trip-per-week limitation on aircraft deemed to be too noisy.

The restrictions were fought by both the Friends of the East Hampton Airport and the Eastern Region Helicopter Council, which argued the restrictions violated the Airport Noise and Capacity Act. The two organizations spearheaded the legal case, with the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) supporting their efforts.

### Does Fly Neighborly work?

The East Hampton court case is a test of the 'Fly Neighborly' program, a voluntary noise abatement program devised by the Helicopter Association International for operators

In 2016, the NBAA issued a summer advisory for the airport, which urged operators to adhere to the Fly Neighborly program. "Operators generally respect the airport's noise mitigation procedures and follow the airport's voluntary noise-abatement procedures," said the NBAA.

Three additional 'transition' routes were also developed to enhance the airport's noise-abatement procedures and help mitigate noise events on the North Fork of Long Island.

NBAA's actions followed the publication of its Noise Abatement Plan for ETO. "NBAA believes it is of paramount importance for business aviation operators to do everything possible to minimize noise impact whenever and wherever feasible," said NBAA president Ed Bolen.



Above: Aerial view and the ramp at East Hampton Airport

However, locals believe the voluntary efforts are insufficient. "Most operators abide by the routes established, but you always have a few cowboys out there," a town official said. "In bad weather, noise is a bigger problem."

Quiet Skies Coalition Chair Kathleen Cunningham said it is not unusual for people attending parties in the Hamptons to fly out at 2:00am. That means that even if operators may want to abide by the rules, their clients may not, further exacerbating what is an already bad problem.

"The town is considering a Part 161 proposal, but we don't expect any real progress," said Cunningham. "We'll go through the motions without expectations. When you have 20 helicopters coming over per hour, it's disturbing. Without some progress, our voices will be drowned out by those who want to close the airport."

"Only a tiny fraction of the community actually uses the airport because most people drive or take the train or bus from Manhattan. Flying is an insignificant way of getting here compared to ground transportation."

Cunningham's doubts are shared by the Say No to KHTO local pressure group, which wants to close the airport. Say No to KHTO's reaction to the latest ruling was to call the FAA a "lobbying organization for aircraft operators" and to object to the fact locals do not have control over their own airport.

Say No to KHTO cited the fact the airport has outgrown its original role as a landing strip for local recreational pilots and indicated that the latest ruling had helped its efforts. ○



## UK CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

### BACKS ADS-B 'IN/OUT' USING 1090MHZ FOR NATIONAL SYSTEM AND ANNOUNCES MORE TECHNOLOGY TRIALS

The UK's Civil Aviation Authority is to assess several ADS-B systems for applications in business and general aviation.

The trials include one at Dundee Airport in Scotland that will investigate low-cost systems that receive Mode-S and ADS-B data to provide air traffic controllers with more information on aircraft operating outside controlled airspace.

Another will look at the transmission of weather data from the ground direct to an aircraft cockpit via 978MHz. This trial is being undertaken by equipment manufacturer uAvionix and aeronautical information service provider SkyDemon and it is hoped that in the longer term the system may provide information, such as weather data, to drones in UK airspace.

A trial with volunteers from the business and general aviation community will investigate simultaneous transmission from aircraft with Mode S and a conspicuity device, which meets the criteria in CAP1391.

Finally, a trial being run by industry development group Future Airspace Strategy will look at VFR implementation – the provision of real-time traffic data to smaller airports, to enhance an airport's situational awareness of aircraft in its vicinity.

Colin Chesterton, CAA future systems coordinator, said, "We are very keen to put electronic conspicuity systems into aircraft cockpits as soon as possible. But it's important we also include the users' requirements in our decision making."

#### ADS-B advantages

Electronic conspicuity capability is said to have the potential to:

- Enhance safety through improved situational awareness for pilots and air traffic control
- Reduce infringements of controlled airspace
- Improve access to the UK's increasingly busy airspace.

Far right: **Synthetic visual guidance** is an advanced application of ADS-B

Above right: **Trials will be held at Dundee Airport**

Right: **An enhanced flight vision system uses ADS-B**

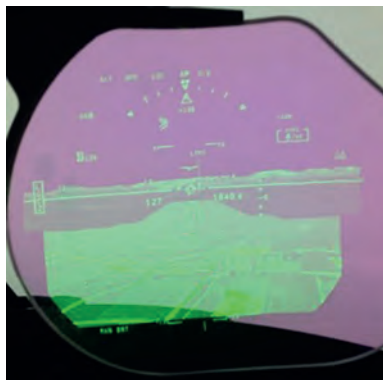
***"We have an opportunity to put in place a system that will increase the safety of pilots and give them some really useful features"***

"We have a real opportunity to put in place an affordable system that will increase the safety of pilots and give them some really useful features, such as live weather data, and also provide controllers with the data they need to do their jobs."

Christian Ramsey, president of uAvionix, said, "ADS-B provides electronic conspicuity for all airspace users based on an international standard. The UK's progressive exploration of low cost solutions through CAP1391 and of weather broadcasts on 978MHz bring critical safety enhancing real-time intelligence to pilots in the cockpit, as witnessed in other parts of the world."

"The expansion into the 978MHz frequency also presents the opportunity to leverage that spectrum for the safe integration of drones into the airspace."

The CAA has also recently confirmed that ADS-B 'in/out' using 1090MHz is its preferred national system to improve electronic conspicuity of business and general aviation, ideally through transponders. The CAA is already working with industry to develop an integrated electronic surveillance solution offering both airborne and ground environment benefits. ○







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## ACI JET OPENS ITS ORANGE COUNTY FBO AND ANNOUNCES A US\$600,000 REFURBISHMENT TO CATER BETTER FOR BUSINESS TRAVELERS



### Vital statistics

**Location:** John Wayne Airport, California

**Operating hours:** Open 5:00am - midnight, seven days a week

**“A profitable FBO to us must also reinvest in its employees and facilities”**

Aviation service provider ACI Jet officially opened its FBO at John Wayne Airport (KSNA) in Santa Ana, Orange County, California, last month. The company was awarded the lease to the former Signature Flight Support facility in January.

ACI Jet, which also operates three other FBOs in the state, used the celebration to mark the beginning of a two-month refurbishment project at the site that is expected to cost US\$600,000. The renovation will add three conference rooms to the space, giving it four meeting locations in total.

ACI Jet's Orange County FBO becomes the company's largest FBO. The company also operates out of San Luis Obispo.

Joe Daichendt, general manager of the Orange County FBO, said that the facility remodel, which will add to those amenities, is refreshing an undercapitalized FBO.

He said, “Orange County has historically been underserved by an FBO market of two incumbents that failed to effectively compete. We, along with the incumbent FBOs and others, competed fairly over a number of months for the leasehold.

“Although a smaller independent FBO chain, we were fortunate that we had a long history of fair and

competitive pricing, which was a key element of the request for proposals.

“We were honored to be selected, and although we haven't looked back since, we are mindful of our roots as a local, independent California FBO and what that means to us, and our customers.

“The opening is both exciting and validating for us. Exciting in the sense that for a long time now, we've desired to bring our exemplary service, and competitive and transparent pricing model to the Orange County aviation community.

“It's also very validating too that the local aviation community has responded in kind. While chain FBOs certainly have their place, we believe that place is alongside a local, independent FBO like ACI Jet that complements the FBO offerings of an airport.”

Daichendt added that a passion for aviation, and the fact that most of ACI Jet's employees are also pilots, allowed them to better understand customers' needs: “Operating an FBO is a balancing act; to operate a successful FBO, it must also be profitable. A profitable FBO to us is one that is sustainable, continues to grow and prosper, reinvests in its employees, facility and amenities, and gives back at every turn to the community and people we serve. It's a tall order, and we take great pride in fulfilling it. ○

Above: Artist's rendering of the Orange County FBO after refurbishment

Below: ACI Jet donated to a charitable fund in memory of Whittier Police Officer Keith Boyer at the FBO's opening ceremony







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# “Marketing’s objective is the same as in any other industry – get the buyer to pull the trigger”

**Brian Foley**



The president of Brian Foley Associates, and previously marketing director for Dassault Falcon Jet for over two decades, discusses engaging with customers and his path to the top

**A**fter graduating with a degree in aerospace engineering, my first job was with Boeing in the flight test department in Seattle. Nothing was more fun for a fresh-faced 22-year-old than working on giant jetliners to ensure their safety for the flying public.

After having time to better acclimatize to the corporate culture, it became clear that advancing in the engineering organization meant spending a very long time waiting for your chance to come up.

Fortunately, there was at least one division that recognized individuals for their potential. In sales and marketing, there were many opportunities for advancement that were based on ability, not on how many years were spent sitting behind a desk.

I made the jump and was recognized early and placed in a program Boeing had at the time called EXPO – Executive Potential. This involved being taken through different parts of the company to gain a better appreciation of how the business worked. During this time, I attended evening classes and eventually earned an MBA in marketing. This is where I learned about the fundamentals of marketing, but it never really prepared me for what I’d find out in the real world.

## Moving on

I made the difficult decision to leave a bright future at Boeing to return to my native east coast and family. To enable this, I joined the business jet manufacturer Dassault Falcon Jet, located

just outside of New York in Teterboro, New Jersey. That’s where I discovered just how much marketing to Boeing’s airline customers differed from marketing to Falcon’s corporate and very wealthy individual clientele.

In the airline world, purchase decisions were made on defined financial metrics such as cost per seat mile, fuel economy, maintenance cost, and cubic feet of cargo space. I learned that the sales process in private aviation was much more emotional and ego-driven.

For example, a Gulfstream might be sold because a buyer’s golf buddies were talking about theirs in a locker room, or a Falcon deal could go bad because the CEO’s partner didn’t like the color of the carpet in the airplane they were shown. There have even been cases of sales caused by simple one-upmanship – having the bragging rights of owning the newest, farthest, fastest and highest flying jet available.

When it’s time to replace the current model with a new business aircraft, the market is very much analogous to the boating world: an owner never trades down or sideways, only bigger and better. The couple that bought their first small, practical aircraft or fractional share to fly from New York to Palm Beach are usually still doing that same trip – after many trade-ups – in a

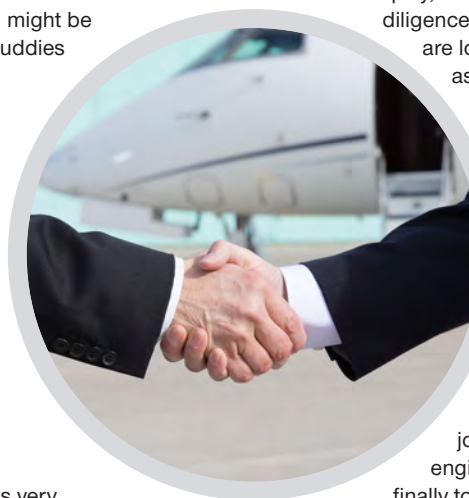
larger cabin today. In fact, the typical business jet trip length, whether it’s a small Cessna Citation or a giant Global Express, is roughly an hour-and-a-half.

## New beginnings

In 2006, armed with a knowledge of the way the industry works, I started my own aviation consulting firm, Brian Foley Associates, or BRiFO for short, to help others expand their own understanding of it. Clients include investors and private equity, whom I help with market due diligence of companies they are looking to acquire. I also assist aviation companies with strategy, product positioning and marketing planning.

Through my affiliation with an investment bank, I am also able to help raise capital for aviation companies, or find companies for investors to purchase.

The wonderful aviation industry has allowed me to try many different jobs by moving around from engineering, to marketing and finally to be the owner of a consulting firm. In this business, marketing’s objective is the same as in any other industry – getting the buyer to pull the trigger. ○



Above: **Foley believes marketing has an integral role in sales**

Brian Foley is president of Brian Foley Associates, based in Sparta, New Jersey. The company offers a breadth of consulting services to the aviation industry





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# Vanessa Oliver

BUSINESS AIRPORT INTERNATIONAL GETS TO KNOW THE PRESIDENT OF FBO **BELLINGHAM AVIATION SERVICES**, WHICH IS BASED ON THE COAST OF WASHINGTON, USA

## What was your career path to your current role?

Funnily enough, I studied chemistry in university. I left Bellingham during my college years and returned a few years after to start my career at Alpha Technologies, a company specializing in backup power systems for communications media. I was lucky enough to work directly for the chairman of the company, who truly is an entrepreneur. I consider him my mentor and I have had the privilege of working for him for the past 25 years.

In this capacity, I have handled many different types of special projects. One of my duties was managing the corporate aircraft and airport properties. Fifteen years ago, we recognized that Bellingham needed a professional FBO to service the increased corporate traffic to the airport. Our Port Authority then put out a request for proposals during 2003 and I am pleased to say that I was the award recipient. Our first day of business was January 1, 2004.

## What is the best part of your job and why?

The best part of my job as president of Bellingham Aviation Services is developing relationships with the amazing aviation community. I am honored to serve not only the individuals that work for this company, but all those involved in aviation that I have the pleasure of meeting. From the business owners to corporate flight departments, flight students to private pilots and schedulers and dispatchers, everyone has a story and a love for this industry.

Right: **Vanessa Oliver**  
in the remodelled  
Bellingham Aviation  
Services office

***“The standards of  
a service-oriented  
company piggyback on  
moral standards and  
compassion”***



## How do you stand out from competitors?

I believe we stand out from our competition in many ways. Most importantly, we strive every day to improve and better serve our customers and employees. Recently, we made the decision to invest funds to improve our operations at BLI – Bellingham International Airport – as we have done a huge remodel for the comfort of our visitors. The employees are excited and proud about the new look. We have incorporated the beauty of the Pacific Northwest in our design and we welcome everyone that would like to make the trip to the Pacific Northwest to stop in and take a peek at our improvements.

## What is your dream holiday destination and, if money were limitless, what aircraft would you choose to fly there in?

My dream vacation would be an animal safari in Africa. I was born in Nairobi – my father was in the Royal Air Force and was stationed there. I would love to go back and explore this region. I'm not particular about what aircraft I would fly to Africa in, but it would be amazing to explore in a helicopter.

## What makes a successful FBO?

A successful FBO starts with the employees. I believe that if those in charge respect not only the customers that we serve, but the employees, vendors and community, the respect will be reciprocated and a company will be on the path to success. All the other standards of a service-oriented company piggyback on moral standards and compassion, neither of which mean anything without respect.

## What does the future hold for Bellingham Aviation Services?

The future of Bellingham Aviation Services has a lot of hope and promise as we strive to exceed the expectations of our customers. We are the branded FBO at BLI and continue to promote the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. We live in a beautiful place. ○





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# *Stately arrivals*

The security and logistics involved in arranging travel for a president or head of state are complicated and expensive – but there are benefits for those involved

Words | **Chris Anderson**





# A

According to recent figures, Donald Trump is on course to spend the same on travel in his first year as US president that his predecessor, Barack Obama, did in eight. Most

of Trump's travel so far has been within the USA, with it reported by *Newsweek* that during his first 100 days in office, a quarter of his time was spent at Mar-a-Lago, his golf course and country club in Palm Beach, Florida, which he often calls 'The Winter White House'. The cost of each weekend visit by Trump to his property is said to be around US\$20m to the US taxpayer, according to CNN, with security an obvious expense here – Obama, in contrast, spent just under US\$97m on travel during his eight years as president, according to documents reviewed by Judicial Watch, a conservative government watchdog.

But regardless of who travels the most in this instance, or for what purpose, there is no getting away from the fact that flying a US president – or any head of state, for that matter – is a costly and complicated process. Speed, efficiency, discretion, reliability and safety all need to be considered,



***“These are customers with impressive aircraft full of passengers, like 747s or A380s, coming from long-haul distances”***

Neal Betchley, Avfuel’s regional director for commercial sales, Europe the Middle East and Africa

with the logistics surrounding these magnified according to the size and number of aircraft involved.

“You’re talking wide-bodied aircraft, quite often, like a Boeing 777,” says Charles Gabb, strategic accounts manager at Universal Weather and Aviation. “The Mexican president, Enrique Peña Nieto, has a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which cost US\$218m – I think they all try to outdo each other. Aircraft like that, and if there are a few of them, can put a lot of strain on an airport.”

Neal Betchley, Avfuel’s regional director for commercial sales throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), knows this prospective customer base well, as the FBOs and airports the company supplies need to be prepared. “When you’re talking heads of state and their entourages, you could be referring to presidents, prime ministers or rulers of countries throughout the Middle East,” he says. “These are customers with impressive aircraft full of passengers, like 747s or A380s, coming from long-haul distances. In such cases, the increases in fuel consumption can be significant.”

Gabb cites the United Nations General Assembly, held every September in New York, as an example of when the visits of around 100 heads of state can apply extreme pressure to a destination. “It’s for three weeks. They have preliminary sessions, then the second week is with the foreign ministers, and the third is when the heads of state arrive,” he says. “For that entire period, the police at JFK are working overtime, there is a huge strain on airport



resources, from ground stairs to operation buses, and the FBO staff involved will not be allowed holiday, drafting in people from their other locations, such as Florida or California, and even then finding themselves working between 16 and 19 hours a day.”

Jeppesen’s international trip planning (ITP) team also has experience of working with heads of state, and explains that flexibility is just as important as the overall organization. “Each trip comes with its own sets of challenges,” a spokesperson from the company reveals. “The bottom line is close attention to detail, with zero failures, be that flight planning or ground-handling arrangements. These are also elements to be coordinated not only with the main customer, but also the supporting staff and agencies.”

#### **Arrivals and departures**

A head of state will not be able to use a regular passenger terminal when they land, due to potential security risks, but where they exit the aircraft, and how, can vary. “There is a big difference between official and unofficial state visits,”

Main image: **Two VC-25s are used as Air Force One**

Above: **Major international meetings can place pressure on business airports**





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***“The pomp and pageantry of an official state visit is quite something, with flags, a band and red carpet”***

James Walker, aviation consultant

## Marble and gold luxury

Most heads of state travel in style, with aircraft equipped to meet their needs. There are often conference or communications rooms, luxury sleeping quarters, and areas for security. Some countries, such as France, Germany and the UK, do not have dedicated aircraft for their leaders, and generally fly them first class on their national airlines or use a former military airplane.

The US president travels on Air Force One. Two highly customized Boeing VC-25s have been in service as Air Force One since 1990, while the Mexican president recently took delivery of a US\$218.7m Boeing 747 Dreamliner. It can carry up to 250 people, features a presidential suite, with a conference room and even a fireplace in a private area.

