

CHC to support Siemens in constructing wind farm

Offshore operator CHC Group has penned a new contract with Siemens Wind Power to provide helicopter services in support of the Veja Mate offshore wind farm, which is currently under construction in the German North Sea.

Regional director for EMEA Mark Abbey says: "Last October we celebrated the successful completion of the Gemini wind farm project, off the coast of Holland. We provided nine months of support for construction of the farm from our Den Helder base.

"We are excited to build on our successful relationship with Siemens. CHC has decades of experience working with energy customers, and we will continue to evolve our services and technology to best meet their needs."



The AW139 has been a dependable partner for CHC in its North Sea work.

GlobeAir rides the growing Mustang market

Austrian air taxi operator GlobeAir is continuing to take advantage of Mustang market growth in Europe, and CEO Bernhard Fragner says that this is occurring thanks to new entrants to the private jet arena, as well as those downgrading from larger aircraft.

"We are continuing on the upwards curve that we have been on," he states. "If you look at industry statistics from WingX or EBAA, you see a slight decline in the overall market in terms of movements in Europe. However, the Mustang market is growing. Very often this is a downgrading process from large aircraft, but interestingly we are also seeing new customers. Online platforms such as Stratajet, PrivateFly, Lunajets, Fly Victor and many others are doing an extraordinary job in terms of picking out customers who have never flown on a private jet before.

"That is the big strength of those platforms and it seems to have boosted the VLJ sector in two ways. Firstly the investment in marketing has been fundamental to educating the market, and secondly, these platforms have pioneered instant booking technology, making the air charter service easily accessible to the end user. They have reinvented and simplified the process."

Fragner says that it is possible to stay 'almost anonymous' when



Bernhard Fragner says that business is on the up and he expects to add three further aircraft in the coming months.

booking a private jet these days, which is very desirable for many business travellers. Though his company flies VLJs, he doesn't feel that the Mustang's range is a limiting factor. "It is true that we cannot operate family trips for up to five or six people, requested during the summer season, and it is also true that normally the principal is the one who flies most frequently. He normally accompanies the family and the nanny to the holiday destination, and after a few days he

goes back to work using a smaller jet. But we have plenty of traffic that we can cater to."

GlobeAir recently completed significant cabin interior upgrades for its fleet, a vital step in Fragner's view: "Customising the travel experience is more needed than ever, so we aimed at creating an elevating experience at 33,000 feet in a completely new and modern environment," he continues.

"It was a two-year project to get the approvals and so on. My team turned around the whole fleet within a few months and refurbished them. The customer reception has been really great. In particular frequent flyers, who had the chance to compare the old cabin designs with the new ones, provided great feedback.

"Creating bespoke interiors by replacing standard materials with high end Italian leather gives a completely new feeling to the passenger on board, who expects a certain level of sophistication at every stage of the trip."

In terms of routes, he says that popular pairs are still stable. "The Balearic Islands are really picking up heavily with flights going to Ibiza or Palma. Last year we saw much more activity than we have seen in the years before. Greece is also very popular, particularly its islands. People are no longer travelling to Turkey due to the

uncertain situation and safety problems. There is instead a new promising destination in the Balkan area that is attracting the European elite, the glamorous country of Montenegro, which is expected to become the second Monte Carlo.

"We also saw more business out of London. We would hesitate to say that this is because of Brexit, as it could be the economy growing...we are not sure. But compared to all other growth and business destinations like Geneva and Paris, we see much more demand in London."

Late last year, Blink and Wijet, two other European Mustang operators, joined forces and fleets. Fragner says that this has not impacted the market either positively or negatively so far: "We know the numbers of the market quite well, and what each company does. If you combine Blink's stats with those of Wijet, that is exactly the sum of the combined business now. There hasn't been any shift in market share in either direction though they may well work on the combined fleet to achieve greater efficiency. I think that would be their main focus at the moment.

"We are quite happy with how the business is developing and we are more committed than ever to focus on this segment. We are looking forward to adding at least three more aircraft very soon, because we see that there is growth potential," he concludes.

JetEight pledges alternative to business class clients

Berlin-based start-up JetEight is launching a subscription service in the third quarter of this year using small jets and turboprops on routes between Zurich, Frankfurt and Berlin and targeting business class airline customers. CEO Ruben Portz says he wants to offer better value to these passengers by reducing waiting times.

JetEight will not be operating the flights; the operating partners it chooses will dictate the types of aircraft that are used. Phenom 300s and the King Air family are likely candidates. "It is interesting for us to keep an eye on European legislation regarding SETs too; we might be able to think about commercial flights using a PC-12," adds Portz.

