

IN BRIEF

AW169 HEADING FOR SWISS ALPS

Bern-based Mountain Flyers has signed an order to acquire a Leonardo AW169 medium-twin helicopter with a VIP interior. The order signing at Leonardo's booth at EBACE yesterday will expand the charter operator's fleet, says Mountain Flyers chief executive Christoph Graf. Mountain Flyers now operates a single AW109, but the light twin helicopter's payload is not enough for some customers, Graf says. The AW169 will help the company on regular charter trips to several destinations within Switzerland, as well as on long-range routes to Nice and Monaco. Leonardo has signed more than 180 orders and commitments for the AW169, of which about 50 have been delivered, the company says.

IDAIR GETS A340 CONNECTED

Idair has delivered its in-flight entertainment and cabin management system on an Airbus A340-300 to an undisclosed end customer. The package includes Apple iPad-operated controls for IFE, lighting, electrical shades, external aircraft cameras and a moving map system.

AIRPORT GETS BREXIT BOOST

TAG Farnborough, one of Europe's leading business aviation airports, expects to smash its annual movement record in 2018, thanks to a resurgence in global business aviation traffic to the hub, about 35 miles (55km) southwest of London.

About 30,000 take-offs and landings are forecast for the 12 months ending 31 December. "Our highest movement tally to date was recorded in 2007, when we welcomed 27,300 business aircraft," TAG Farnborough chief executive Brandon O'Reilly said at the show.

Last year, the airport celebrated 27,000 take-offs and landings – up 7.4% on the same period in 2016.

The positive momentum is continuing into 2018 with a 20% year-on-year growth recorded between January and April. "We recorded our busiest day on record on 25 May with 188 movements," O'Reilly notes.

He says the 2016 UK vote to leave the EU is contributing significantly to the airport's strong performance. "Brexit has resulted in a lot of opportunity-driven travel, with many individuals and businesses flying into and out of the country looking for investment prospects," he notes. "We hope this will continue for some time."



➤ **PREPARED:** Brandon O'Reilly say the airport has the infrastructure for further growth

➤ By KATE SANSFIELD

TAG Farnborough is also benefiting, O'Reilly says, from the sporadic opening hours of RAF Northolt – the fourth-largest airport in the London area for business aviation traffic – and the increasingly congested and slot-constrained commercial airports around London – such as Heathrow and Luton – which are squeezing out business aircraft traffic in favour of the more lucrative airlines. "Many customers are now turning their backs on these very busy, large airports in favour of dedicated business aviation facilities like ours," he says.

With a movement ceiling of 50,000, O'Reilly says the airport still has plenty of room to grow. "We have infrastructure in place that can handle us operating at full capacity," he adds.

TAG Aviation also expects Gulfstream aircraft movements to grow, once its new service centre opens at the site in 2020.

Meanwhile, the company is hoping to receive approval from the UK Civil Aviation Authority before the end of May to reclassify the airspace around the facility to permit safer and more efficient departures for operators.

At present, the airport sits in unclassified, albeit highly complex, airspace, thanks to the relative proximity of both Heathrow and Gatwick airports, alongside several nearby general aviation fields and the Royal Air Force's Odiham base.

"Hopefully it will achieve all the objectives: improved environmental performance, noise reduction, more efficient use of airspace and improved safety," says O'Reilly.

ONE-STOP SHOP FOR SUPER-RICH



➤ **HUB MED:** Malta is the ideal location for the service, says Alessandro Rostirolla

Helicopter Services Malta aims to capitalise on its central Mediterranean island location to capture superyacht traffic and provide a full-service management solution for onboard rotorcraft.

The one-year-old company this week became fully certified to offer helicopter sourcing, buying, staffing, maintenance and operational services.

Chief executive Alessandro Rostirolla believes his company will provide helicopter owners with a much-needed one-stop shop to service all of their needs.

"Today, private owners using aircraft on top of their yachts have to talk to lots of different companies, but if they talk to Helicopter Service Malta they can have a full service, including the management of the aircraft, maintenance and operation," says Rostirolla.

"We're based in Malta because all super-yachts stop in Malta. It's good for taxes and we can provide hangar space and maintenance services in one stop."

The company's managed fleet currently includes two Leonardo AW109s and an Airbus Corporate Helicopters ACH135, but Rostirolla is aiming to reach "20 helicopters within one year".



➤ **BON APPETIT:** Chef Marie Brunier demonstrates the kitchen's versatility

Making a meal of it in new Global galley

Bombardier held a crepe-making demonstration at the show yesterday to highlight the kitchen facilities on board its Global 7500 aircraft. The galley is 20% larger than the food preparation area on the Global 7000.

It features two stacked, dual-function ovens – the top one providing convection and microwave capabilities and the bottom one comprising convection and steam functions – as well as an induction cooktop and a "very deep" pull-out sink, says Bombardier air systems section chief Melissa Giannangelo.

There is a flexible compartment that can be used as a fridge, freezer or wine cooler, along with a two-litre capacity boiling kettle, a coffee-maker and a recessed space for more particular coffee aficionados to keep their own machines.

AviationManuals has Part-NCC covered

US-based first-time exhibitor AviationManuals is hoping the show will provide "the ideal platform" to push along its drive to boost customer numbers in Europe.

The business aircraft operations manuals and safety management system (SMS) software provider has teamed up with Switzerland's AeroEx to offer what it describes as "affordable, convenient and comprehensive" support to help non-commercial operators comply with the European Aviation Safety Agency's Part-NCC regulations.

When it comes to Part-NCC compliance, AviationManuals chief executive Mark Baier says the company realised that "clients are falling between the cracks of having to do it themselves or with a larger management company that

charges a lot of money to do it for them".

AviationManuals and AeroEx have developed a "fixed-price Part-NCC package" that includes manual development and editing, compliance monitoring and related advisory services, interim management, training, risk assessment tools and forms.

Baier says the company has signed up an undisclosed European launch customer for its Part-NCC package.

AviationManuals also announced at EBACE the launch of a new iPad app which complements its online modular SMS platform.

"Some of our existing customers have been testing the app and it is usable today, but you have to subscribe," says Baier.



➤ **LAUNCH:** Mark Baier demonstrates the new iPad app