The ultimate in head-of-state travel is arguably from Qatar. “When I worked there, we took delivery of two brand-new 747s for the royal family,” aviation consultant James Walker reveals. “Each cost US\$300m, and they spent the same again customizing them with a satellite communications room, security room, a cinema, a master bedroom and marble and gold everywhere. It was far superior to any hotel room I have ever seen, with the staff training to match. Best of all, in the lower deck, where you would usually expect to find baggage, there was a complete electric spit-roast, where a chef would prepare a whole lamb.”

explains James Walker, an aviation consultant who used to fly as a pilot for Qatar’s head of state.

“The pomp and pageantry that comes with an official state visit is quite something, with flags, a band and a red carpet, and the arrival might be into a royal or VIP terminal, possibly the FBO, or you would go to a remote spot at the airport, the steps and limo would appear, and the head of state would walk down. An unofficial visit, like a shopping trip, would be low-key, and require far less planning and security – maybe 10 days as opposed to three months.”

To get the head of state out of the airport quickly, reducing the security risks further, their arrival is streamlined as much as possible. “They aren’t taken through immigration or anything like that, and all of the diplomatic clearances are prepared in advance,” Walker confirms. “They can be away and on the road mere seconds after landing.”

Universal, which has helped to organize the trips of many heads of state to the US, explains the process involved. “We get the schedules and the particulars of the aircraft from the operator, and then we send it to that country’s embassy in Washington DC, who will talk directly to the State Department,” says Gabb. “We aren’t allowed to talk to the State Department ourselves, so clearance is handled and relayed back to us via the embassy.

“Separately, we deal with US customs at the arrival location, sending them as much information as possible, including everyone’s passport details.”

Even with everything pre-arranged, there is still much to get right on the day of the visit itself, especially if traveling a

Above: **Speed and security through the airport are paramount for VIPs**

long distance. “If you’re flying into Washington DC, the US Secret Service will specify an exact time, and you’ll be given a grace period of plus or minus 30 seconds either side,” says Walker. “And that’s to be on the ramp, lined up with the red carpet. It’s only one chance, you can’t get it wrong, and if your flight time to get to Washington DC is 16 hours from Qatar, that’s an incredible challenge.”

Domestically, it seems that the planning of trips can be a bit more spontaneous. “A prime example of this is election season,” says Ben Spence, logistics manager for Avfuel, referring to politicians involved in the US presidential election. “Candidates quickly change their campaign trail plans based on poll results and projections. It’s imperative for them to go to key states as new information is revealed.”





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But it is while the head of state is in the air, nearing the airport, that many of the security checks will begin. "I've been at airports before where there are around 120 vehicles, mostly BMWs and Mercedes, waiting for the head of state and their entourage, and all of them need to be screened," says Gabb. "About three hours before, the military will take the cars off in groups, opening and closing the doors, the hood and the trunk, using sniffer dogs all over and mirrors to look underneath. It's a huge process."

Despite tight controls on security and arrival times, last-minute changes can still occur. "The heads of state might want to leave earlier or later," says Gabb. "Later is fine as you get more time, but if it's earlier, the first people I tell are the catering companies. They have to prepare a lot of different meal choices, so as much notification as possible is needed. And after the head of state leaves, his entourage may want to start leaving 15 minutes apart, so a revised schedule would need to be organized."

### Who benefits?

Huge operations, such as heads of state visits, require equally large sums of money to make them happen. "Budgets vary wildly depending on the purpose of the visit and each country's requirements around security," a representative at Jeppesen's ITP explains.

But despite the hard work it leads to, there can be substantial gains for companies and businesses local to the airports involved. "Whole communities can benefit,

Above: Arrivals of heads of state are often accompanied by a guard of honor

depending on where a head of state is flying into," Gabb confirms. "Hotels, cafés, restaurants and even shopping malls will all see a surge in profits."

Catering and limousine hire companies are also among those offering their services. "You'll get businesses that are set up to cater to this type of client," says Walker. "I know of a limousine company at Heathrow with a stunning collection of vehicles, including armored Range Rovers and all sorts. We'd call them up and tell them, 'We're in London for 21 days, we want your vehicles on standby 24 hours a day for that time.' And the drivers have to be ready, and the cars polished and valeted, to go at any time."

An obvious benefit for FBOs and airports generally is the large increase in fuel sales; conversely, there are large costs associated with handling such flights and the logistics vary for each occasion, explained Spence. "If an FBO is able to handle such large aircraft, then it will most likely have the necessary fuel supply. We would be notified either during the visit or straight after in order to supplement or replace the used fuel." ○

## Planning a head of state visit

Jeffrey W Briand, senior vice president, global trip support, World Fuel Services (WFS), presents his personal checklist:

### Runways get crowded ✓

"At big international events like the G7 Summit, World Economic Forum or Paris Air Show, with multiple heads of state arriving and departing at once, crews should consider longer taxi times and also significant holdings for landing."

### Parking can be an issue ✓

"I've seen operators bumped from their reservation before, just because another dignitary arrived before them. Even with lots of planning, aircraft repositioning or using a different airport is not uncommon."

### Know the rules ✓

"Rules and regulations can vary from one location to another, also year after year. Planning in advance is vital. The sooner service requests are submitted, the better the chances of a successful trip."

### Big events take big planning ✓

"An event like the FIFA World Cup or the Olympics will stretch over a longer period and involve several locations. Each has their own set of challenges, expectations and increased sales, both for fuel and trip support services."

### Control change ✓

"Any change to a plan will cause a ripple effect, which needs to be contained. At key events, parking, transportation and hotel accommodation will be limited due to high demand, so this needs to be managed."





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# Game of

Are drones aviation's friend or foe? *BAI* explores the laws around UAVs in airspace and the next steps in protecting airports

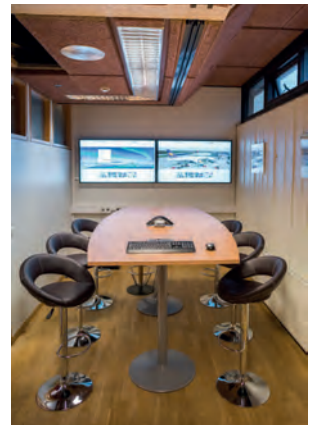
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**T**

here is growing concern over reports of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) – or drones – in airspace around airports. While lawmakers and politicians deliberate over the necessity to introduce new regulations, many airports are deciding to take matters into their own hands to protect their airspace. What current and potential technical options are there for drone protection? And what are the legal and policy implications of using drone technologies around airports?

### Technological solutions

In recent years reports of the obstruction of flight operations by UAVs have risen in frequency, and a growing number of airport executives and airline pilots have either encountered the threat in real time or have become aware of such instances after witnessing or reading a report of a near miss. According to European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) figures, UAVs were responsible for more than 1,400 incidents in 2016 – a sharp rise over the 606 incidents reported between 2011 and 2015. In early July 2017 a UAV flying close to Gatwick Airport in London caused the closure of the runway and the diversion of five flights.

“Unauthorized UAV use near airports has been causing disruption,” says Mykel Kochenderfer, director of the Stanford Intelligent Systems Laboratory (SISL) at Stanford University, California. “It hasn’t been especially widespread, but all UAV operators should be aware of the safety risk they can pose to aviation if used irresponsibly.”

In recognition of the potential for the misuse of UAVs around airports and elsewhere, a growing number of companies and organizations around the world have developed innovative technology to help address and minimize any possible negative impacts. One of the most

**“Once new remote identification rules are in place, they should assist airports in identifying and tracking operators of rogue UAS near airports”**

Matt Clark, senior associate at Hogan Lovells

widely used technologies – already offered as a default safety feature by many UAV producers, including DJI, Yuneec and GoPro – is geofencing. These systems generally work by combining local RFID connections like wi-fi or Bluetooth with the GPS network to create a virtual barrier around airports or other sensitive areas.

Another interesting technology is the net bazooka, launched earlier this year by UK startup Open Engineering. The device, known as the SkyWall 100, can be used to fire nets directly at a drone before landing it safely with an integrated parachute.

Also in Europe, French companies DSNA Services and Groupe ADP have jointly developed the Hologarde drone detection system, which links radar, radio frequency and HD video technologies via a single control center. The system, which can detect drones up to 5km (3 miles) away, was recently deployed for testing at France’s Paris-Le Bourget Airport during the International Paris Air Show.

### Integrated approach

Elsewhere, US-based company CACI International has developed the innovative SkyTracker air defense network for use by customers keen to keep small UAVs out of restricted areas and to protect critical assets. The system consists of a network of sensors that are strategically placed to cover an area of concern. These sensors passively listen for specific radio signals between a small UAV and the operator’s controller. When a detection occurs, it notifies the operator with an audible alarm and displays the identity of the drone type, its geolocation and that of the operating handset. The computer operator can then notify the proper authorities about the location of the handset (and therefore the ground operator) to remove the threat from the area.

Alan Kraft, senior business development executive for counter UAS (unmanned aircraft systems) and cyber security at CACI International, says, “The system has



Right: SkyTracker helps users protect their assets from small UAVs





already been successfully tested at Atlantic City Airport and Denver International Airport, in partnership with the FAA, under a corporative research and development agreement. The system does not interfere with any airport or FAA systems since it is completely passive. More installations and pilot programs are planned for the near future.”

While individual technologies of these types will undoubtedly play an increasingly important role in protecting business airports, there is also a growing awareness of the need for an integrated approach to the management of drone use, both in and around airports and throughout commercial and military airspace more generally.

One of the early pioneers in the creation of connected approaches is the NASA Ames Research Center, which is working alongside government, industry and academic institutions like Stanford University to develop a UAS traffic management (UTM) system that integrates operator platforms, vehicle performance and ground infrastructure. During June 2017 the project team completed tests of the most recent version of the system, with live drones at six sites around the USA.

## Legal implications

In addition to technological solutions, authorities around the world also continue to develop legal and regulatory frameworks designed to combat the threat of drone incursions in sensitive areas like airports.

During May, EASA published draft proposals to regulate the operation of small drones across Europe and invited industry stakeholders to provide comment and input until August. Among other things, the proposals set out a framework to achieve safe operation of drones while allowing the industry “to remain agile, to innovate and continue to grow”. EASA has created a task force to assess the risk of collisions between drones and aircraft.

In June the Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR) Joint Undertaking also unveiled its U-Space blueprint for the “safe, secure and environment-friendly use of drones in low-level airspace”.

Meanwhile, in the USA there is already a mandate that UAVs cannot fly within five miles (8km) of an airport without receiving permission from the flight tower, although commercial operators can fly in Class G airspace without prior approval. Drones must also adhere to FAA flight regulations and stay below 400ft (121m).

“Regardless of whether the UAV is operated for commercial or hobbyist purposes, they are always required to yield the right of way to all manned aircraft and are

Above: **Some experts believe airports could be used as bases for small UAVs one day**

**“All UAV operators should be aware of the safety risk they can pose to aviation if used irresponsibly”**

Mykel Kochenderfer, director of the Stanford Intelligent Systems Laboratory at Stanford University

prohibited from operating in a manner that interferes with operations and traffic patterns at any airport,” says Ted Ellett, a former FAA chief counsel and co-founder and co-chair of the Global Unmanned Aircraft Systems practice at law firm Hogan Lovells.

According to Ellett, there are also likely to be changes to the current legal and regulatory landscape surrounding the deployment of counter-UAV measures around airports and other sensitive infrastructure.

“The current legal and regulatory landscape, including Title 18 of the US Code, the Communications Act of 1934, and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations, makes it illegal for civilians and law enforcement alike to deploy most counter-drone systems and exposes the operator of such systems to possible prosecution and/or civil liability if they are used,” he says.

As Matt Clark, senior associate at Hogan Lovells, explains, the issue of rogue UAV flights around airports is also an area of concern for the US Congress, which has directed the FAA to “establish a pilot program for airspace hazard mitigation at airports and other critical infrastructure” using unmanned aircraft detection systems, in cooperation with the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other federal agencies. “After completion of the pilot program, the FAA may use unmanned aircraft detection systems to detect and mitigate the unauthorized operation of an unmanned aircraft that poses a risk to aviation safety,” says Clark.

The FAA UAS Integration Office is also working with UAS detection manufacturers, through cooperative research and development agreements, to evaluate small UAV detection and identification capabilities, using different methodologies and systems on and near airports.

“Finally, the FAA recently established a new Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) to help it create standards

## Friend not foe

Amid all the gloom and doom about the negative impacts of drones, there are signs that there is a potential upside to their use at business airports.

In May 2017 Clear Flight Solutions, a spin-off from the University of Twente in the Netherlands, announced that Edmonton International Airport in Canada had become the first airport in the world to deploy its novel Robird – a lifelike robotic bird designed to scare away real birds. Some companies, such as UK technology startup Blue Bear Systems, now also produce UAV-based systems capable of carrying out aircraft inspections as part of routine maintenance, repair and overhaul processes. Following a successful trial of the technology, easyJet also expects the system to be in “active operation at up to 10 easyJet engineering hangars in the near future”.





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## Revenue streams

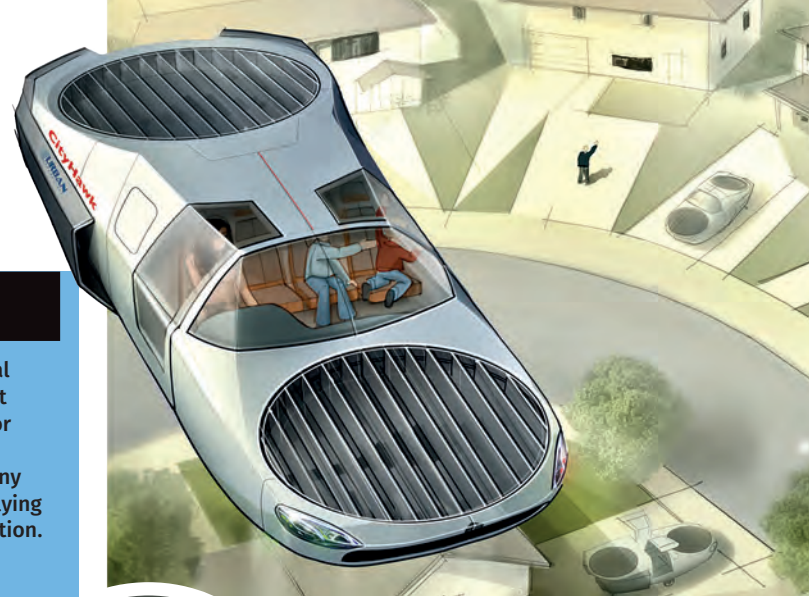
While organizations around the world continue to develop technologies and legal frameworks to mitigate the risks posed by drones, there are also indications that remotely piloted UAV technology could one day provide a new revenue stream for business airports.

One interesting initiative is currently being developed by Chinese UAV company EHang, which has revealed plans to use its EHang 184 drone as an autonomous flying passenger taxi in Dubai as early as this year in a bid to ease urban traffic congestion.

Elsewhere, Israeli startup Urban Aeronautics has hatched plans to develop a variant of its novel Cormorant UAV into the CityHawk flying passenger vehicle.

"The Cormorant prototype has had over 200 successful test flights. It is currently flying fully autonomously within controlled conditions. There is no pilot on the ground or in the air," says Janina Frankel-Yoeli, vice president for marketing at the company.

"CityHawk is essentially a manned variant of the Cormorant, so we consider the Cormorant program to be a common core. Once the Cormorant development is complete we will take one of the prototypes and convert it into a manned aircraft. We expect to fly that manned prototype at the Paris Airshow in 2021," she adds.



Above: The CityHawk could one day be used as a passenger taxi

Left: Janina Frankel-Yoeli, vice president for marketing at Urban Aeronautics

Systems International, the Academy of Model Aeronautics, and the FAA."

From a legal perspective, Ellett also highlights the fact that airport proprietors, as owners of their facilities, have rights that give them the power to manage those facilities and restrict vehicle access to the airport in a "reasonable way". In this light, he believes that airports should adopt a clear policy that prohibits UAVs from operating over airport property at certain altitudes.

"While simply having a policy is no guarantee that it will always be adhered to, adopting a reasonable policy that prohibits certain UAV flights over airport property will strengthen the legal position of the airport," he says.

"Airport proprietors can also work with local governments to have established local rules and ordinances that prohibit UAV operations over airports. In situations where such local rules and ordinances are enacted, airports can seek to have the local authorities prosecute violators," he adds.

for remotely identifying and tracking unmanned aircraft," adds Clark. "The ARC will provide the FAA with its recommendations later this year. Once the new remote identification rules are in place, they should assist airports in being able to identify and track down operators of rogue UAS near airports."

### Common sense

Although increasingly stringent legal and regulatory obligations will undoubtedly help to reduce the dangers posed by UAVs, SISL's Kochenderfer still argues that the best way to prevent drones from flying too close to airports is to educate the public. He also points out that UAV manufacturers continue to build technological safeguards into units to "help prevent users from flying too close to airports, in restricted areas, and above a specific altitude. In the future it may be important for authorized UAVs to fly near – or even at – airports.

"UTM and other technologies can help enable this in a way that preserves safety. I also highly recommend visiting knowbeforeyoufly.org, which is part of an educational campaign led by Association for Unmanned Vehicle

**"While having a policy is no guarantee that it will be adhered to, adopting a reasonable policy that prohibits certain UAVs will strengthen the legal position of the airport"**

Ted Ellett, former FAA chief counsel

### Future prospects

Kochenderfer envisages a time when there could even be opportunities for airports to host the facilities that are used to launch and remotely pilot UAVs.

"I do see a future where UAVs will share the airspace and runways. I would welcome this, but trust must be gradually established in the technology," he says.

Looking ahead, Kraft also predicts that there will be "fantastic opportunities" in the UAV market in the coming years, particularly since the main thrust of UTM schemes, such as those led by NASA, is to integrate UAVs into national airspaces and, in the process, allow facilities to integrate piloted and remotely controlled aircraft.

"I think this is going to radically change our lives. It is another reason for upcoming generations to focus on science, engineering, technology and math subjects at school and college. I'm looking forward to the day this comes about," concludes Kraft. ○

Right: In the USA, it is illegal for UAVs to fly within five miles (8km) of airports without permission







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# • Does *size* matter?

How is the market for large jets faring compared with that for their smaller counterparts, and are FBOs equipped to handle such aircraft?

Words | **Mario Pierobon**







hanges to aerodrome safety certification proposed by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) earlier this year mean that some European airports may soon be able to accept

larger aircraft without substantial modification to their infrastructure. It appears that after several years of shrinking business aviation traffic, the demand for business aircraft chartering is moderately picking up again.

With expanding fleets of business aircraft in operation and more large jets being operated now than was the case in the past, FBOs looking to welcome large business jets in the future will have to cater for handling requirements that differ from those of smaller aircraft.

