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ETIHAD CARGO ENHANCES OPERATIONS TO CHINA

Etihad Cargo, part of United Arab Emirates (UAE) national airline Etihad Airways, will enhance its Chinese cargo services later this month when it increases bellyhold cargo capacity between Abu Dhabi and Chengdu.

Effective 30 March, cargo capacity to and from Chengdu will grow 40 per cent to 930 tonnes per month, a result of the current five times a week Airbus A330 passenger service between Abu Dhabi and Chengdu moving to a daily operation.

Chengdu is a leading economic, transportation and communications centre in China, where nearly half of the world's Fortune 500 companies have operations. Situated in Sichuan province which is home to more than 80 million people, Chengdu is also one of China's biggest markets for Foreign Direct Investment.

Etihad Cargo is the only operator that provides a direct air link between Chengdu and the UAE capital, where cargo can connect seamlessly to destinations across the globe.

The increase in cargo capacity between Abu Dhabi and Chengdu comes against a background of increasing trade flows to and from China. In 2013, Etihad Cargo carried more than 73,000 tonnes of goods to and from China, up 33 per cent on 2012 (54,903 tonnes).

Beyond increasing bellyhold cargo operations into Chengdu in 2014, Etihad Cargo will continue to deploy substantial maindeck freighter capability to Shanghai (seven per week), Hong Kong (six per week), Beijing (two per week), and Guangzhou (two per week). These services will operate using a mix of Airbus A330F, Boeing 777F and Boeing 747F aircraft.

The airline will also continue to offer daily bellyhold cargo capability between Abu Dhabi and Beijing, Abu Dhabi and Shanghai, and with its equity partner Air Seychelles, between Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong.

Kevin Knight, Chief Strategy and Planning Officer at Etihad Airways, said: “Our additional services to Chengdu provide shippers with convenient, daily access to points all across our global network.

“Today, we offer just over 19,000 tonnes of monthly cargo capacity to and from China, with unique direct access out of China to the Indian subcontinent market, where we offer services from Shanghai and Hong Kong to the cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Dhaka.

“As a direct result of increased demand for our cargo services, tonnage carried between our Chinese destinations and the rest of our global network has grown significantly over the past 12 months, and our forward projections for 2014 are looking positive.”