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SHG Press Office

St Helena Airport

Airlink Proving Flight & the Future of Tourism



Airlink's Embraer E190-100IGW aircraft at St Helena Airport

The arrival of the Airlink proving flight on Monday, 21 August 2017, forms one of the components in bringing St Helena closer to commencing commercial flights to the Island. Regular commercial air services will mean easier and quicker access to the Island which will hopefully see an increase in visitor numbers as well as the benefits the flights bring to residents, family and friends to access the Island in a much quicker way than at present. The Tourism team have been working hard in anticipation of this.

Director of Tourism, Chris Pickard, remarked:

"The visit of Airlink's Embraer 190 for a series of tests and evaluations for the St Helena and South African authorities has taken us one step closer to the start of commercial air services - flights that will transform the Island's tourism profile with tourists on St Helena becoming the norm, rather than the exception. It is time for the Island and all Saints to get ready to welcome our visitors as Airlink will supply the crucial access link between St Helena and the rest of the world."

St Helena Tourism hosted the Airlink Marketing team who visited during the Proving Flight - Chief Revenue Officer, Chris Hoare, Tour Products Manager, Katherine Whelan and Marketing Co-ordinator, Sandra Tasker. The Tourism team also engaged with representatives - Sone Kuhn from African Ample Assistance and Craig Smith of New Frontiers Travel & Tour - Tour Operators who work alongside Airlink in selling destination travel.

Various meetings were held with key players on the Island involved in future air access plans. Members of Enterprise St Helena, Tourism, and the Marketing & Communications team met the Airlink marketing team to devise future campaigns on how best to promote the Island as the next up-and-coming tourism destination through online & print publicity and working in conjunction at future travel shows.

Marketing & Communications Manager for Enterprise St Helena, Justine Green, commented:

"Our involvement in these meetings were beneficial to both myself and my team. It was a fantastic learning experience that we will now incorporate into our marketing activities. We are eager to start promoting flights to the Island. This is an exciting time to be working in marketing, especially as we are marketing OUR Island."

Tourism Officers, Melissa Fowler and Christina Plato, gave visiting tour operators a 'taste' of St Helena's attractions and facilities on offer. Heavily packed into a tight schedule were the opportunities to meet a range of accommodation, transport and tour providers on-Island.

Continues over-leaf →

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Airlink Proving Flight & the Future of Tourism Contd

The lead contact at the Tourist Office in relation to accommodation, transport and itinerary arrangements, Melissa Fowler, said: *"We wanted to provide an excellent experience for those who arrived and several Tourism Office staff accompanied transportation and acted as 'tour guides', to escort individuals to their accommodation.*

"We hope that everyone who visited last week enjoyed their experience of the Island. As a team, we had planned with various stakeholders to ensure they got the most out of their trip. It was a pleasure to host Sone and Craig and I look forward to building a strong working relationship. I hope the message is spread of how excited we are to receive visitors and how truly unique St Helena is as a new destination for Airlink."



Tourist Officer, Melissa Fowler, with Tour Operators

St Helena Airport Staff Successfully Complete Training

Earlier this year, staff at St Helena Airport undertook a month's training when the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Instructor, Neil Coull, from Redline Aviation, Doncaster UK, visited the facility to deliver three courses. With a wealth of experience behind him, Neil was able to deliver training to staff in Crisis Management and Aviation Security Management, along with training for the Aviation Security Instructors course.

The ICAO Crisis Management course lasted five days and was attended by Kerry Yon, Gwyneth Howell, Mario George, Ryan Moyce and Dennis Stroud. The second course - Aviation Security (AvSec) Management training programme - lasted 10 days. This was attended by Kerry Yon, Gerald Yon, Gwyneth Howell, Mario George, Ryan Moyce, Marc Fowler, Marten Fourie and Sanjay Bargo. Keegan Yon, the apprentice undergoing security training at the Airport, was also able to sit in and monitor the course in order to gain exposure at this level.

The final course - ICAO Aviation Security Instructors training - was arranged by Airport management to enable the Security staff to achieve the required capability in the training and development of the Airport and agency security staff, as set out in the Overseas Territories Aviation Requirements. This course was attended by Kerry Yon and Gerald Yon. On their successful completion of the course, the Airport was able to apply to Air Safety Support International (ASSI) for their Instructors Certification. The applications were accepted by ASSI and Kerry and Gerald were issued their certificates, which are valid until 5 February 2019.

The course provided guidance to achieve the high standards in the presentation of a training programme and identified key areas for development in order to become an effective user of ICAO training material, presented in the AvSec training format. The training covered the role of the instructor and introduced staff to AvSec principals of learning and Instruction, Course Organisation, Overview of Course Development, Presentation of Materials and Test and Assessment of Performances. During the course, both staff underwent the tests and assessment processes where they were assigned instruction modules that required them to develop unique course module content which they later presented to Airport staff.

Their accomplishments have brought new accreditation to the Airport and demonstrates the significance gained as there are now approved ASSI AvSec Instructors on-Island who are authorised to deliver the following courses: *Security Screener, Security Supervisor, Operating Crew, Air Cargo Handling Agent, Catering and General Security Awareness (GSAT)*.

Over the coming months, both Kerry and Gerald will be involved in designing training programmes for the Airport which will be submitted to ASSI for approval. Once the programmes are authorised, the Airport will become more self-reliant and minimise the need for instructors from overseas to visit as regularly as they have had to during the last two years.



Security Staff at St Helena Airport, Kerry Yon and Gerald Yon

Councillors' Induction Tour

The Airport Directorate was pleased to invite the newly elected Legislative Council and the SHG Business Delivery Group to visit the Airport Project as part of their induction programme.

The site visit started at the wharf in Rupert's Bay, where an overview was given on the construction, continuing work and plans for operation.

The group then moved to view and discuss some of the wider developments in Rupert's. This included the construction of the new gantry and fuel management arrangements in the Bayside, the work on the heritage wall (near the Fish Processing Plant), and the new Sea Rescue facility. There was also a discussion on plans for cargo handling in Rupert's and on rock-fall protection. The party then proceeded to drive along the Access Road to the Airport, stopping to look at the construction of the Bulk Fuel Installation.

Upon reaching the Airport, the entire group were able to pass through the Security Building and were given a tour of the Runway, as well as the Combined Building, which included Rescue & Firefighting, the Met Office and the Control Tower. Elected Members and the Business Delivery Group took opportunities during this event to ask questions, engage in useful discussions and obtain a further understanding of the goals, objectives, and future prospects of the Airport, and the wider Rupert's Valley development.



Legislative Council and Business Delivery Group on Airport Tour

Airlink Proving Flight - Photo Gallery



Airlink Pilots at St Helena Airport



Aircraft coming in to land at St Helena Airport



Passengers disembarking the Aircraft



One of the Meetings held with Airlink



Aircraft departing St Helena Airport