#### **The market**

Despite smaller jets remaining the most popular and more affordable, there has been a rise in the number of large jets entering the market in Europe. Ettore Poggi, group FBO director at Luxaviation Group, says, "Larger business jets are obviously more expensive, so they are not as accessible.





## Supply and demand

It has been reported that growth for business aviation is steady in Europe, but analysts remain concerned that there is still an oversupply of aircraft, including large jets. Flight number growth is almost non-existent globally, with some hope created with Europe's steady figures.

"Despite the wider macroeconomic headwinds, we finished 2016 in a good position," says Tom Ville, marketing and public relations manager at Netjets Europe. "We saw around a 4% increase in total flights operated for the first six months of 2017 year-on-year and a 5% increase in total hours flown during the same period."

"In 2017 we are continuing to invest in renewing our fleet. We recently took delivery of our 30<sup>th</sup> Global aircraft and 50<sup>th</sup> Challenger. In Europe on average we are taking delivery of almost one new aircraft every month across the course of this year."

"We saw around a 4% increase in total flights operated for the first six months of 2017 year-on-year"

*Tom Ville, marketing manager at Netjets Europe*

Of course, there are more jets – both large and small – in use than in the past, but the ratio between them fluctuates with the long-term economic cycles.

"The most popular large business jets are the Embraer Lineage and the various models manufactured by Airbus and Boeing. Meanwhile, airports are regularly lengthening and widening runways to cater for larger jets."

Joe McDermott, senior business aviation consultant at Global FBO Consult, comments, "Large jets tend to be very destination-specific, meaning there a set list of destinations that they venture to. These jets are always welcomed at FBOs because they can generate more revenue than smaller aircraft. The market for the Gulfstream 650 or Global 6000 is relatively small, but has been slowly growing since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Converted pre-owned commercial Boeing 737s and Airbus 319s/320s are on the market alongside new-build models, creating new markets, clients and opportunities."

### Requirements

Whether a general aviation FBO can handle larger aircraft and passenger numbers is dependent on the airport's infrastructure. This includes factors such as runway length and width, loading capacity on the apron, firefighting ability and navigational aids.

"The FBO must have the capability – either in-house, subcontracted or performed by the airport – to marshal the aircraft to its parking position," says Poggi. "This may involve a 'follow-me' marshaling vehicle and equipment powerful enough to tow a large aircraft. Once in position, air-stairs and luggage belts may be required."

"Other essential equipment and services may also be needed for large aircraft and volumes of passengers, including luggage trolleys, passenger airside transportation,

additional security screening to help passenger flow, and a lounge to accommodate the increase in passenger numbers. More trained FBO staff would typically be required to handle a larger aircraft and it should be taken into consideration that they take longer to handle than smaller aircraft."

There are many benefits for FBOs in targeting larger aircraft, including increased handling prices, which are typically based on aircraft size and weight, larger fuel uplifts, and more ancillary services such as catering, ground transportation and other concierge services, all of which lead to higher revenue and margins.

### Attraction

Before putting money into infrastructure and equipment to handle large business jets, there needs to be solid evidence

Main image: China's Deer Jet operates a fleet of four large jets  
Below: Large jets frequently use FBOs in Dubai







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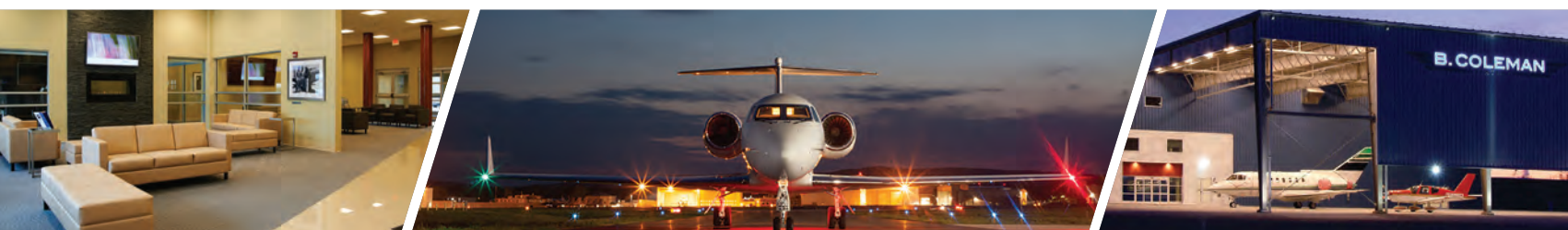
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***“For sporadic large jet operations, there is not much extra investment that business airport operators and FBOs need to make”***

Joe McDermott, senior business aviation consultant at Global FBO Consult

for traffic available or to be generated. “For sporadic large jet operations, there is not much extra investment that business airport operators and FBOs need to make, provided they are able to offer enough parking space,” says McDermott. “The only additional pieces of equipment would be the likes of belt or ULD loaders, and tow bars and push-back tractors or tugs, which are not normally required to handle smaller business aircraft. These can be rented by the hour.”

It can be more difficult for FBOs to target the operators of large jets unless they are based at a large airport that serves a desirable destination. They cannot create passenger demand. McDermott says, “An FBO cannot

Main image: **Bombardier Global 6000, part of NetJets Europe’s fleet of large business jets**

Below: **Large jets can be modified to feature bedrooms**



attract a large jet unless the business passengers need to go to that specific airport or city.”

Geographic location is not a hugely important factor as such because the choice is dependent on the type of passenger. Poggi knows this all too well. “One example is our ExecuJet-managed FBO at Brussels Airport, which attracts many large business jets because the EU’s and NATO’s headquarters are in Brussels,” he says. “On the other hand, our ExecuJet-managed FBOs at Dubai’s International Airport and Al Maktoum International Airport, and King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, attract large jets because there are more of them in the region.”

McDermott adds, “Large jet operators have a breadth of FBOs to pick from at bigger airports, and the winner is always the company that has built a reputation of delivering excellent customer experience backed by internationally certified training – such as NATA Safety 1st – and safety management systems under International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling [IS-BAH] registration.”

### **Planning and training**

Even the smallest FBOs can accommodate large jet handling requests with planning and personnel training.

“If an FBO that is not accustomed to handling a large jet get a request to do so, the request is likely to come via an established international trip support and planning agency that will normally communicate specific equipment that it is known to be required,” says Global FBO Consult’s McDermott. “If instructions do not come in from the trip planning agency, FBOs that are good at planning will know to ask the trip support company or the chief pilot of the aircraft operator what requirements must be satisfied.”



Above: **ExecuJet Africa's FBO** offers a fleet of large jets

Right: **Catering for inflight meals** has to be provided at airports

He says, "Through careful planning, the handlers will proceed to hire any equipment for a specific period from airlines or third-party ground service equipment providers, such as loading equipment to reach higher compartments than in smaller aircraft, a GPU, an air-conditioning unit or, more rarely these days, an air starter.

"After this they will look at the number of people on board and the amount of baggage, and will plan their own staff allocation to the aircraft accordingly. The FBOs' aim will always be to provide a cost-effective, efficient and safe service to their clients. FBOs will have these processes documented in their standard operating procedures or operations manual, and their staff will have appropriate training and biannual recurrent training to ensure delivery of the highest level of service."

Best-in-class FBOs provide formalized training in ground operations for their employees to cater for all needs, including handling large jets. "All staff would be trained in multiple disciplines, ranging from customer service at the highest level to efficiently and safely operating various equipment types on the ramp and working on multiple tasks on the ramp," says McDermott. "A good FBO will have people with a wide variety of experience who might have previously worked in the military, with airlines, or even with regulatory authorities. Experience, dedication and training tend to enable FBOs to plan very carefully for the arrival of any type of aircraft on their ramps so that they can deliver the highest-quality service to their clients."

As Poggi points out, "There are no specific regulations to handle large jets, but training would certainly be our requirement from both a technical handling and a safety point of view." ○



Above: **Larger jets carry more baggage** for airports to handle on the ground



## Certification changes

The European Safety Agency (EASA) has said that with the proposed new certification specifications, airports will be able to accept large aircraft within its existing infrastructure, increasing capacity at congested aerodromes in particular.

Airport operators that fall under the recently issued EASA regulations on aerodromes (EASA ADR) are required to comply with the new regulatory requirements by December 31, 2017.

James Dillon-Godfray, head of business development at London Oxford Airport, says, "The converting procedure checks compliance with the new requirements of the EASA regulations and the differences with the national regulations. This generates desktop work over several months for one or two people devoted to the exercise for an airport of our size.

"This includes a start-from-the-beginning exercise as if you have just built an airport and are getting certified for the first time. The EASA scope of the transition process was not supposed to be a recertification, but a much lighter touch procedure to check against compliance," comments Dillon-Godfray.

"However, the first move to becoming EASA certified is quite an exercise for smaller aerodromes with small management teams, but once complete the ongoing administrative requirement is no more burdensome than under the old national licensing scheme.

"Under the new framework you need to have an up-to-date safety management system before you start. You also need to have undertaken gap analysis – the comparison of actual performance with desired performance – where it is required."



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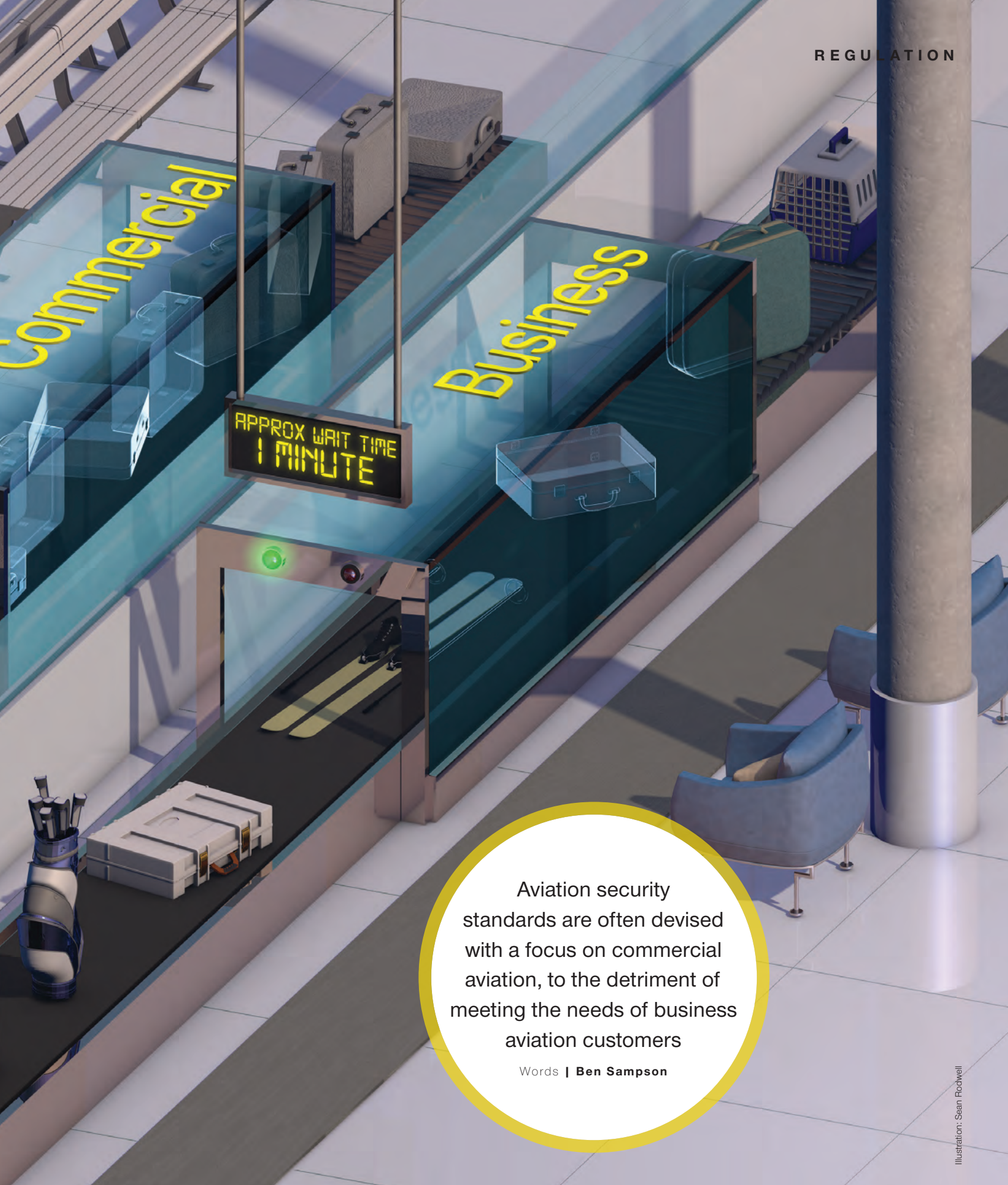
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Aviation security standards are often devised with a focus on commercial aviation, to the detriment of meeting the needs of business aviation customers

Words | **Ben Sampson**



**F**or the aviation industry to exist and prosper, people have to be confident that flying is a safe and secure activity. To this end, the aviation industry, legislators and the media pay a lot of attention to ensuring that aviation security measures are comprehensive and current.

For those outside the aviation sector it's easy to categorize business and private aviation as the same thing as commercial aviation. Yet there are many important differences between them that influence the way security is conducted in each. Many working inside business aviation would argue that the differences are not allowed to influence it enough.

Perhaps the largest difference between commercial and business aviation is the clients. Speaking at a security seminar at the EBACE event in Geneva, Switzerland, earlier this year, Patricia Davis, head of compliance monitoring at TAG Aviation UK, said that business aviation clients expect to be treated differently from the general public and that different types of clients expect to be treated in different ways: "There is less risk than there is with a member of the public buying a ticket to get on a public aircraft."

Most in business aviation would argue that they have fewer clients than commercial aviation and that those clients are therefore lower risk and don't usually expect to be screened. But when it is decided that your crew and passengers need to be screened for security, there can be great differences in how that screening is handled at different airports and FBOs.

Speaking at the seminar, Hugo Locke from the Flying Group said, "At some, they practically undress you. At others, they barely take a glance."

"As an operator, the main issue is that the regulations and laws are being written for the big commercial airlines, without any attention to the very specific daily needs of business aviation."

It is often the case, Locke adds, that aviation security regulations don't make sense when applied in the business and private aviation sectors: "The rules and regulations are too airline focused. It's even worse for helicopter operators. It becomes frustrating, not just for operators and FBOs, but also sometimes for the passengers, who begin to question the sanity of the processes."

### Demarcations and derogations

An issue for operators in the EU is that although aviation regulations are centrally created in Brussels, Belgium, member states can change the basic rules. Airports can also create demarcations within the airport, where different rules and security standards are applied.

The level of variation, both between European countries and between airports, has increased since December 2016, when the European Commission began to allow countries to derogate from the aviation security screening standards and use alternative security measures (EC Regulation 2016/2096). Airports can use alternative security measures







## Cybersecurity challenge

Although physical security is a priority for business aviation, there is growing awareness of the threat of cybersecurity attacks. The increased use of digital tools in the cockpit, flight department and the companies that support business aircraft operations, places aircraft and passengers at greater risk.

Research shows that the number of cybersecurity attacks is increasing every year. A recent Cybersecurity Ventures report predicted that the cost of protecting against cyberattacks – and cleaning up after a successful one – will rise to US\$6tn annually by 2021. In

April this year ICAO announced a declaration that provides a framework for addressing cyber risks and stressed the importance of business aviation's involvement.

"New and more sophisticated digital technologies and processes are coming online daily, it seems, impacting our network and its relationship with shippers and the traveling public," said Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, ICAO Council president. "What this means for cybersecurity and cybersafety stakeholders is that threats are emerging at an ever-increasing rate."



***"We need to lobby for a better understanding of business aviation and get to a situation where our operations are properly risk assessed"***

Sean Rafferty, managing director of Universal Aviation UK

for aircraft that have a maximum take-off weight of less than 4.5 metric tons, if that aircraft is flown by the company that owns it, or if it is chartered by a company so that it can transport its own staff.

According to the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA), the revisions do not adequately define "alternative security measures". This means many business aviation operators can be subject to the measures, a worse situation than when working toward a common screening standard.

"There is no consistency. We don't have problems with the screening; we all want to be protected. But the rules were written to protect the public and our customers are very different," says Sean Rafferty, managing director of Universal Aviation UK. "We need to lobby for a better understanding of business aviation and get to a situation where our operations are properly risk assessed."

"For example, at one business aviation terminal in Ireland only hand baggage can be screened. Hold baggage has to go through the main, commercial, terminal. Clients

turn up with golf clubs because they don't realize that hold and cabin baggage require different security processes."

### Heavy aircraft

Another issue is the increasing size of business jets. If an aircraft is heavier than 4.5 metric tons, the passengers must be screened. There is a trend for new business jets to be larger and heavier. The Bombardier Global 7000, for example, weighs more than 4.8 metric tons. The aircraft are getting bigger, but legislators haven't changed the rules.

"It's clear that if anything is in a restricted area it should be screened," says Rafferty. "That gives operators huge problems. As long as the airport says it can give you a demarcated area that's fine. But you can't compromise on security in a restricted area."

"The airport has to be able to manage those rules in different areas, and some just can't. If an airport fails an EU audit it gets served an Article 15 that closes it down. This makes airports nervous of creating demarcated areas."

Main: Business aviation clients value the flexibility charter operators offer

Left: Requirements to screen baggage can vary from country to country in Europe

Above: Cybersecurity can be an issue with digital flightdecks

According to Rafferty, some airports could lose business if they can't create a demarcated area. For example, an aircraft over 4.5 metric tons may be having a tech stop. If it lands at Luton in the UK, everyone has to get off, be screened and then get back on. "Once it takes off from UK soil, they have to be able to guarantee that it is safe and secure. Ireland doesn't have that same rule, so some companies in Luton could lose business to Shannon," he says.

## Baggage reconciliation

There are two main types of screening that takes place in aviation – baggage screening and passenger screening.

Baggage security standards for the aviation sector were tightened during the 1980s. After the Air India disaster in 1985, which killed 329 people when a device in an unaccompanied bag exploded off the coast of Ireland, airlines became responsible for ensuring that hold baggage from a 'no-show' passenger was not allowed on board. Unaccompanied bags may only be carried on a flight if rigorous security checks have been carried out. Then, following the Pan Am 103 disaster in 1988, when 259 people were killed over Lockerbie, Scotland, the rules were tightened and Triple A (Accounting and Authorization of hold baggage for carriage by Air) was created. Triple A requires airlines to account for the status of every bag being loaded into an aircraft hold and for the details to be authorized by an appointed person.