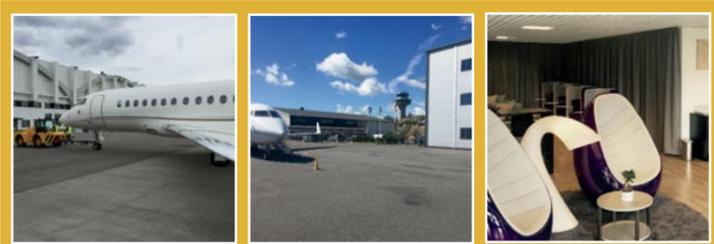
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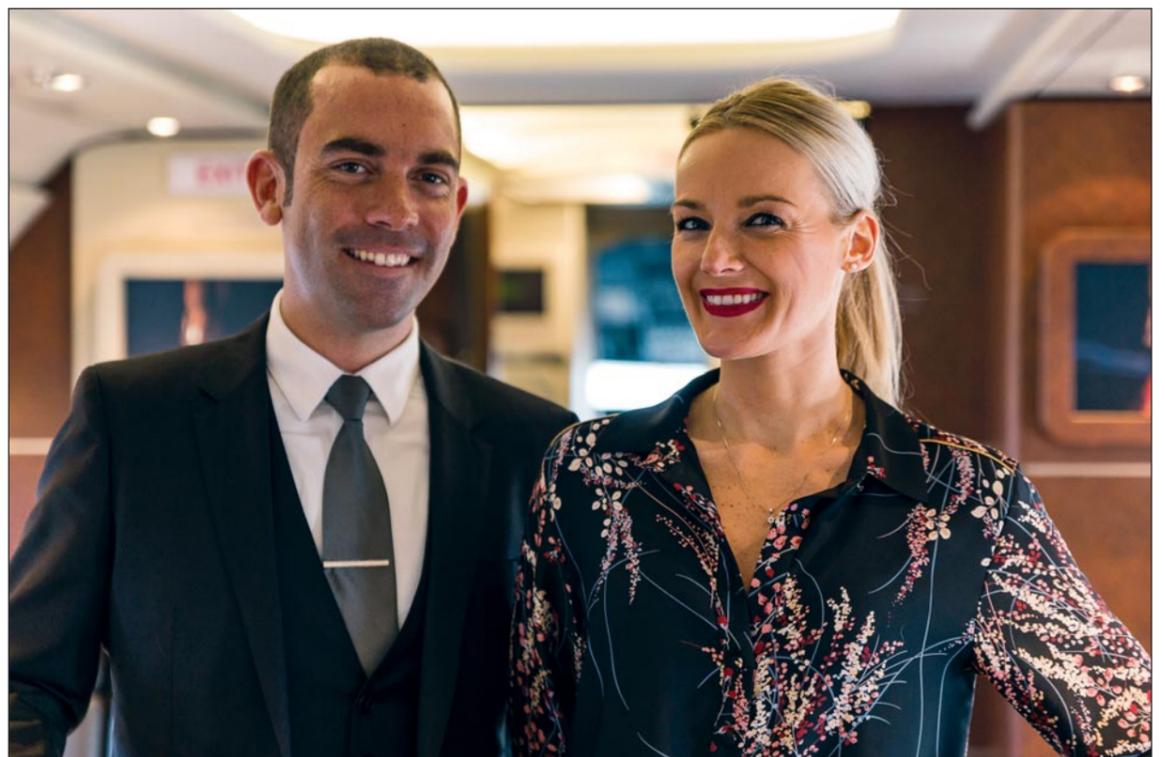
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Flight attendant instructors Virginie Chateau and Mallory Mortier are delighted with the latest ACJ.

Global Jet adds a fourth ACJ for charter

Geneva-headquartered Global Jet has added a Paris Le Bourget-based Airbus ACJ318 Elite to its charter fleet, having seen considerable demand for VIP large cabin types, especially in the Middle East. "This ACJ is an excellent product that can fly for more than nine hours," says the operator. "Its baggage load is a critical point for any client

that wishes to travel with a large amount of suitcases at maximum passenger capacity."

The newcomer will be the fourth Airbus offered for charter although Global Jet manages a further four units for private clients. "We have an extensive knowledge in managing VVIP airliners and our crews are qualified far beyond the required

standards, guaranteeing maximum safety and unrivalled high-end service on board," the company says.

The aircraft is capable of transporting up to 19 passengers and 80 suitcases from Dubai to London or from Paris to New York non-stop. The cabin has been designed with a separate bedroom and a spacious bathroom, as well as eight beds.

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