

Chengdu benefitting from new Cathay service

In October last, Cathay Pacific Airways launched a new scheduled freighter service to Chengdu, one of the fast-developing cargo markets in Western China. The new service will operate from Chengdu to Shanghai before returning to the Cathay Pacific hub in Hong Kong.

The airline currently operates 16 scheduled freighter flights to Shanghai each week. The flights to Chengdu will enable the airline to expand its presence in the west of the country as it grows in importance as a high-end manufacturing centre. The airline is also serving Chongqing in the region, with a twice-weekly freighter service operating since 9 August 2011.

Lufthansa Cargo mulls over its future investments

Lufthansa Cargo has decided to put on hold plans to invest around €1bn in Frankfurt as a result of a night-flight ban there.

"Lufthansa still wants to invest, but the size is dependent on the night flight regulations," was the succinct comment from a company spokesman. The group had planned to invest in a new logistics facility, as well as a new administration building.

Flights at Germany's largest airport were banned between 2300 and 0500 at the end of October 2011, following an appeal by residents over the noise generated. The ban affects mostly cargo flights; in response, Lufthansa Cargo has announced plans to station a freighter in Cologne, and transport goods there via road for onward shipping.

E-freight now gathering momentum

Emirates SkyCargo, a leading player in the industry move towards e-freight, has added further momentum to the drive by announcing that electronic air waybills (e-AWBs) are now being used for 100% of shipments from its Dubai hub.

The IATA e-AWB initiative aims to remove the requirement for paper air waybills, the contracts used for the transportation of air cargo. By eliminating the need to print, handle or archive the paper AWB, the simplified air freight process brings benefits to businesses throughout the supply chain.

The IATA e-AWB scheme is one part of the e-freight push, a collective industry effort, which is facilitated by IATA: the aim is to remove paper AWBs, as well as every other document and certificate, by the end of 2014.

Emirates SkyCargo, the freight division of the Emirates airline, was already on track to meet the deadline, with 51 of the locations it serves e-freight compliant: this latest milestone is further testament to the progress being made.

Falcon Cargo takes to the air

Gulf Air recently announced the launch of Falcon Cargo, its newly branded cargo umbrella that will offer more innovative, cost-

effective features, products and services to its customers.

Falcon Cargo offers a comprehensive suite of services that include Falcon Express, mail, courier, diplomatic and general cargo, animal transportation, dangerous goods and high value cargo as well as other shipments that require special handling. Supported by a state-of-the-art cargo handling system, Falcon Cargo promises quicker decision making, faster transit times and ultimately a speedier delivery to customers.

Gulf Air's wide-body aircraft, operating mainly from Europe, the Far East, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, feed its Bahrain hub, thereby enabling goods to be rapidly dispatched throughout its operation. This is a great business advantage for customers wanting their cargo to reach both primary and secondary markets in the region and beyond.

With Bahrain airport's fully-equipped chiller rooms, air-conditioned areas for livestock, designated areas for dangerous goods and radio-active cargo, exclusive location for valuable cargo, separate areas for diplomatic cargo and airmail, Falcon Cargo assures its wide range of customers peace of mind in terms of safe and secure handling.

Altogether, Gulf Air offers its clients 51 destinations across the world in 33 countries. Moreover, it has the largest network in the Middle East, with nearly 700 flights every week in the region, and more non-stop flights than any other carrier.



The importance of being E

E-commerce is a critical component of the future security, efficiency, sustainability and overall commercial success of the air cargo supply chain: these are the thoughts of the Global Air Cargo Advisory Group (or GACAG), which firmly believes that the changeover from current processes will, in the fullness of time, happen. GACAG has undertaken to drive its development and encourage progress through several initiatives that will be executed by its E-Commerce Task Force.

At the heart of a long overdue process change, the Group says, is the elimination of paper-based documentation. With participation from airlines, forwarders, ground handlers, customs and shippers, GACAG has initiated a review of the e-freight project launched by IATA in 2006; and it will review other relevant initiatives, to identify the best possible way forward to accelerate the implementation of a paperless transportation process.

Two areas have been identified as priority for collaboration by GACAG members: these are the electronic air waybill (the so-called

e-AWB) and the promotion of electronic Customs procedures.

In fact, the implementation of harmonised electronic Customs procedures by countries worldwide is key to creating a network of routes where air cargo industry participants can benefit from an end-to-end paperless process, GACAG says. Removing the requirement to transport original paper documentation with the freight allows for significant cost and time savings and enhances reliability. GACAG members have begun to identify countries where they can jointly engage with relevant authorities to promote the implementation of these procedures at a national level as well as internationally, through the World Customs Organisation.

Cargo Community System will take Paris into the future

The Cargo Community System is actually owned by a quartet of companies, namely Aéroports de Paris, Sycaff, TLF and Air France. Together, the four own a 50% share of Cargo Information Network. The remaining 50% is split between Caronaut International (with 25%) and Traxon Europe, which holds the other 25%.

Cargo Information Network was set up just over a year ago and became operational at the end of 2011. Its main goal has been that of providing full traceability of all cargo operations at Charles De Gaulle airport, no matter what the airline, the cargo handler or the forwarder. All status data, from unloading to final delivery, is stored on the CIN database. CIN will also provide additional data on ULD management, security certificates, transit formalities and so on. Consequently, Customs at Charles De Gaulle will have access to all the movements for any piece in real time. Moreover, CIN will be able to trace the ULDs, the AWB and the HAWB to piece level. Finally, both cargo and mail traffic will be on the CIN database.

Jean-François Bouilhaguet has been appointed President of the Cargo Community System and Cargo Information Network.

In brief

- Following years of close partnership, Vanderlande Industries and Beewen have agreed on a takeover of Beewen by Vanderlande. This takeover further strengthens the position of Vanderlande as an integrated player with a full product portfolio.

In the new set-up, Beewen will become the AS/RS centre of competence within Vanderlande with the prospect of growth in line with the latter's ambitions.

- Late last year, Volga-Dnepr Airlines became the first airline to be voted Best Cargo Charter Airline for three years in succession in the Baltic Air Charter Association's annual awards. The award was presented to Volga-Dnepr at BACA's 2011 Excellence Awards ceremony in London.