Today the rules of most air transportation authorities stipulate that if passengers flying internationally with checked baggage fail to arrive at the departure gate before the flight is closed, that person's baggage must be retrieved from the aircraft's hold before the flight is permitted to take off. These rules apply to business aviation if baggage needs to be screened. Rafferty says that while Triple A is good for commercial aviation, the regulations again do not adequately reflect the needs of business aviation. "They are about protecting the public and these aren't public flights," he says.

Davis, from TAG Aviation UK, agrees: "Bag reconciliation is different for us. The crew meets the passengers and puts them and the baggage on the aircraft at the same time. We are doing our own reconciliation and are responsible for our own ground handlers having Triple A training, which is challenging."

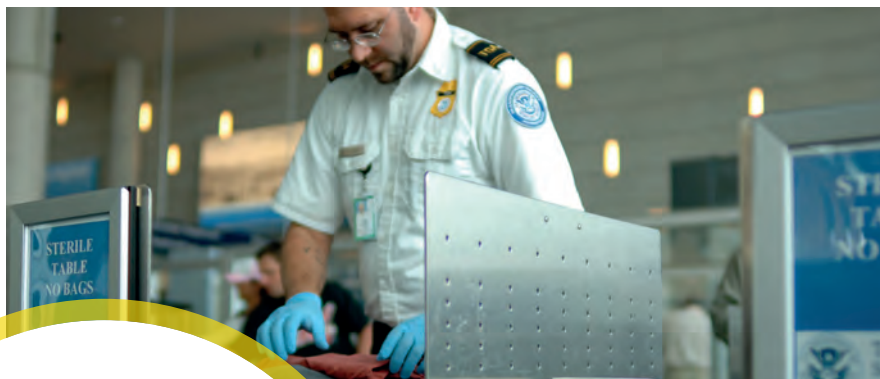
Similar problems adopting commercial aviation rules into business aviation occur regarding a more recent European aviation law change. To help fight terrorism and crime, since April 2016 all air carriers have been required to collect and transmit, to each member state's authorities, passenger name record (PNR) data for passengers on flights from non-EU countries. Again, critics from business aviation say the directive should be more specific about exactly what an 'air carrier' is.

PNR data is already collected by most operators and is included in the advanced passenger information collected

## Screening in the USA

Passenger screening rules for business aviation in the USA are similar to those in the EU, with the vital difference that the onus is on the operator to provide security, not the airport. The reverse is true for commercial aviation. There is no screening

of passengers required for an internal, non-commercial domestic flight in the USA. For 'public charter' flights there is screening at the FBO. There is also a security requirement for 'quasi-private' operators, such as membership flying clubs.



***"I want more security – but it must be intelligent security. I would encourage everyone to have a voice"***

Hugo Locke, Flying Group

for travel to and from countries such as Canada, Mexico, China, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Thailand, South Africa, Spain, Pakistan, Jamaica, Kenya, Algeria, Iran, Syria, Morocco. PNR can also include any information collected about passengers, including credit card details or hire car. The simplest approach for business aviation companies is to not collect the information if they don't want to transmit it. A further challenge is that most countries want the PNR data transmitted 24 to 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure. Flexibility about departure is often the most important aspect of a business flight, so this can be difficult to achieve.

The responsibility for passenger data collection often falls to the FBOs or the trip support companies. Davis says, "They are implementing something similar in the UK. It is our responsibility through the FBOs. For last minute flights, even if it has taken off, the data can be transmitted before it lands."

Rafferty agrees that there hasn't been a problem with providing PNR data, because most flights only have a few people on them and are several hours long. "We have to keep an eye on where the data goes. It's not seen as a big deal," he says.

## Intelligent security

Business aviation customers have specific expectations and requirements that business aviation companies strive to meet. When security regulations are made in a general way, that can get in the way of business aviation companies meeting those needs. Private and business aviation cannot depend on laws that are designed purely for commercial aviation. As Hugo Locke says, "I want more security – but it must be intelligent security. And a general security awareness of everyone in business and the general aviation community about what we are doing. I would encourage everyone to have a voice." ○





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Main: Clients are welcomed at a TAG Aviation facility





Fixed-based operators often talk about customer service being the number-one priority. *Business Airport International* explores how this is achieved and what is prioritized

Words | **Steve Johnson**

# At your service



**B**ack in less competitive, pre-internet times, it was a lot easier to satisfy customers buying products and services. The need for differentiators to win hearts and minds didn't seem too great and choice was often limited.

When traveling by air, all that mattered was that services were safe, comfortable and reliable; the glamor of flying made up for any inadequacies. Travelers got to their destination faster and paid accordingly.

Today, of course, there are multiple options at customer's fingertips and tougher competition within the industry. Ultimately, if first class scheduled services aren't convenient and it can be afforded, passengers can opt to fly 'executive' and will still benefit from a superior, often tailored experience. No one would argue that the basics of safety remain absolute essentials, but what does the executive flyer expect? How do FBOs look after their customers and ensure that services, discreetly and sensitively deployed, check all the boxes?

#### At the center

Private jet charter companies agree that the customer must remain at the center of operations. Jana App-Sandering, group



***"The airport is an inconvenience in the process. Transition should be as insignificant and irrelevant as possible"***

James Dillon-Godfray, head of business development at London Oxford Airport

client service manager at Luxaviation, says, "Business aviation is centered on the customer. We make it our mission to deliver excellence – to go above and beyond the call of duty." The approach at TAG Aviation is the same and is that as each individual has their own needs and desires, the company's duty is to adapt services to its philosophy of 'customers deserve the best'.

Will Holroyd, director of sales and marketing at Harrods Aviation, takes a broader view, and says, "Our industry is portrayed as serving film stars and industry leaders. However, our primary customers as an FBO are, in fact, the pilots, engineers and support crew. They want to know that the individuals traveling in the back of the aircraft are well cared for." This seems to suggest that by taking the approach of looking after 'internal customers', fare-paying customers will reap the benefits.

The team at London Oxford Airport believes excellence, best practice and individuality create an integrated experience. James Dillon-Godfray, head of business development, says, "It starts from the first airport signage and the airport terminal entrance. Likewise, it is possible to leave the terminal in four minutes from touchdown when everything falls into place."

Smooth transitions are just as important for travelers using both executive and commercial flights. Signature Flight Support, the world's largest network of FBOs, meets scheduled flight passengers at their aircraft and provides a shuttle service to the FBO facility, additionally taking care of luggage retrieval, customs and immigration. With its multinational experience, Signature tailors its services accordingly, taking inspiration from the locales it serves.

Harrods Aviation suggests that great customer service delivery isn't about gimmicks or tricks – it's about listening, understanding and delivering. Luxaviation's App-Sandering



Left and below: **Signature's FBO facility at Biggin Hill**

Above: **Excellent customer service is an integral part of business aviation**





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says, “We even cater for our non-human passengers, giving special treats to pets and making sure they have a comfortable place to relax during their flight.”

London Oxford Airport reveals that in addition to delivering specific cabin requirements, staff will jump in a car and buy anything customers need, even driving customers to London in the middle of the night when a chauffeur hasn’t turned up.

### Staying social

Like it or loathe it, the social media revolution continues to have an impact, particularly in informing others about purchasing experiences. But what about the FBO and executive aviation sector – how is customer service quality measured and monitored? Erturk Yildiz, FBO handling manager at TAG Aviation Europe, says, “Some customers don’t want to use social media to show how, where or when they are traveling. Despite that, if they do

***“We make it our mission to deliver excellence – to go above and beyond the call of duty”***

Jana App-Sandering, group client service manager at Luxaviation

share photos and comments on social media, it helps to improve our visibility.”

Luxaviation believes that the primary method of measuring customer service quality is whether a passenger returns. “We encourage our cabin staff to report and analyze every flight and keep track of what went particularly well, which enables us to implement the detail on other flights,” says App-Sandering. Interestingly, Signature says that it surveys extensively and has social media for customer and stakeholder interaction.

Harrods Aviation states that the expectations and the standards the company sets are so high that it quickly learns of a less-than-perfect experience. “We have a team who are in constant contact with our customers, ensuring service levels are being met. It is vitally important that our global customers know and trust who they are doing business with. The major trade shows are a big help, but we also like to meet with our clients in their own back yard to truly understand their needs,” says Holroyd.

Harrods Aviation also says that it never hides away from the fact that it employs humans, not machines. More than being empowered to manage the highest levels of

Above: **The team at Harrods Aviation’s London Luton FBO**

Right: **Staff work around the clock to cater to their passengers’ demands**



## Service with a smile

For 20 years Paris-based consultant Luxury Attitude has been training organizations to deliver service excellence. With a portfolio that stretches across the hospitality, transport, retail, finance and automotive sectors, the company is also active in the aviation and airports marketplace.

Hervé de Gouvion Saint Cyr, director, says, “The airport environment offers many examples of alternative price-based choices, including parking facilities, internet access, seating and lounges. These create environments full of promise, but also generate different levels of expectations.”

De Gouvion Saint Cyr separates expectations into two distinct approaches. He says that the functional service approach is about expertise, organization and processes. Increasingly digitally powered services include parking reservations, ticketing, check-in, security and customs control. But these things are mostly about being a service provider. “The goal should now be about transforming customer satisfaction into customer delight,” he says.

He suggests that there needs to be more focus on what he calls “the emotional approach”. The human dimension of service

is how to engage with the client and show them that you really care. The aesthetic dimension is encapsulated by how to appeal to a client’s senses through eye contact, smile, gestures and words.

To really transform a client’s perception, de Gouvion Saint Cyr says that companies should work on clearly defining the brand experience they want clients to enjoy. “It’s not only about what they have to do, but about positioning themselves to transform a service process into an experience,” he says.



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service, staff are also entirely comfortable with raising any concerns they may have. This is echoed by London Oxford Airport, which says that any issues are jumped on immediately and resolved. "We have Twitter and Facebook, but the average business and private aviation passengers are usually too busy to interact on these platforms. It tends to be aircraft operators that monitor the activity," explains Dillon-Godfray.

The social media effect may not be universally important for the FBO and executive aviation sector, but other IT developments are making a difference. Luxaviation refers to the fact that technologies have enabled an experience more akin to a luxury restaurant or hotel, with its MyLux app providing access to operational and planning information, location guides and more. Signature says that the advent of new technology and apps has improved services for both customer and crew alike. Signature's TailWins app is used to reward customer loyalty, and its iFBO app provides information to support aircrew.

### High standards

Despite apps and the like, London Oxford Airport believes that the main event for FBOs and executive aviation is still about the smooth transition from car to plane and vice versa. "The airport is an inconvenience and a hurdle in the process. Transition should be as insignificant and irrelevant as possible," says Dillon-Godfray.

As for becoming paperless – another transformation that is affecting every corner – crews can now submit general aviation reports via websites, but according to Oxford Airport that is an imperfect process, as reports are

## Creating customer satisfaction

In every industry, including the FBO sector, customer service requirements have changed dramatically in recent times. Across the board, customers have become highly informed, price conscious and service savvy.

FBO customers demand great service personalization and often a bespoke experience. To deliver this, developing a dossier of individual preferences can be very beneficial. Google news alerts can be set for relevant content to support particular clients, such as career landmarks or successes.

Simply being polite isn't good customer service, but creating a relationship by maintaining professionalism and focusing on the core function of customer and employee relationships will create a memorable experience. Social media presence and 'likes' do not drive customer loyalty. These platforms serve purely to give gentle reminders about the business, its culture and products.

Gone are the days of management behind closed doors. The most successful FBOs are always available to their clients. Effective two-way communication is important to ensure successful, long-term relationships.

*In conversation with president and senior partner Doug Wilson and senior associate Rikki Altenburg, FBO Partners*



Below: FBOs prepare for every eventuality to ensure customer satisfaction

**"It is vitally important that our global customers know and trust who they are doing business with"**

*Will Holroyd, director of sales and marketing at Harrods Aviation*

also sent to the airport and FBO by email. Would a greater move toward being paperless mean reduced paperwork and more time for customers?

Business aviation is already at a point where customers want and expect things to happen immediately. Signature thinks this will spill over into the FBO world. Patrick Sniffen, vice president of marketing at Signature, says, "Customers are becoming more time sensitive and any delays in their travel are more than annoyances. As an FBO, being ready for every eventuality is critical to satisfying customers." Harrods also suggests that evolution will come from necessary speed and response times, not because customers are more demanding.

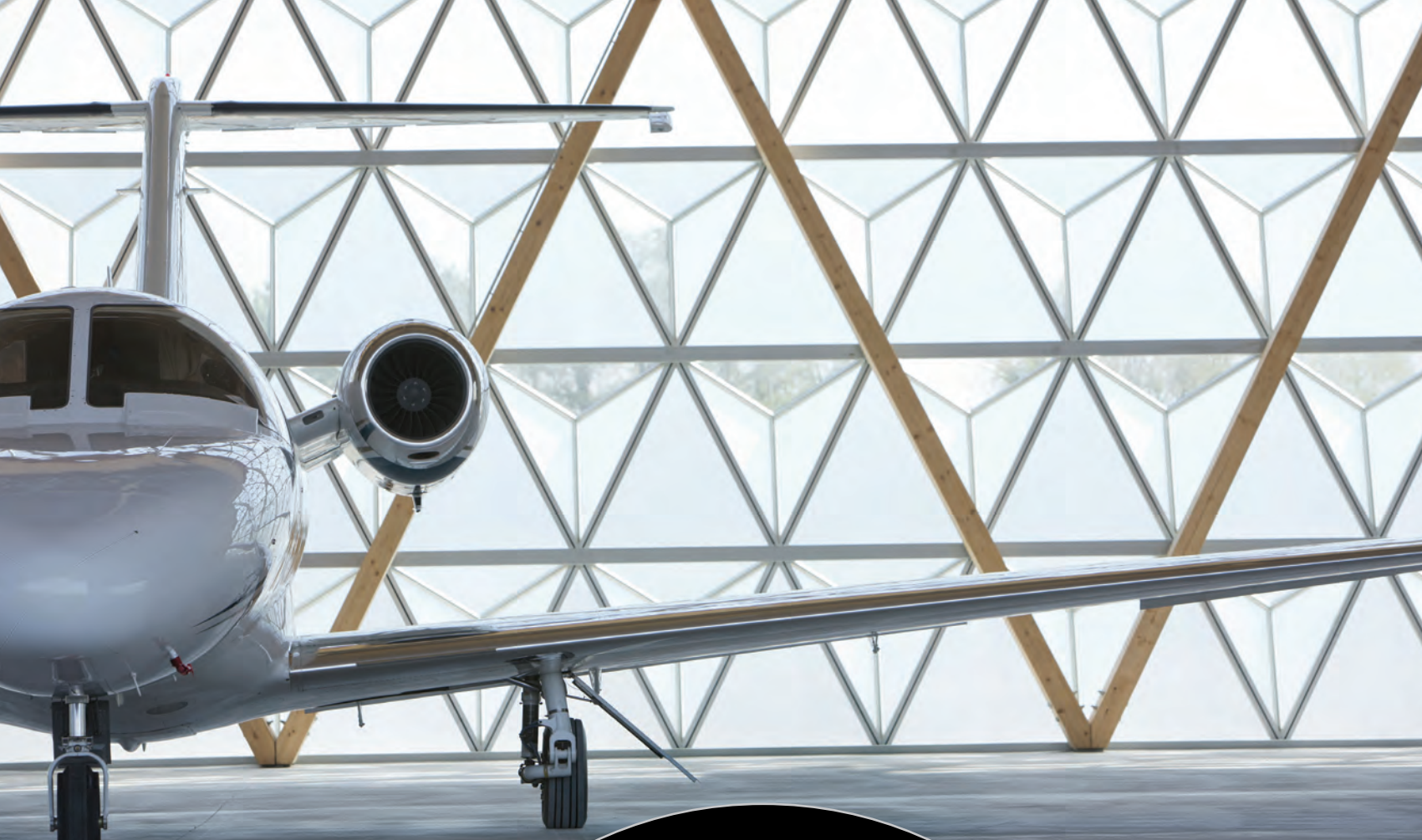
"They are always seeking greater reassurance that service is safe and that staff are qualified and trained to meet their needs," adds Holroyd.

All this is happening at a time when expectations continue to rise as competition grows, according to Oxford Airport. Dillon-Godfray says, "Everyone is benchmarked against the last FBO experience the passenger may have had. I think that mini FBOs at smaller general aviation airports might evolve to cater for an evolution at the lower end of the charter market, using single-engine turboprops for specific aerodromes."

Balancing running executive aircraft with the attention to detail of a high-grade and respected establishment may not be easy, but that is the situation for the business aviation sector. Dillon-Godfray concludes, "We should forget we are an airport or FBO and behave more like a five star hotel, where every member of staff is the concierge." ○







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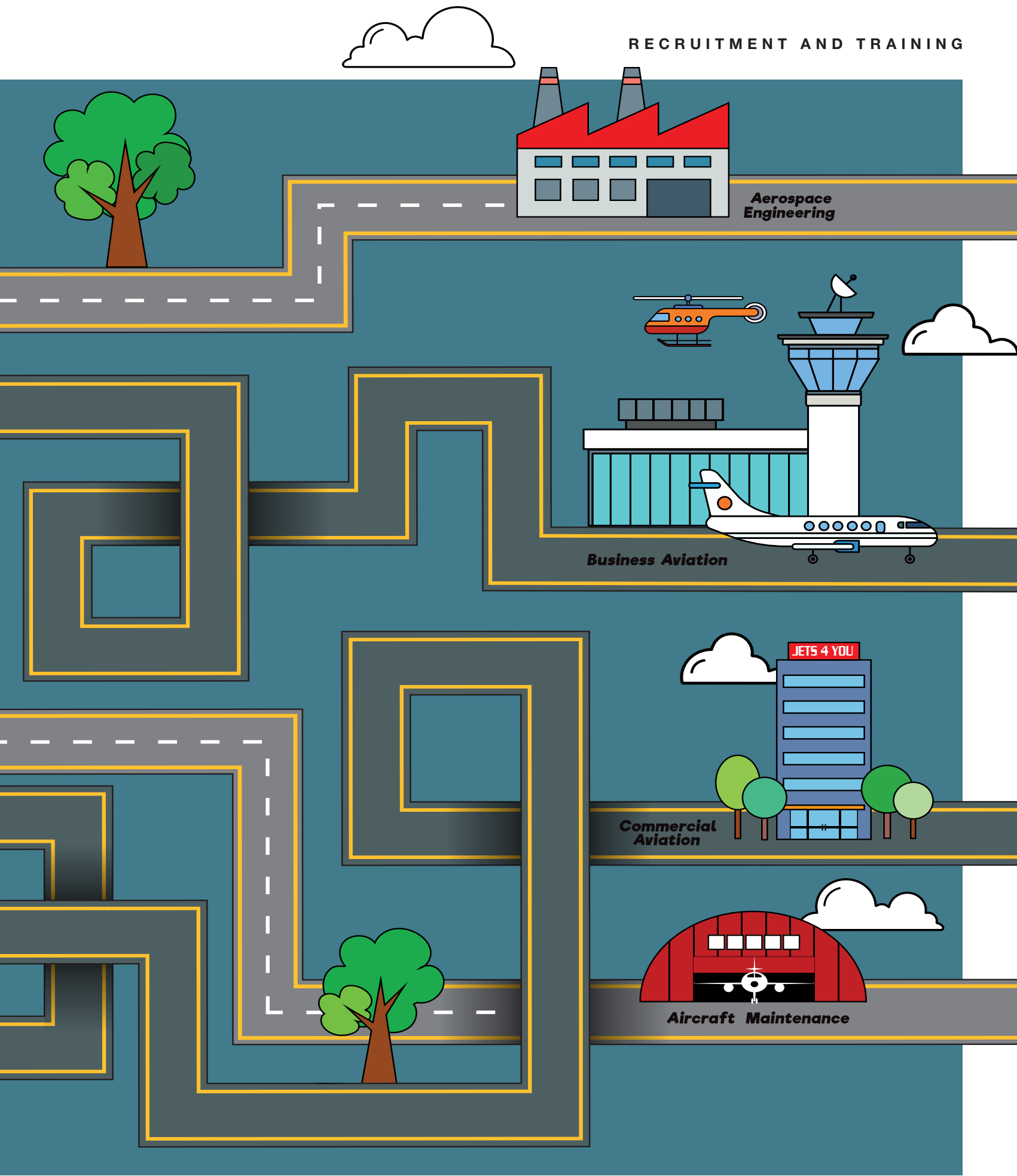
With recent research revealing the possibility of skills shortages in the future, business aviation is improving its training and qualifications options and making greater efforts to recruit young talent

Words | Hilary Robertson



# Career path





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**T**

he looming problem of a possible staff shortage was raised in a study published recently by Korn Ferry Hay Group, conducted with the support of Booz Allen Hamilton on behalf of the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA). *Shortage of Skills in European Business Aviation*, published in June 2017, confirmed what many people had already anticipated – students and young professionals are often unaware of business aviation as a career option.

“The biggest surprise is that many of the key players in the sector are unaware of the skills shortage that’s facing them in the not too distant future,” says Christian Weiss, project director for Korn Ferry Hay Group. “That may be because they’re not losing staff, so they don’t see the issues facing smaller operations around the world. When attrition is low, the view of the wider industry is restricted, but we see that in specific segments of aviation and regions around the world, companies are beginning to struggle to recruit the highly skilled people they need.

“The number of students in STEM [science, technology, engineering and mathematics] subjects in higher education is stagnant or continuing to fall slightly in Europe, despite increasing demand for STEM-qualified graduates in sectors such as aviation. In regions where airline growth is most rapid, demand for certain skilled aviation professionals will increase considerably in the coming years.”

**“It’s time to make business aviation more attractive to highly skilled, technology savvy aviation professionals”**

Christian Weiss, project director for Korn Ferry Hay Group

As part of the study, students on aviation-related courses were asked which companies they knew about, and they rarely mentioned or even knew business aviation companies. “This doesn’t bode well if they’re not even aware of the sector,” says Weiss. “Small aviation companies in Europe especially need to be more active in their local recruitment marketing. All aviation companies have different workforce demands, depending on their specific location, demographics profile or strategy. They need to be creating awareness of their companies in educational entities, offering apprenticeship schemes and an employee proposition that is attractive to the skilled trainees needed.”

Another conclusion of the study is that collaboration between aviation players is needed to bring about a change in the perception of the sector. “It’s time to make the business aviation sector a more attractive employer to highly skilled, technology savvy aviation professionals,” says Weiss. “They will be increasingly in demand and competition for them will only intensify. One of the problems we have is businesses focusing on their own needs – in future, small and medium enterprises just won’t succeed as lone wolves. They need to collaborate.”

### Pathways

For aviation consultant Andrew Hughes, one of the main issues is the lack of clear pathways for recruiting the right people, training them for a specific role and then developing their careers. “The challenge is finding the right number and quality of people and training them in understanding



Left: There is a difference between training for technical skills training and softer customer-focused training

Right: Tests for qualifications can be taken on-site



how business aviation works,” he says. “There is a high degree of technical competency behind the scenes and many of those roles are hidden from customers and also from those studying the very skills that are in demand. There are immense opportunities in the sector for the best candidates and they just don’t realize it.”

Part of the problem for Hughes is the lack of understanding and unclear perception of business aviation. “People are sometimes attracted to employment with FBOs because of a perceived sense of glamor and a VIP lifestyle. The reality, of course, is very different, as the FBOs’ clients in reality lead demanding lives and are actually primarily interested in the time-saving benefits, convenience and security that an FBO provides. Better marketing of specific businesses and the sector as a whole would emphasize the reality and professionalism of staff involved and attract more of them.”

Increasing the perception of the sector and the career pathways of staff goes hand in hand with the improvement in standards across the global business aviation sector.

“The International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO) is becoming accepted as

best practice in aircraft operations,” says Hughes. “The International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling (IS-BAH) does the same in the FBO and ground handling environment, laying out best practice.

“Together they are making global procedures more standardized. They will increasingly improve the professional perception of business aviation and that presents an opportunity for attracting the best candidates across the sector.”

**“Training in the industry has relied too much on slide shows. We’re reassessing our programs so they are more face to face.”**

Victoria Malki, chief instructor at the Business Aviation School

## Focused training

It is clear that if business aviation is to attract the best recruits, it must offer good training. Victoria Malki, chief instructor at the Business Aviation School (BAS) in Paris, says, “Training providers must stay on top of the latest regulations and procedures in the business aviation industry. The specific training program must offer the right level of development for the individuals within an FBO especially, so that they understand the various systems and security procedures.”

With so many roles to recruit and train for, Malki and the team at BAS see a growing need in business aviation for people who focus on their specific tasks and who communicate well.

“There’s a balance between the technical skills people need to be able to undertake their specific role and the softer, but equally important, communication and service skills,” she says. “We take care and time to ensure every training program provides detail on the standards and procedures that must be adhered to, are important and are appropriate to the specific region. We’ve spent years imposing restrictions on confidentiality, so employees can’t talk about their customers, planes or business. That makes it difficult to improve public perception of business aviation.

“Training in the industry has relied too much on slide shows and digital delivery and we’re reassessing all our training programs so that they are much more face to face



Left: Customer service training often focuses on communication skills



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## Learning curve

The first European Careers in Business Aviation Day was held in Geneva at EBACE 2017. Its format was based on the successful US version.

Students as young as 12 were introduced to the global business aviation industry with tours, exhibitions, speakers and round table discussions.

"Our model helps the industry reach more than 1,000 students every year and although the European version has started smaller, it has the potential to grow quickly," says Peter Korns, operations manager at NBAA.

"We were happy to support the EBACE team and we're considering the two

events as a collective whole, because there's a global need to open up the world of business aviation to young people. We're able to show them that this is about more than what they see when they get on a plane – there are engineering, marketing, interior design, tax and law specialists who make our industry happen.

"We need to connect with young professionals and even younger students to plant the seeds and help develop their energy and passion. Days like this are vital in helping us communicate the diversity of opportunities available in business aviation."

"Workshops to develop more effective interaction are an excellent way to keep customer service at the forefront of your team's focus," says Hill. "But then we engage people with simulations and scenarios specific to their team. It's important to work through the possible areas where sales and customer service break down or are more difficult. We put participants under pressure in front of their colleagues so that they learn how to respond when similar pressure is applied by customers.

"That human interaction and learning how to do it better is so important, especially in such a customer-focused industry like business aviation."

Don Baldwin, president and CEO of Baldwin Aviation, helps companies develop and implement safety practices. Introducing the standards brings confidence to companies and Baldwin's clients are already seeing the benefits of training staff in strict competencies.

"If an operator knows one handler conforms to IS-BAH and another doesn't, they'll always make the sensible choice," says Baldwin. "The standards demonstrate that an organization goes the extra mile to keep everyone safe. These international standards – whether that's IS-BAH or IS-BAO – bring structure to organizations and clarify expectations for employees. They're beginning to be adopted around the world and they help entire organizations develop a uniformity of safety procedures.

"Sometimes getting everyone together for training can be difficult, especially with 24/7 operations, but there are some great online courses. Formal training should always be backed up by an organization's induction, training, shadowing and mentoring schemes. Together they help bring professionalism to our industry. If you can find the right candidates with good skills in their area, the work you do with them, especially if they're new to business aviation, will help them develop their skills." ○

and paper based. People learn better that way. If we provide the best learning, that will increase professionalism."

## Team building

Christine Hill is executive vice president of ServiceElements International (SEI), an organizational culture development company. "We work with organizations from around the industry to help elevate the power of excellent service within companies, in addition to their individual divisions, departments and other organizational teams," she says. "We use workshops, coaching, webinars and e-learning to help companies in business aviation achieve financial results through superior service.

"FBOs in particular are hiring young people and they will be working in teams that have seen five generations of the same family. Engendering the most professional culture in those environments comes from great leadership, encouraging teamwork and holding people accountable."

Communication and service workshops are extremely popular with SEI's customers.

Below: Smartphone apps such as hullo Aircrew are making it easier to recruit temporary staff



## App-y flight crew

Aviation managers now have an app to help them hire temporary staff at the touch of a screen. The hullo Aircrew app enables effective contact between aircrew and operators globally.

The traditional way of filling aircrew slots often involves word-of-mouth recommendations and existing staff using their network. All that is still possible, but hullo Aircrew offers a searchable database with worldwide information and accessibility.

Keiron Blay, CEO of hullo Aircrew, explains, "The web and app platforms allow flight crew to make the most of their flying time and

ultimately their earnings. Operators can use it to crew flights quickly and easily.

"Although our first release focuses on pilots and aircrew, we'll be extending that in the future. Finding and booking temporary staff is an issue across the whole business aviation industry and we're pleased to have found a solution. Any documentation needed to prove people's qualifications can be uploaded to the app, so it's immediately available for managers when they book. We've also set up reminders so that when expiry dates are

approaching, individuals will be reminded of their own responsibilities."

Hullo Aircrew is designed to be straightforward for staff and managers. Contractors will be able to search within their own specific parameters such as date, location and contract details. They can then post a job or search the database for suitable crew.

"We want it to be as cost-efficient and effective as possible for everyone," says Blay. "As the app is used more, we'll be updating the platform based on users' experience."



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BUSINESS AIRCRAFT HANDLING





The International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling (IS-BAH) program was launched in July 2014 as a voluntary code for best safety practice. Three years later, what is its progress?

Words | **Stephanie Taylor**



**D**eveloped by the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) in association with the National Air Transportation Association (NATA), the IS-BAH was the first program to bring the concept of safety management systems (SMS) to the business aviation ground-handling sector.

IBAC says the third-party independent audit component of the IS-BAH registration process aligns with proposed SMS requirements for ground-handling service providers (GHSP) based on existing standards and recommended practices agreed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

"Currently, ICAO Annex 19 deals with SMS. It covers service providers, and while international general aviation operators are not considered such in the context of this Annex, it does require operators of large or turbojet aircraft to implement an SMS," explains Terry Yeomans, IBAC program director for the IS-BAH.





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***“An effective safety management system should factor in the risks associated with having other entities perform tasks and services that may impact performance”***

Terry Yeomans, IBAC program director for the IS-BAH

“Furthermore, although the scope of Annex 19 does not currently directly apply to ground-handling services, the SMS guidance material within the ICAO Safety Management Manual (SMM) Doc 9859 says ‘An effective SMS should factor in the risks associated with having other entities perform tasks and services that may impact the service provider’s performance,’” Yeomans continues. “On this basis, as operators and aerodromes who have successfully implemented their own SMS see their systems mature, they will need to start to look at their supply chains in more depth for risk assessments.

“This is relatively straightforward when dealing with regular city pairs and routes, but the huge diverse nature of business aviation operations means any one of thousands of locations could be today’s destination for operators. With a strong SMS at its core, the IS-BAH can be used as a tool to assist with risk mitigation for operators and aerodromes, in that FBOs and BAHAs will have an active SMS aligned with their own.”

### **Increasing uptake**

As a not-for-profit organization made up of 14 business aviation associations including BBGA, EBAA and NBAA, IBAC has a huge reach, so it may come as a surprise that at the time of writing, the program has only 76 locations registered as IS-BAH Stage I, and five operators registered IS-BAH Stage II – companies can progress to Stage II once they have maintained the IS-BAH for two years.

Nonetheless, Yeomans says that by year-end 2015, IBAC had seen 13 registrations, while year-end 2016 put the count at 44, so it is clear the standard is gaining traction. July 2017 alone saw a number of FBOs become IS-BAH registered, with EAN Aviation claiming to be the first in West Africa to do so alongside other newcomers such as Deer Jet’s Sanya

FBO in China and Lisbon Airport’s Sky Valet FBO in Portugal.

While the US accounts for just under 50% of the total number currently registered, Yeomans claims the remaining registrations cover Europe, Russia, Africa, the Middle East, India, Asia, China and Mexico, “proving the IS-BAH to be a truly ‘international’ standard”.

The EBAA is aware of how the uptake may appear to others, with CEO Brandon Mitchener stating, “It is a demanding standard that is not easily satisfied and this is why progress might seem slow to some. However, we fully support IBAC in its determination that only those who meet the required standards will be registered and are happy to see a relatively slow rate of registration as a result, knowing all such FBOs have been robustly audited to ensure they fully satisfy the standard, a condition that is also very important to the regulators.”

David Curgenvin, managing director of DCA International, a consultancy company that can either help companies to prepare for IS-BAH or carry out the audit, expresses a similar sentiment: “IS-BAO [the equivalent standard for operators] was slow starting and now there is a substantial number of registered operators. We believe that IS-BAH will follow suit. We also understand that some operators are inquiring as to whether FBOs and BAHAs are IS-BAH registered when choosing a ground-service provider. This is definitely a step in the right direction.”



Above: **The IBAC group meets at the NBAA’s annual conference and exhibition**

Below left: **The IS-BAH standard has been devised to cover fueling operations**

Below: **Demonstrably safe maintenance procedures can help FBOs attract business**



## What do operators think?

NATA says, "As more and more aircraft operators are adopting standards such as IS-BAO, they are strengthening the methods they use to determine whether or not service providers meet their level of safety and quality performance. Just as charter brokers and clients are looking for operators with a demonstrated commitment to proactive safety management, aircraft operators and managers are similarly vetting their FBO and maintenance providers."

Operators do see it as important when deciding who to work with. In 2012, Mark Wilson, then COO and now president of NetJets Europe, told *Business Airport International*, "What can be helpful with such a standard is that it takes certain issues away from the operator/handler relationship if

the handlers have agreed to attain a certain standard. Thereafter, any concerns that operators have we can address more readily, while the more straightforward issues are looked after by the handlers' standard."

NetJets now confirms, "When looking to possible vendors, our procurement department considers whether they have IS-BAH certification as part of the decision-making process."

Furthermore, for companies whose offering consists of both aircraft charter and FBOs, perhaps being registered for one standard and not the other standard seems very conspicuous.

Announcing plans to register for the IS-BAH in February this year, William Borgsmiller, president of ACI Jet, notes, "With our roots



in Part 135 charter and management, we've held numerous safety ratings for years, including IS-BAO, which may be likened to an IS-BAH sister certification offered by IBAC for aircraft charter companies. By virtue of being an IS-BAO-certified charter company with worldwide operating authority, the foundational aspects of IS-BAH for our FBOs are already in place."

Below: Safety of ground handling personnel is improved when working to the IS-BAH standard

Matt York, senior manager of Jeppesen's international trip-planning business operations, concurs: "As the program continues to mature and an increasing number of vendors participate, we expect to see aircraft operators seeking out IS-BAH-accredited agents to partner with, unless of course a location has only one vendor."

"Through Jeppesen's far-reaching vendor network, the vendor relations team requires evidence of such standards, especially in training of ground-handling and FBO staff," continues York. "Various standards and training packages are available throughout the industry; however, NATA's Safety First standard is considered one of the most prevalent. IS-BAH is increasingly being viewed as a similarly important component."

### Challenges

General consensus is that setting up internal documentation processes is slowing things down. Yeomans argues, "Organizations have always done things the right way – they just haven't thought about documenting it."

It is the development of documentation systems that is taking the time, from wanting to go ahead with adopting the standard, to being in a position to be assessed."

Even once this issue has been addressed, Curgenvin says the results can vary hugely. "It is our view that some companies read and fully understand

the standard and ensure that every item is fully covered in their manuals and procedures. Others cover items in quite a general way and are short of the mark in detail."

In an attempt to both promote and de-mystify the standard for companies thinking of registering for an audit, IBAC continues to hold workshops entitled 'The Fundamentals of IS-BAH' around the globe.

Yeomans notes, "Of the organizations that have attended workshops in the last three years, 26% have gone on to register, 29% are actively implementing the standard, 11% were auditors, 10% are not eligible for registration, and the remainder have either closed, been purchased – some by the 29% who are now implementing – or we are unable to ascertain their status."

IBAC states, "Safety is an investment, not a cost," and Richard Keltner, director of safety at Clay Lacy Aviation Seattle, which just became the first FBO in North and South America to achieve IS-BAH Stage II accreditation, agrees. "Any discussion of safety costs and benefits includes complexities," he says. "For example, man-hours allocated to developing a program that meets a standard can result not only in achievement of the standard, but also in a direct improvement in the processes that create improved efficiencies, strengthened infrastructure, better training and, ultimately, higher levels of customer service."

However, cost is a potential inhibitor. Although IBAC states, "Pricing options are available to reduce the costs when a chain wishes to purchase IS-BAH for multiple



**"Safety is an investment, not a cost. Man-hours allocated to developing a program to meet a standard creates improved efficiencies"**

Richard Keltner, director of safety at Clay Lacy Aviation Seattle





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Above: The IS-BAH standards board meets every year with members of the IBAC to improve the standards

Below right: Clay Lacy Aviation's FBO at Seattle's Boeing Field Airport

facilities," Jeppesen's York counters. "Some of the larger 'chain' ground handlers and FBOs cite auditing cost as a burden, because each individual handling location is audited individually."

Keltner finds it easy to outline the direct costs: "IBAC requires all registrants to purchase the guiding document – *The Standard* – which is US\$1,650, but companies belonging to NATA or NBAA can receive up to US\$450 in discounts. Companies must also send a representative to an IBAC-provided training seminar prior to standing for the audit, which is between US\$500 and US\$750. Travel costs, hotel costs and other expenses associated with that training will vary.

"Furthermore, companies requesting registration must coordinate a third-party audit, and accredited auditors are free to set their own fees. Depending upon the complexity of the operation and travel requirements, the audit cost can run anywhere from US\$3,500 to US\$15,000. If a company successfully passes the audit, IBAC requires a US\$600 registration fee.

"Man-hours allocated directly to preparing for the audit and participating in the post-audit process will vary. In our experience, the gap analysis, audit and post-audit effort required at least 50% of my focused time for 60 days. In addition, the senior management team allocated approximately 5 to 10 hours per week to the effort during the month preceding the audit.

"We also contracted with an approved third-party aviation safety support expert – Baldwin Aviation – to assist

us in creating our safety system. This relationship was essential in our journey to Stage II," Keltner concludes.

## The future

Yeomans refers to the IS-BAH as a "live document", with Stewart MacPherson, chair of the standards board for the IS-BAH and an auditor himself, adding, "There is always work to do, as you can never be too safe.

"This is my third year as chair and every year it gets a little easier as our understanding of the IS-BAH grows," Stewart continues. "Every May, a group of individuals from various fields within the business aviation environment get together with members of IBAC and discuss in detail every aspect of the standard and work to continually improve it. We work in an open forum with constructive comments and suggestions. We take into account feedback from auditors, clients and industry experts to put forth the best standard possible."

While both uptake and understanding grows, Curgenvin identifies a remaining issue: "We are concerned that some IS-BAO operators are still carrying out audits of FBOs and BAHAs despite their IS-BAH registration. They say they do not recognize the standard, but we understand this is being addressed by IBAC."

IBAC and the IS-BAH program remain an active part of the current ICAO Ground Handling Task Force along with IATA, NATA, ACI, OEMs and individual States. Within the typically conservative and slow-moving aviation industry, the standard is still viewed as very young, and only time will tell if the IS-BAH will achieve longevity. ○

***"There is always work to do, as you can never be too safe. Every year it gets a little easier as our understanding of IS-BAH grows"***

Stewart MacPherson, chair of the standards board for the IS-BAH

## What do ground handlers think?

Jet Aviation has become the first FBO network to have each and every one of its facilities IS-BAH registered. David Allen, the company's environment, health and safety FBO coordinator, highlights the benefits: "IS-BAH allows Jet Aviation to be better recognized as having the strong standards that developed our company. The greatest improvement that we implemented as a result of becoming IS-BAH registered was moving more of our processes to electronic methods. Emails and attachments work, but moving to a more dedicated support matrix was a good step for Jet Aviation."

Jet Aviation, like Clay Lacy, was undeterred by the cost, with Allen

declaring, "The financial cost is minimal when compared with the benefits of a good program for safety, training and operations. In regard to the personnel needed to maintain certification, Jet Aviation will dedicate a team to these needs in addition to including the necessary responsibilities to already existing positions.

"The difficulty is in the fact that the standard is new and there are many questions that needed to be answered in order to properly attain certification. The individuals behind IS-BAH have been great at communicating with Jet Aviation and the audit teams to answer these questions."







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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.

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MOROCCO

# *Under* **African skies**





Morocco has become a hub for private aviation, with both business and leisure travelers flocking to the North African country. *Business Airport International* looks at what it has to offer

Words | Kirstie Pickering





The exterior of Marrakech Menara Airport



**M**orocco's reputation in the business aviation industry is going from strength to strength as more major FBOs, charter companies and customers recognize its benefits.

Casablanca, Marrakech and Rabat, the North African country's capital, have all emerged as popular private jet destinations for both business and leisure.

The Middle East and North Africa Business Aviation Association (MEBAA) is the official industry representative in the region, and a member of the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC). A not-for-profit organization, it provides a platform for businesses, governments and worldwide media to gather and communicate the needs and benefits of business aviation across the continent.

MEBAA represents 254 companies within the MENA region, including Airbus, Boeing Business Jets and XJet. The association seeks to implement operational safety and efficiency, through training, lectures and conferences, and chose Marrakech as the location for its annual conference and event, which took place in September this year.

"Morocco is ideally placed in terms of geographic proximity to Europe, Africa and the Middle East, plus it benefits from macroeconomic and political stability," says Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi, MEBAA founding and executive chairman. "The Moroccan aeronautics sector posts an annual growth rate of 15-20%, historic average economic growth in the region has been 4.4% per annum, and compound annual fleet growth in Africa is predicted at 3.2%. Furthermore, Morocco is the most active African market, with 50% of North African aircraft movements."



**"Marrakech is firmly on the map as both a business center and a luxury travel hot spot"**

Adam Twidell, CEO at PrivateFly

## Fly in to...

### Rabat

**Airport:** Salé Airport

**FBO/Handlers:** ASE – Morocco, Dalia Airport, Link Aero Trading Agency, Stars Aviation Service and Swissport Maroc

**Runway:** 3,500m (11,483ft)

**Fuel:** Jet and Avgas

### Casablanca

**Airport:** Mohammed V Airport

**FBO/Handlers:** More than 10 including Moroccan Aviation Services, Jetex Flight Support and VIP Jet Morocco

**Runway:** 3,719m (12,200ft)

**Fuel:** Jet and Avgas

### Marrakech

**Airport:** Menara Airport

**FBO/Handlers:** Nine including Astra Aviation Services, Link Aero Trading Agency and Moroccan Aviation Services

**Runway:** 3,100m (10,170ft)

**Fuel:** Jet and Avgas





### Hassan II Mosque, Casablanca

The Hassan II Mosque is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. A maximum of 105,000 worshippers can gather for prayer at one time, with space for 25,000 people inside the hall and 80,000 in the mosque's grounds.



### Jardin Majorelle, Marrakech

The Majorelle Garden is a 12-acre (522,720ft<sup>2</sup>) botanical and artist's landscape garden that contains the Islamic Art Museum of Marrakech. It took French painter Jacques Majorelle 40 years to create this enchanting garden.



### Merzouga Dunes, Merzouga

Head to the desert to ride a camel, go quad biking over the dunes and camp with the locals for an authentic Moroccan experience. Merzouga is a small Moroccan town in the Sahara Desert, near the Algerian border.



### Medina of Marrakech, Marrakech

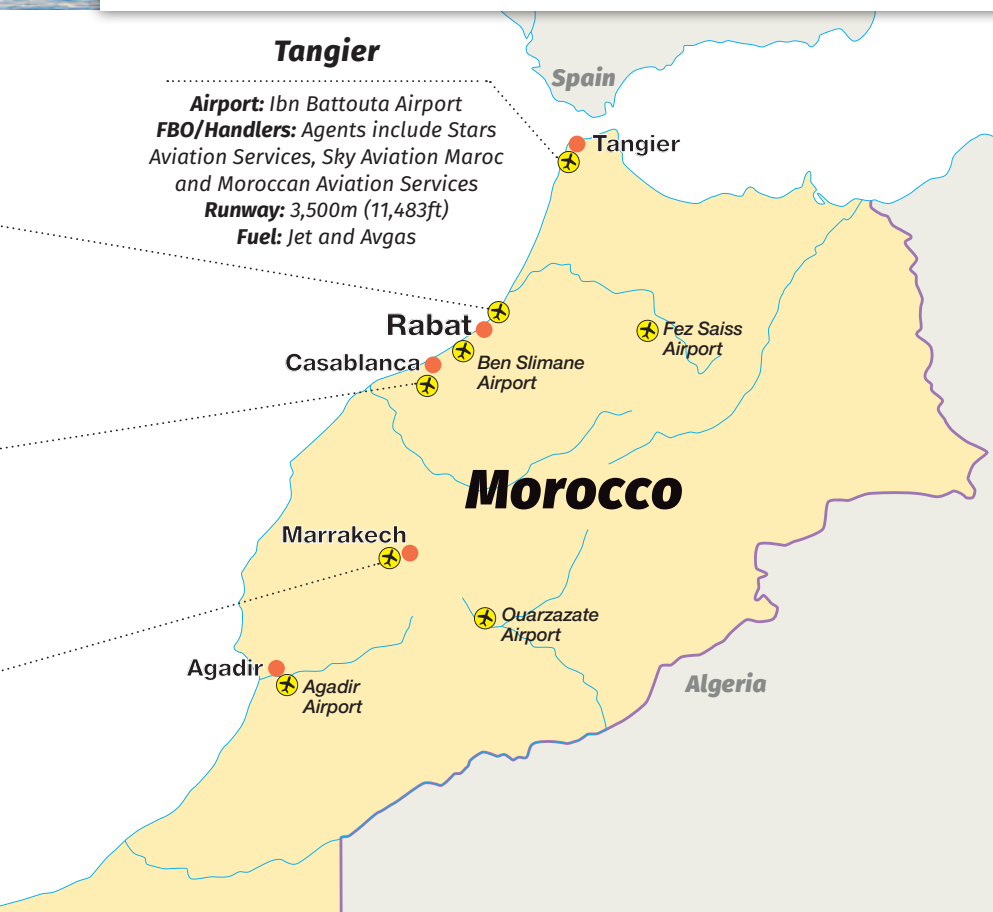
Founded in 1070, the Medina of Marrakech is the most famous market in the region, with stalls selling Moroccan trinkets, authentic street food vendors and snake charmers aplenty.



### Ouzoud Falls, Ouzoud

One of Morocco's most famous natural wonders, the Ouzoud Falls sit near the Atlas Mountains. Watch out for local Barbary apes that congregate by the water and the rainbows that form in the waterfall's mist.

## Sightseeing



### Tangier

**Airport:** Ibn Battouta Airport  
**FBO/Handlers:** Agents include Stars Aviation Services, Sky Aviation Maroc and Moroccan Aviation Services  
**Runway:** 3,500m (11,483ft)  
**Fuel:** Jet and Avgas

### Rabat

**Casablanca**  
 Ben Slimane Airport

## Morocco

### Marrakech

**Agadir**  
 Agadir Airport

Spain

Tangier

Fez Saiss Airport

Ouarzazate Airport

Algeria

He continues, "The African business aviation market has been resilient through the global financial crisis and new aircraft sales fared better than in developed markets such as Europe and North America. According to market statistics quoted by FlightGlobal, Africa's business jet fleet has more than doubled in the past 10 years."

MEBAA claims Marrakech Menara Airport is the most popular for business flights, followed by Tangier Ibn Battouta Airport, Casablanca-Mohammed V International Airport, and Rabat-Sale Airport respectively. The body also says the country has also seen a recent hike in its popularity as a holiday destination.

### Hot spots

Alnaqbi's comments are supported by flight statistics from global private jet charter company PrivateFly, which flies customers to Fez Saiss Airport, in addition to the above airports, with Marrakech Menara the most popular. The majority of its clients head to Morocco from Europe, with UK and France residents chartering the bulk of the flights.

"About 60% of our flights to Morocco are leisure-related, while around 40% are for business," says Adam Twidell, CEO of PrivateFly. "Flights to Casablanca and Rabat tend to be for business, with Tangier and Fez seeing more leisure demand. Marrakech is firmly on the map as both a business center and a luxury travel hot spot, offering a combination of rich history and culture with excellent hotels, resorts and golf courses.

"We do see demand year-round but leisure flights tend to peak in spring and autumn when Morocco really comes into its own as a leisure destination, offering more reliable



sunshine and higher temperatures than rival destinations in Southern Europe, but still a fairly short flight distance away for clients in Northern Europe.”

Mike Ryan, co-founder and head of supply at private charter firm Victor, agrees. He says Marrakech is ‘by far’ the most popular Moroccan destination they fly to, with 68% of flights to the country heading to the former capital, followed by Casablanca at 13%. Europe makes up Victor’s top five origin regions flying to Morocco, with the UK in the top spot. The charter company has arranged flights to the country from India and Nigeria.

“Travel to Morocco is split fairly evenly between business and leisure, as it is across our wider business,” says Ryan. “Morocco offers consistently fine weather and a rich sweep of culture for discerning holidaymakers. But it is also a country experiencing economic growth through the automotive and textile trades, and the development of its telecommunications sector. As a stepping stone to Africa and the Middle East, it has real importance for business.”

“The business aviation market in Morocco is most definitely growing in line with the country’s economic growth and widening opportunities around its industrial, textiles and telecommunications sectors in particular.”

### Operators

Many major global FBOs operate in Morocco, underscoring the country’s prominence as a business jet destination.

Moroccan Aviation Services specializes in airline handling, representation, supervision and support. Based at Agadir Airport, it is fully accredited by the Moroccan Civil Aviation Authority and other bodies such as the Ministry of Transport. The company also has representation at Casablanca, Marrakech, Tangier and Ouarzazate airports.

Mohamed Outamrarht, managing director of Moroccan Aviation Services, says, “The business aviation market in Morocco is growing, especially in tourist-friendly cities and

Above: **Victor cites Marrakech as its most sought-after destination in Morocco**

***“As a stepping stone to Africa and the Middle East, Morocco has real importance for business”***

Mike Ryan, co-founder and head of supply at Victor



because of the beginning of petroleum exploration in areas of Morocco.

“Morocco is popular for its pristine beaches and is rich in natural beauty. Tourists can visit them all year-round as the climate is fresh and pleasant. Passengers using our services from France, Spain, Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and so on love the large beach resorts on the long Atlantic coast. Agadir is a favorite of many tourists.

“People have to visit Morocco to believe and experience the beauty of the country’s cultural heritage. There is so much to explore that it is hard to fit it all in to one trip. Moroccan Aviation Services can handle all private jets and also provides minibuses to anywhere in the country.”

Jetex Flight Support operates FBOs in five major cities: Casablanca, Rabat, Marrakech, Agadir and Dakhla. The company also arranges ground-handling services in other popular destinations across the country, such as Tangier.

“We decided to open our facilities at these locations in response to increased market demand,” says Julian Pitaresi, Morocco stations manager at Jetex Flight Support. “According to MEBAA, North Africa’s business aircraft fleet has been growing at almost twice the global average rate. The Moroccan market is particularly active, accounting for around half of the region’s aircraft movements. Morocco benefits from its strategic position as a gateway to Europe and the rest of Africa. It is set to become a key destination for the business aviation industry, and is an important location in our global portfolio.”

This year, Jetex renovated all five FBOs, completing the process in September.

“On average, we are dealing with around 150 movements to and from Morocco per week.

Travelers are coming from all around the world,” continues Pitaresi. “The most popular countries for departures and arrivals tend to be France, Spain and GCC countries [the Gulf Cooperation Council comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates], as well as other African nations.

“Traffic volume varies according to the area and seasonality. The most touristic place is Marrakech, where low season tends to run from June through to August due to the hot summer. For the rest of the year, it is usually very busy and Casablanca and Rabat are both popular year-round. The business aviation market has been progressing steadily.

“We strongly believe Morocco is one of the most strategically significant places in Africa, due to its location, attractive touristic destinations, level of economic development and the business opportunities that the Kingdom is offering.”

### Getting in

Morocco is a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and Moroccan aviation regulations state that private flights operated by aircraft registered in fellow ICAO member states do not require previous authorization when overflying Morocco’s territory or landing in its airports.



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Presidential Aviation also has a trip planning arm of its business

Despite this, a flight plan still needs to be submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority of Morocco and the arrival airport at least 24 hours before the scheduled departure time. The only exceptions to this rule are Hassan I Airport and Dakhla Airport, both of which are in Western Sahara and require prior permits.

If the aircraft is registered to a country that is not a member of ICAO or if the journey is a charter flight, a request for authorization – a landing permit – must be submitted to the Moroccan civil aviation authority featuring the operator name, aircraft owner, pilot name, aircraft type and registration, date, route, and full schedule of flight, flight purpose, and passenger and cargo details. Securing the landing permit requires the application to be submitted by a local supervisory agent. A form must be completed and signed for the permit to be approved and issued.

The immigration authority requires passengers and crews on all flights landing in the country to fill in landing cards personally. Crew can enter Morocco with a visa secured upon arrival if they are in uniform, in possession of crew identification and on general declaration, although this process can be delayed at night. Passengers from more than 70 countries, including

EU states, the USA and Russia, can enter Morocco for up to 90 days with a visa obtained upon arrival.

#### Tourism

The lure of Marrakech's medinas, palaces and gardens makes it a picturesque holiday destination for those who want to immerse themselves in the local culture, but the lesser-known coastal resorts are also hot spots. Morocco has more than 1,200 miles of coastline. Agadir and Casablanca offer well-known urban beaches, whereas Plage-Blanche and Dakhla are off the beaten track.

Fort Lauderdale-based private jet charter company Presidential Aviation and its partner firm Presidential Private Jet Vacations cater for the customer who wants to experience Morocco's finest sights. Packages can include return flights on a selected private jet for up to 18 guests, all hotel accommodation in suites, ground transportation, helicopter transfers, professional guides and visits to a hammam. An eight-day tour of the country includes trips to the cities, coast, and High Atlas mountain range.

"The lure of Morocco is its exoticism," says Oscar Arce, CEO of Presidential Aviation. "Most of our customers originate from the USA, with an even split between business and pleasure. Flights to the country prove particularly popular in spring, thanks to the perfect weather."

"Morocco is experiencing substantial growth in its private aviation business. It has become the most active market in North Africa and continues to expand at a faster pace than its neighbors."

Jetex's Pitaresi feels that the country has something for everyone. "Morocco is a very safe place to travel, and tourists are coming from all continents to enjoy its wonderful destinations," he says. "In addition to its security and political stability, the country boasts a distinguished cultural heritage, a pleasant climate and incredible scenery. It is characterized by diversity of landscapes. These include dry deserts, evergreen forests and attractive coastal areas, making it a desirable place to visit for all travelers." ○

***"People have to visit Morocco to believe and experience the beauty of the country's cultural heritage"***

Mohamed Outamarht, managing director of Moroccan Aviation Services

## MEBAA Show Morocco 2017

From September 12-13, the MEBAA held a two-day outdoor event at Aero Club Royal at Marrakech Menara Airport as a platform for business aviation suppliers, providers and buyers to network and create new relationships in the continent. The show featured over 50 exhibitors, including Honeywell, Sea Prime, Bombardier and sponsors Gulfstream, and displayed 25 aircraft.

The accompanying conference's agenda at Marrakech's Mandarin Oriental Hotel included a panel discussion about North Africa's refurbishment and completion of MRO centers, a keynote presentation on Morocco's business aviation airport project, and discussion of legislation, registration and regulations for the business aviation market in North Africa.

# city **focus**

Your guide to flying to  
the Twin Cities

Words | Kirstie Pickering

## Main airports in Minneapolis

### Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport

**Operating hours:** 24/7

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Signature Flight Support. Facilities include a business center, showers, overnight hangar and a limousine service

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, Jet A, JetA+

**Runway length:** 04/22 – 11,006ft (3,355m); 12R/30L – 10,000ft (3,048m); 12L/30R – 8,200ft (2,499m); 17/35 – 8,000ft (2,438m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 12 miles (19km)

### St Paul Downtown Airport

**Operating hours:** 6:00am to 10:00pm, Monday to Friday, 7:00am to 10:00pm at weekends

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Signature Flight Support and St Paul Flight Center. Facilities include hangars, power-plant servicing and tie-downs

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, Jet A, JetA+

**Runway length:** 04/22 – 7,001ft (2,134m); 13/31 – 7,003ft (2,135m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 12 miles (19km)

### Flying Cloud Airport

**Operating hours:** 7:00am to 9:00pm in winter, 7:00am to 10:00pm in summer

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Premier Jet Center, Elliott Aviation, Hummingbird Aviation, Modern Avionics, Executive Aviation and Thunderbird Aviation. Facilities include after-hours call-out, weather briefing, de-icing and local hotel discounts

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, Jet A

**Runway length:** 10R/28L – 5,000ft (1,524m); 10L/28R – 3,989ft (1,215m); 18/36 – 2,690ft (820m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 19 miles (30km)







## FLYING TO MINNEAPOLIS

### Other airports near Minneapolis

#### Lake Elmo Airport

**Operating hours:** 7:00am to 5:00pm, November-March,  
7:00am to 7:00pm, April-October

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Valters Aviation. Facilities include short-term hangar storage, oxygen service, courtesy car and aircraft preheat

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL

**Runway length:** 14/32 - 2,850ft (868m); 4/22 - 2,497ft (761m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 25 miles (40km)

#### Crystal Airport

**Operating hours:** 7:00am to 9:00pm in winter, 7:00am to 10:00pm in summer

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Thunderbird Aviation and North of Sixty. Facilities include a concierge service, catering and valet parking

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, JetA+

**Runway length:** 14L/32R - 3,268ft (996m); 14R/32L - 3,267ft (996m); 06L/24R - 2,500ft (762m); 06R/24L turf runway closed in the winter - 2,123ft (647m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 13 miles (21km)

#### Anoka County-Blaine Airport

**Operating hours:** 7:00am to 6:00pm in winter and 7:00am to 7:00pm in summer

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Cirrus Flight Operations and Lynx FBO Network. Facilities include an 80,000ft<sup>2</sup> (7,432m<sup>2</sup>) aircraft hangar, an exclusive terminal, and two aviation museums

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, JetA+, JetA, MOGAS

**Runway length:** 09/27 - 5,000ft (1,524m); 18/36 - 4,855ft (1,480m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 25 miles (40km)

#### Airlake Airport

**Operating hours:** 8:00am to 6:00pm, Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm weekends

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by Aircraft Resource Center. Facilities include maintenance, courtesy car, catering and pilot supplies

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, JetA

**Runway length:** 12/30 - 4,098ft (1,249m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 27 miles (43km)

#### Fleming Field - South St Paul Airport

**Operating hours:** 8:00am to 7:00pm, Tuesday-Friday, 8:00am to 6:30pm on Saturdays

**Facilities:** Fixed-base operations provided by City of South St Paul. Facilities include a first-class terminal building, free wi-fi, a large private meeting room with full screen projector, and a flight planning room

**Fuel:** Avgas 100LL, JetA+, MOGAS

**Runway length:** 16/34 - 4,002ft (1,220m)

**Distance from Minneapolis:** 19 miles (30km)



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# A broad reach

**B. Coleman Aviation** is positioned to welcome passengers into Chicago without passing through the city's busy main airport, even offering a flight service of its own with private charter arm Coleman Jet

**F**ull-service aviation provider B. Coleman Aviation offers FBO, air charter operations and aircraft management services from its headquarters at Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYY) just 25 miles (40km) southeast of Chicago. B. Coleman has also recently achieved certification as participants in the DCA Access Standard Security Program (DASSP), becoming an approved DCA Gateway FBO and meeting the security requirements to allow private aircraft to travel from the FBO directly to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (KDCA).

GYY has an 8,900ft (2,712m) runway, virtually zero commercial air traffic, few ATC delays, and also offers cost savings and easy access to Chicago via train or a multiple highway network compared with the much larger, more hectic airport hubs.

B. Coleman Aviation's FBO complex offers on-site maintenance through affiliate company Infinity Aircraft Services (IAS). IAS specializes in scheduled and unscheduled maintenance services along with AOG support, mobile operations and interior services. It is headquartered in West Palm Beach, Florida, with satellite locations in Atlanta, Georgia and at B. Coleman in Gary, Indiana.

## Expanding facilities

B. Coleman is growing quickly and prides itself on the high level of service it provides to its FBO customers, the attention to detail to its private air charter clients, and the tailored service for each managed aircraft. The staff at B. Coleman



believe this formula has equated to the company's consistent growth since its inception in 2013.

The company has broken ground on its new 40,000ft<sup>2</sup> (3,716m<sup>2</sup>) common aircraft hangar, which is phase one of a US\$30m expansion plan. The hangar will be completed in November 2017 and available for additional based tenants, transient aircraft and larger jets. There will also be space for maintenance services. Short- or long-term lease options are being accepted and are claimed to be the most economical in the area.

Additional expansion phases include more hangar options and a ground lease covering 11 acres of land. The airport is only minutes from the highway, offering

Above: **The FBO lobby at GYY**

Right: **The management team based on the site**

Below: **GYY is well-placed to ease congestion at nearby major airports**

## Vital statistics

**FBO:** Gary/Chicago International Airport, USA

**Runway:** 8,900ft (2,712m)

**Services:** Baggage and freight handling, heated hangar space, de-icing, Jet-A and 100LL AvGas fuel, gourmet catering and courtesy transportation



a safe and private environment for flight departments or individuals to build a facility specific to their needs.

## Fleet additions

The company's aircraft management and private air charter division, Coleman Jet, has also grown considerably over the past few months. It has added two Gulfstream IVs, a Nextant 400XTi, and a Lear 55 to its charter fleet. Coleman Jet has also achieved worldwide operations certification, allowing the company to increase its service offerings to clients.

With the high levels of congestion at other major local airports and the likelihood that this will continue to increase in terms of commercial air traffic, the business aviation community is expected to turn exclusively to business aviation alternatives such as GYY. B. Coleman is well-positioned to serve this fresh influx of business thanks to its highly acclaimed customer and FBO services and low fuel prices. ○

## B. COLEMAN AVIATION

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Reader Inquiry Number 101



# The Alps gateway

Noting Annecy Mont-Blanc Airport's prime location near the Alps and Geneva, **Edeis** decided to turn its hand to the development of the high-potential airport

## Vital statistics

**Airports:** Annecy Mont-Blanc Airport, and 17 other airports in France

**Opening hours:** 365 days a year

**Services:** De-icing, secure parking, air traffic control, passenger lounge, concierge service



**A**nnecy Mont-Blanc Airport saw an increase of 10% in overall traffic in 2017. Business aviation is the main focus of the development of this doorway to the region, and it welcomes more than 2,000 flights a year.

The airport's prime location means it provides the most efficient access to the northern Alps – Megève, Courchevel and Chamonix – and to Geneva, whose city center is 30 minutes away. Considerable work has been carried out on service quality, the area's accessibility from the air, and attracting companies.

Edeis has been operating and developing the airport since early 2013. The Haute-Savoie department, which owns the airport, chose to entrust its development to Edeis, whose portfolio now includes 18 airports in France.

### Expectations and upgrading

Simon Dreschel, manager of Edeis, says, "Annecy Airport remains a local, people-focused platform whose services and reception quality meet even the highest standards. In May 2017, the airport obtained the international IS-BAH certification to guarantee and represent a high level of safety, quality and services for business aviation."

Edeis also recently signed a strategic agreement with business aviation service provider Jetex, to ensure a very high level

of service to its customers. Annecy Mont-Blanc Airport operates 365 days a year and provides extensive on-demand schedules. If the customer chooses not to take a car from the airplane, they only have 30m to walk to access their own vehicle. They will then be received by trained, organized employees, who are there to ensure a superior quality of service throughout the reception. Recent major regional events such as EBACE or the Annecy International Animated Film Festival all benefitted from these facilities.

Whether carried out by Edeis or by meticulously selected service providers, the range of services on offer for business aviation customers is vast: concierge services, aircraft de-icing, customs services, air traffic control, secure parking with video surveillance, ground handling, crew lounge, passenger lounge, catering, hotel reservations, and rental cars. The airport is also host to premium service providers for helicopter services such as

Above: **Planes positioned at Annecy Mont-Blanc Airport**

Below: **Private jet charter firm Vistajet flies to the airport**

Heli Sécurité, and chauffeur-driven car transfers by Rservices.

### Investment

The extensive work on the improvement of infrastructure and on land development for hangar construction projects illustrates how much of a turning point 2017 has been for Annecy Mont-Blanc.

Investments of €10m (US\$11.7m) will ensure the platform's development, with a focus on three main areas: improved operational safety by adhering to the latest taxiway approval standards and separating helicopter and airplane activities; improved aircraft traffic flow and reduced taxi times; and the installation of aircraft hangars on 10,000m<sup>2</sup> (107,639ft<sup>2</sup>) of new land. To reinforce the ranks of the 10 on-site companies, investors were selected in September of this year following a request for proposals for three lots of land. Construction work should begin by the end of the year.

"Edeis has doubled business aircraft traffic at the airport since its arrival and intends to continue this dynamic by improving accessibility to ski resorts, Geneva, and surrounding countries," concludes Dreschel. ○



**EDEIS**

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Reader Inquiry Number 102



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# London is calling

Located at two of the UK's busiest business aviation hubs, **Harrods Aviation** offers a full range of FBO services in partnership with its famous Knightsbridge department store

**L**ocation is an integral consideration when looking at which FBO to use for a trip, and this rule is never truer than when looking at the well-supported London area. London, like many large metropolitan capitals, has its logistical challenges, and it is therefore important to understand and acknowledge these implications before choosing an airfield. Only after this decision has been made can a passenger start to look at which FBO service provider to use when planning their journey.

In the greater London area, travelers are spoilt for choice, and Harrods Aviation is proud to rank among the options. With full service FBOs at London Luton and London Stansted, in addition to a new third location at the airfield of Cranfield University, Harrods is perfectly positioned to support customer needs.

Will Holroyd, sales and marketing director of Harrods Aviation, comments, "Cranfield has been a key strategic addition to our suite of service offerings. With the popularity of Luton showing no signs of slowing down, it was essential that we added to our alternative offering at Stansted."

"Cranfield is only a short drive up the greatly improved M1 motorway from Luton, so anyone wishing to fly privately should consider this as a strong contender for location of choice. For those traveling to the area close to the



flagship store in Knightsbridge, Cranfield is a superb alternative to Luton."

## Decision making

Once a location is confirmed, passengers need to decide which FBO to use. There are many options at Stansted, creating competition and a desire from each provider to offer the best service possible, but at the top of a list of requirements must be a safe service. Harrods Aviation is an IS-BAH-registered FBO and in addition to safe, audited

Above: **The Stansted FBO can cater to any size of jet**

Below: **Harrods Aviation creates a bespoke experience for every passenger**

handling, customers want to know they will receive a great experience. Harrods is synonymous with service, delivering an acclaimed service on a daily basis.

## Services

Harrods Aviation offers a breadth of FBO services across its two UK sites. At London Luton, there is 216,000ft<sup>2</sup> (20,067m<sup>2</sup>) of ramp space, 59,000ft<sup>2</sup> (5,481m<sup>2</sup>) of hangar storage, Jet A-1 fuel replenishment and aircraft maintenance. It is open 24 hours a day, every day.

At Stansted, customers can benefit from facilities including full aircraft type ground support equipment, mobile x-ray, interior and exterior cleaning, and 46,000ft<sup>2</sup> (4,273m<sup>2</sup>) of hangarage space, among other offerings.

Harrods Aviation offers the choice of location and the service that customers need for their next trip to London. Stansted is a great 24/7 airfield offering a 10,000ft (3,048m) runway, competitive fuel prices and a simple route to the financial heart of the capital. ○

## HARRODS AVIATION

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Reader Inquiry Number 103





# Expansion success

As Iceland grows in popularity as a tourist destination, **SouthAir** has expanded its operations to cater to the growing influx of passengers arriving on the Nordic island

**T**he International Air Transport Association recently revealed figures that showed the aviation industry has experienced a 12-year high, with global traffic growing 7.9% for the first six months of 2017. Keflavik Airport in Iceland sets new records every month, with the traffic for 2016 being over 40% higher than in the previous year and the forecast for 2017 showing further growth of as much as 30%.

Due to the hike in footfall, the airport is adapting so it can expand and accommodate more passengers traveling through the main terminal each month. For general aviation (GA), there has also been an increase in passenger numbers and the team at SouthAir, which operates the only private air terminal on the airport, has been preparing for this growth in popularity for some time.

## Locations

After focusing on expanding its operations into Akureyri (BIAR) in the north and Egilsstaðir (BIEG) in the east of Iceland to serve the needs of the ever-growing numbers of customers who wish to stop at these locations, SouthAir started to make preparations in Keflavik to ensure it would operate to the same standard as its other operations.

What followed was a year of hard work from SouthAir, settling in at a new location at the eastern apron on the airfield, a few hundred meters north of its old FBO. Countless hours went into preparing the new building, and SouthAir employees put in extra work to clean out and refurbish the new location in time for the July 1, 2016 deadline.



Above: **The site offers home comforts and maintenance facilities**

Below: **Keflavik Airport is often battered by intense snowstorms**



It has been over a year since SouthAir moved to Building 810, and it now has a fully licensed GA terminal, more than twice the size of its former offering, with multiple lounges of various sizes, meeting rooms and a cafeteria with free refreshments for customers, including



## Vital statistics

**Airports:** Keflavik International Airport

**Opening hours:** 24/7 all year

**Facilities:** De-icing, weather briefings, flight planning, large ramp space, diplomatic clearance, customs and immigration

a cookie bar. There is also a recreation room where customers can pick up a free book, and an area for children to play.

## Safety first

Due to the increase in footfall, there was a pressing need for a new security gate to and from the eastern apron. Shortly after the company's move to Building 810, Iceland's airport and air navigation service provider, Isavia, finished the installation of a larger, improved security gate in the building SouthAir operates in. This means the terminal is now airside and landside, which makes a huge improvement to the service for customers who need a quick service in and out of the country, with their jets usually parked within walking distance of the FBO and the security gate leading straight into the SouthAir facility.

SouthAir is set to continue its hard work and gradual expansion, and the new facility has a second floor that is to be developed into office space to house a number of flight-related operations, such as the local flight school and the Icelandic Transport Authority. ○

**SOUTHAIR**

To learn more about this advertiser, visit [www.ukmediaevents.com/info/bai](http://www.ukmediaevents.com/info/bai)

Reader Inquiry Number 104

# Strength in diversity

**Sundt Group** has many strings to its bow, with multiple business arms including Norway's largest operator of executive aircraft, Sundt Air

**S**undt Group has diversified in several ways since it was founded in 1997, and is involved in a lot more than flying business jets.

There is a family of companies under the Sundt umbrella. The group is perhaps best known for Sundt Air, which operates various aircraft under EU-OPS, and a maintenance facility under PART-145. Its Sundt Air Executive Handling business is also renowned, operating FBOs at Oslo Airport, Gardermoen and Stavanger Airport, Sola, in addition to providing handling supervision throughout Norway.

## Customer service

The charter operator prides itself on being able to meet the needs of its customers worldwide, whether for business or pleasure, two passengers or 250. It also provides aircraft management, and several of the aircraft in its fleet are operated on management contracts with the owners. Within Sundt's fleet is a Dassault Falcon 900EX, Dassault Falcon 7X, Bombardier Challenger 604, Bombardier Challenger 350 and a Cessna Citation Sovereign.

Sundt Air also provides maintenance services and can fulfill complex requirements with its qualified personnel and purpose-built facilities. It undertakes much of the maintenance on its own aircraft in-house, and aims to do all its maintenance this way in the future. The company also offers technical services to visiting aircraft.

## Safety first

All Sundt Air Executive Handling line service personnel are NATA Safety 1st certified and trained to the highest possible standards. Its team consists of pilots and professionals in the aviation and service industry.

The company provides towing, fueling of Jet A-1 and Avgas 100LL, potable water, lavatory, GPU, APU, ACU, baggage belts, and air stairs for aircraft. It can also provide catering for VIPs and works with some of the most impressive local companies. VIP transport is another added bonus for clients – Sundt has



Above: **Sundt Group** offers services ranging from maintenance to executive handling

Right: **A Sundt Air jet** ready to be chartered



exclusive arrangements with several transport companies in the Oslo area, and can arrange everything from a sedan, limo or luxury bus to a helicopter.

Sundt also hosts events in its FBO facilities and is able to assist in planning, catering and arranging entertainment for VIP guests.

## Other business

Another division in the Sundt Group is the Pegasus Helicopter business, a major helicopter operator in Norway. It operates out of bases in Oslo, Sandefjord and Stavanger, and offers services such as powerline inspection, the dispersal of fertilizer and lime, cargo transport, filming and photography, and charter flights.

## Vital statistics

**Airports:** Oslo Airport, Gardermoen, Stavanger Airport, Sola

**Founded:** 1997

**Facilities:** Maintenance, aircraft charter, aviation management, executive handling

Sundt additionally has a division called Norwegian Special Mission (NSM), which manufactures state-of-the-art electronic equipment for flight inspection and maritime surveillance aircraft.

Both its UNIFIS 3000 flight inspection system and the SeaHunter 8000 airborne surveillance system are optimized for efficient operation and can cope with the most demanding calibration and surveillance operation. NSM supplies to aviation companies all over the world, integrating its equipment into a wide range of aircraft. ○

## SUNDT GROUP

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Reader Inquiry Number **110**



# A new horizon

**Milano Prime** offers a unique experience to those who take off from or land in its namesake Italian city, offering state-of-the-art facilities and services, and five-star treatment for passengers and crews

## Vital statistics

**Airports:** Milano Linate and from next year, Milano Malpensa

**Operating hours:** 24/7

**Services:** Lounge, crew 'snooze' facilities, ground power and air starter, conference rooms and executive car transfers



**M**ilan, the capital of design, fashion and business, is becoming one of the world's most sought-after destinations, both for business and leisure. It is the mission of Milano Prime, with its leading FBO of Milano Linate Airport and the new FBO in Milano Malpensa Airport, to represent the excellence of business aviation in Milan.

### Welcome access

With Milano Linate Prime just 7km (4.3 miles) from the heart of Milan, and the soon-to-be-built FBO Milano Malpensa Prime, Milano Prime will offer its guests even better access to Italy and the rest of Europe.

In June 2017, flights in Milano Linate Airport grew more than 10% compared to the same period in 2016, confirming the positive trend in traffic and Italy's position as one of the key drivers of business and general aviation growth in Europe.

Following this success, Milano Prime is now ready to accept the next challenge, with the opening of the new FBO in Milano Malpensa. This site will be dedicated to passengers arriving at the intercontinental airport. Situated in the western part of Lombardy, the airport is close to Switzerland, Lake Maggiore and Lake Como, and offers easy access

to some of Europe's most popular ski destinations, among them St Moritz, Chamonix, and Courmayeur.

### Stylish facilities

The new facility will include a 1,100m<sup>2</sup> (11,840ft<sup>2</sup>) FBO, a dedicated apron spanning over 10,000m<sup>2</sup> (107,640ft<sup>2</sup>) and a 5,000m<sup>2</sup> (53,820ft<sup>2</sup>) hangar that is already operational and capable of accommodating the latest generation aircraft. As in Milano Linate Prime, hangar spaces will be available for daily or longer-term use.

The new FBO is made up of a polyhedral structure that is clearly visible from both above and on the ground.

Above: An artist's rendering of Milano Malpensa Prime

Right: Customers can enjoy private views of the apron

Below: The new building is a polyhedral structure



Inside the structure there are expensive finishes in both the common and private spaces. There are also secluded lounges, which are accessible through translucent tailored partitions, where passengers and crews awaiting their aircraft can relax. Here, just a few meters away from the dedicated apron, customers can enjoy private views of the outside. The addition of dedicated security and border control makes the passengers' experience as smooth as possible.

The Milano Malpensa Prime facility, which is in the final project phase, is expected to be opened and fully operational in 2018. Milano Prime is part of the Sea Prime network. ○

**SEA PRIME**

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Reader Inquiry Number 105



# Fruitful partnerships

Charlotte Pedersen, CEO of **Luxaviation Helicopters**, examines how pressures on the business aviation industry can be relieved by successful integration of services

**T**he demands of private aviation customers continue to increase steadily, with customers wanting to get everywhere more quickly, hassle-free and as smoothly as possible. With these demands comes greater pressure on all private aviation operators to meet customers' needs with exceptional service across all departments, whether at an FBO, in the maintenance facilities or on board the aircraft.

Across the Luxaviation Group, it has been clear for some time that its customers will benefit from much greater integration of the services provided. In planning a journey, neither customer nor broker wants to flit between service providers and operators to get to their destination. If customers can have all their journey managed in one place, the more fluid and successful the experience becomes for them.

## Providing support

With this increasingly complex operational management comes a greater scope of support services. Having launched Luxaviation Helicopters earlier this year, helicopter management has been a natural complement to the services Luxaviation Group provides and the company see great potential in this area. The ability to place both fixed wing and rotary wing assets under the control of a single management organization benefits clients considerably. Luxaviation Helicopters will be one of the first VIP helicopter operators in Europe to hold EASA approval, enabling the company to operate charter flights to offshore yachts and cruise liners.

Across the Group there are already the global experience and capabilities needed to support the needs of VIP clients who own helicopters and want to operate them worldwide. If a client wishes to use their helicopter in the Caribbean one week and Bali the next, Luxaviation strives to make that happen.

Modern helicopters have the ability to fly almost everywhere in all-weather conditions, and can be even faster than jets over short distances. This, however,

requires highly trained crews, world-class maintenance and a professional and experienced back office to arrange customs, permits and security preparations for clients whose end destinations might not be an established airport. Luxaviation Helicopters has the ability to manage these preparations to perfection, while offering the highest security precautions and confidentiality, which is of equal importance in today's world.

## High flyers

The recently announced partnership with Azur Hélicoptère, based at Nice Côte d'Azur International Airport and



Top: **Azur Hélicoptère** operates in the South of France

Above: **Charlotte Pedersen, CEO of Luxaviation Helicopters**

Below: **Luxaviation Helicopters is a natural complement to the Luxaviation Group**



## Vital statistics

**Locations:** Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East

**Founded:** 2017

**Specialties:** Helicopter management, delivering services to helicopter owners, including crew provision, maintenance and charter services

Cannes-Mandelieu Airport in France, is a great example of how all operators can deliver a seamless private helicopter and jet experience for the customer. Working with Azur Hélicoptère to provide helicopter transfers to clients' end destinations in the south of France, Luxaviation and ExecuJet clients benefit from world-class customer service, luxury quality and stringent safety for their entire journey.

Azur Hélicoptère's clients now have access to the Luxaviation Group's fleet of more than 250 aircraft, 25 world-class FBO facilities and 15 maintenance centers across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean and Latin America, managed by the Luxaviation sales office situated on the French Riviera.

Luxaviation Helicopters will continue to seek partnerships with companies that match its high standards in private aviation, and those with which it can establish a long-term relationship to greatly benefit clients. ○

## LUXAVIATION HELICOPTERS

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# Smart investment

**Mototok** understands that creating a high-technology handling operation can be time consuming, but believes companies should consider the return on investment and how their reputation could be boosted

**T**he first aircraft tractors without tow bars appeared in the 1970s, transforming the transportation of aircraft by dispensing with the need for a bar and multiple heads. In 2008 Mototok revolutionized the formula by introducing the Twin, a 34 ton-capacity tractor that was innovative in its format, intelligence and remote-control operating mode.

After more than nine years of evolution, the Twin still exists in the form of a flat chassis at just 32cm (12.6in), allowing it to slip under helicopters and the lowest airplanes weighing up to 75 tons. Therefore light single-engine aircraft – up to a BBJ2 – can be moved with a single machine without a tow bar or accessories. Operators can be trained to use the tug within a few hours and do not need a license for a particular vehicle, eradicating the need for time-consuming renewals. This leads to greater versatility within the team.

## Low maintenance

The machine is electric and therefore has few parts compared with an internal combustion tractor. The batteries will not need to be changed for five to seven years, and the controls are very fast, thereby saving time and money. The device is very compact, slipping under the nose of the plane and accompanying it to its parking station in the hangar. The machine's precision and mobility means that, in most cases, 40% extra space is available in hangars.

Carrying out a job fast and well is always a priority, and Mototok's tractor connects with aircraft in just 10 seconds. This also equates to an increase in revenue because it is possible to move operations from an airplane to a helicopter quickly and simply.

## Safety first

With no manual intervention other than that of a finger on the remote control, and without any accessories or a winch to attach, handlers can work quickly and safely in a way that prevents hand or back accidents. The oversteering protection of the Twin also keeps a digital eye on risky



## Vital statistics

**Who:** Aircraft tug creators based in Germany

**Founded:** 2003

**Products:** The Twin series includes the Twin 7500, Twin 6500, Twin 3900 and Twin Wide, all of which can tow different jet weights and sizes

Above: **The newest Twin** can tow loads weighing as much as 75 tons

Left: **The tractor** can connect with aircraft in 10 seconds

Left: **The Twin tractor** can tow aircraft including helicopters and BBJ2s

actions that could put stress on both the handler and the front landing gear.

## Models

The Twin 7500 AC-AD is the strongest model in the Twin Class. It has full electric drive, high-powered electric motors for extreme stress such as heavy aircraft on steep slopes, radio remote control, and the ability to do pushbacks with the jet engine still on.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Twin 3900 AC-AD is an entry-level model that can tow aircraft weighing up to 39 tons. This is tailored to serve popular business jets such as Cessna, Dassault Falcon and the Embraer Legacy, in addition to nearly all wheeled helicopters and military aircraft. ○

**MOTOTOK**

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Reader Inquiry Number 107



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## Abu Dhabi Airports has invested in its facilities at ABEA, to reflect its popularity with wealthy travelers

Since it opened in 1960 as Abu Dhabi's first international airport, linking the Emirate with the rest of the world, Al Bateen Executive Airport (ABEA) has had several incarnations. In 1982, international operations moved to the current location, 32km (20 miles) outside of the city.

In 2008, Abu Dhabi Airports took over the airfield and converted it into the region's first dedicated business aviation facility, and over the last nine years ABEA has thrived as the sector has grown. As similar facilities have been developed, ABEA has undergone upgrades in recent months to ensure its offering remains top quality in an increasingly competitive market.

The airport has enhanced stores and safety facilities, the front façades of the main buildings have had a facelift, and a new 20m (65ft) tall and 40m (131ft) wide gateway will soon be in place, ready to welcome visitors.



Above: Al Bateen Executive Airport was the Emirate's first international airport

The road network in the airport campus has also benefited from fresh tarmac, allowing for easier movement between buildings and separating of the VVIP section. The airport is set to undergo further facelift projects on several landside buildings, which will then be

released for rental, to meet the high demand for office space.

Opened last year, the airport's most exclusive terminal has a more discreet entrance and exit for those who require extra privacy. The building is predominantly used by royalty, visiting heads of state, and

business executives, and has been constructed to strict sustainability guidelines. It is the first of Abu Dhabi Airports' facilities to have been awarded an Estidama 3 pearl rating, which is the system used by Abu Dhabi's Urban Planning Council to acknowledge a building's green credentials.

Its FBO facilities include customs and immigration support, private baggage screening, gourmet catering, meeting and conference spaces, and opulent lounges.

ABEA is excited to host the Air Expo Exhibition from February 26-28, 2018, as part of Abu Dhabi's Aviation and Aerospace Week. This hugely successful bi-annual event brings together major industry players to discover the latest developments and innovations. ○

### ABU DHABI AIRPORTS

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Reader Inquiry Number 108

## Martin State Airport is a premier general aviation airport in Baltimore County, Maryland, operated by the Maryland Aviation Administration

In 1929, Glenn L. Martin, a pioneer aviation designer and constructor, purchased 1,260 acres, 12 miles (19km) east of Baltimore, to create an aircraft manufacturing site for the Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Company. One of the first aircraft produced at Martin was the B-10, which won the US National Aeronautic Association's coveted Collier Trophy in 1932, for its achievement in aeronautics.

Expansion continued from 1939 through to 1941 with the construction of runways, hangars and the airport administration building. The China Clipper, PBM flying boats, B-26 bomber and Martin Mars were all produced in these facilities, each playing a significant role in the evolution of American aviation.

Additionally, after World War II, the Martin 202 and 404

commercial transports and jet-powered aircraft were produced as the company later consolidated with the American Marietta Corporation in September 1961 to form the Martin Marietta Corporation. The 747 acres devoted to airfield use were sold in 1975 to the state of Maryland. In its role of fostering and developing aviation, the state's purchase of the airport ensured the retention of a general aviation facility close to Baltimore.

Today, Martin State Airport (KMTN) is a premier general aviation reliever airport operated by the Maryland Aviation Administration on behalf of the Maryland Department of Transportation. The runway is 8,100ft (2,469m) long and 180ft (55m) wide, with a 1,100ft (335m) displacement on the north end.



The air traffic control tower is staffed daily from 6:00am to 10:00pm local time. It offers a full complement of aircraft services, including ICAO ARFF category 9, FAA ARFF index E provided by the military, quick turns, heated hangar space, de-icing, ground power units, lavatory service, and forklift services. Pilot and

passenger services include rental cars or limousine, courtesy vehicle, conference rooms, snooze room, and the ability to provide US Customs clearance upon request, so Martin State Airport offers a well-rounded professional and stress-free atmosphere.

Just 10 nautical miles (19km) from the airport to the heart of downtown Baltimore, 40 miles (64km) from Washington DC, 100 miles (160km) south of Philadelphia, and 200 miles (322km) from New York City, Martin State Airport offers convenient access to corporations, medical facilities, sports events and leisure activities. ○

### MARTIN STATE AIRPORT

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Reader Inquiry Number 109



## The top news and industry opinion on **businessairportinternational.com**

**H**ave you visited our website, BusinessAirportInternational.com, lately? That's where we round up the latest news from the industry, week in, week out, and where you will find exclusive insights, interviews and reader opinion polls – more than enough to keep you going between print editions of the magazine.

Looking at the most-read stories over the past three months, readers were keen to learn about the partnership between NetJets and Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport. The deal will see the charter operator provide the travel for both its race drivers and team members during 2018.

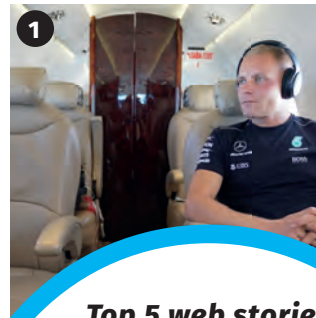
Industry developments were also popular. Among the usual cut and thrust of acquisitions and openings, Gulfstream is taking over the Jet Aviation facility at St Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia, Illinois. It is taking over from sister company Jet Aviation, which will fulfill its MRO obligations through the

transition period starting later this year. The acquisition of the Republic Airport FBO in Farmingdale, Long Island, New York, also caused readers to click. The Signature Flight Support network member has assumed full ownership of all the FBO facilities and services there.

The opening of an FBO at Hawthorne Municipal Airport, near Los Angeles and Santa Monica, by Hawthorne Hangar Operations, also attracted attention.

Finally, readers were keen to learn about how to improve business airports. The opinion of Robert Walters, business development director at London Biggin Hill Airport, on how business airports should be striving for efficiency in every service they provide, proves thought-provoking reading for many in the industry.

Visit the website to find out more. You can also stay up-to-date by subscribing to our weekly email newsletter! ☐



### Top 5 web stories

July-September 2017

1. NetJets partners with Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport
2. Gulfstream acquires Jet Aviation maintenance at St Louis facility
3. How do you make business aviation airports competitive?
4. Republic Jet Center buys Republic Airport FBO
5. Hawthorne opens FBO at Municipal Airport



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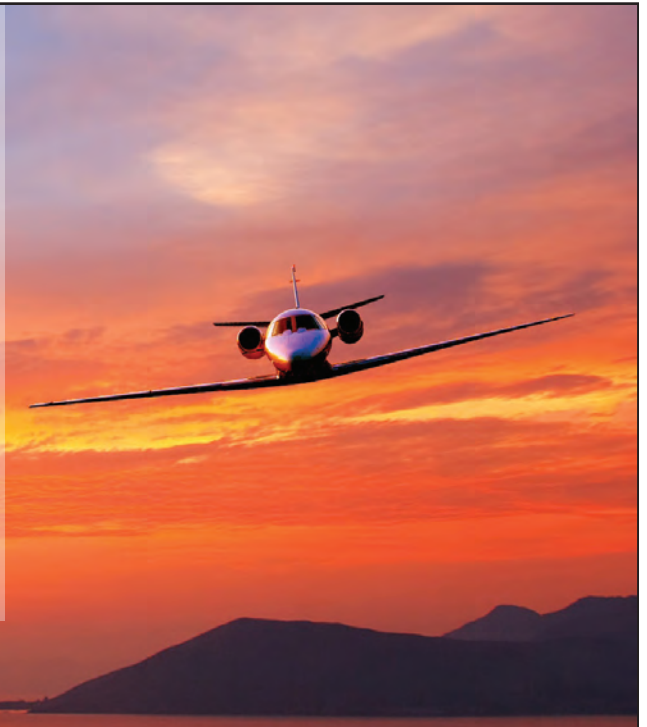
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## In the next issue

- **Regional focus:** Everything you need to know about flying to Southern California
- **City focus:** Heading to Shanghai
- **Special focus:** *BAI* delves into the latest topics and trends including FBO takeovers and temporary flight restrictions
- The latest news and views from industry experts, and much more!

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## ARE **FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS** A STEP TOO FAR FOR IMPORTANT FLYERS, AND WHAT LENGTHS HAVE YOU GONE TO FOR VIPs?



**A**midst the cloud of controversy surrounding Donald J Trump's presidency, consequential temporary flight restrictions (TFR) in the USA continue to be problematic for the business aviation industry.

A recent TFR that impacted operations was from August 4-20 in Bedminster, New Jersey, while President Trump was on vacation nearby. The TFR prohibited operations at Somerset Airport and Solberg-Hunterdon Airport, and due to their proximity, some approaches and/or departures for Central Jersey Regional and Hackettstown were also unavailable.

The ban also closed the west gates out of Newark Liberty International Airport and the Newark satellites, which include Teterboro and Morristown airports. Business aviation operators could apply to have their routes approved by the FAA ATC Command Center, which released a list of approvals for each day.

*Business Airport International* asked readers if they thought such restrictions were fair on the business aviation industry. Could TFRs be handled in a better way by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to alleviate pressure on the sector? How far do companies go to satisfy high-profile clients? ○

### Your views

Heads of state are national assets and unfortunately also targets, and require and deserve the attention, safety and security that their status engenders.

Executive aviation flyers are usually interested in factors such as ease of travel, comfort, convenience, privacy and speed. We in the executive aviation business are familiar with such needs and provide these travelers with what they want.

**Andrea Jilkova, marketing director at Travion**

That TFRs are introduced because someone is on holiday seems to be unreasonable when it has such a disruptive effect on the flow of traffic into and out of airports. Such temporary restrictions are adding to pressures on the air

traffic control system and causing the possibility of confusion to operators, which, in turn, puts more pressure on safety.

**Graham Stephenson, senior aviation consultant**

These TFRs have been poorly handled and have been an impediment to business for 15 years. There doesn't seem to be any success in engaging to alter them.

**Tony T, captain at Wings Airways**

TFRs have always been a challenge for business aviation. One key difference with Trump's travel is in communication. The best defense for any high-profile figure is to keep travel plans on a need-to-know basis. Oversharing of travel plans can extend the

reach and duration of TFRs, as it increases the security risk.

PrivateFly flies a number of dignitaries and royals, and generally finds their flights straightforward. Permits are usually already in place or are granted very easily, and plans are well organized.

**Adam Twidell, CEO at PrivateFly**

There really is no limit as to what our customers can ask of Flightworx but, of course, we will always be realistic about what is possible in order to manage expectations. One of the more memorable requests we've received and delivered includes arranging a charter to collect a dog from a private yacht in Monaco.

**Andy Shaw, managing director of Flightworx**

### Your comments

**What do you think? Is there a better way for the FAA to organize temporary flight restrictions? How far would you go to please a high-profile client? We'd love to hear your thoughts on this or any other topic affecting the business aviation industry, so visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and search *Business Airport International* to join in with the debate.**

**LinkedIn**  
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### Results taken from the monthly poll section on our website\*

\* at time of going to press

### DO YOU THINK IT IS RIGHT THAT SUCH RESTRICTIONS ARE ENFORCED AT BUSINESS AVIATION'S EXPENSE?

**Yes, each industry has their part to play**

**13%**

**No, the industry needs maximum support**

**62%**

**Perhaps, but it needs to be handled in a better way**

**25%**





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