

ETIHAD CARGO TRANSPORTS 72 HORSES ON A SINGLE FLIGHT

Etihad Cargo has successfully shipped a very special consignment. The freight division of Etihad Airways was tasked with transporting more than 70 elite racehorses from England to Kuwait after the European racing season.

In all, 72 racehorses – worth a combined £36 million (US \$45 million) – were transported from London Stansted Airport to Kuwait City, where they will spend the winter months training and racing in the temperate Middle Eastern climate. They were flown on one of the carrier's state-of-the-art Boeing 777 freighters which are equipped with comfortable seating for up to nine grooms and can accommodate up to 75 horses at a time.

David Kerr, Senior Vice President of Etihad Cargo, said: "Safety is the most important thing for our equine customers, which is why it is imperative we offer a safe and reliable service on all of our shipments.

"The Middle East has strong ties to these magnificent creatures dating back thousands of years and, to this day, they are arguably the most precious cargo we carry. In 2016 alone Etihad Cargo has been entrusted to transport more than 1,200 horses, with several more large shipments scheduled before the end of the year."

Conan Busby, MAG's Head of Cargo, owners of London Stansted Airport, said: "We are delighted that Etihad Airways chose Stansted to handle this delicate and valuable cargo. Stansted is the UK's number one airport for horse travel and handles many specialist flights every year. Many of the horses taking part in this year's Olympic Games and the Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations passed through Stansted's dedicated equine facility."

A team of six professional grooms handled the horses during loading, while on board the flight – when they visit them in the cargo hold to ensure they are comfortable and calm – and on arrival in Kuwait.

When the horses arrived at Stansted they were loaded by their grooms into jet stalls, specially designed with non-slip floors which hold three horses apiece. The IATA-approved stalls were then loaded onto the temperature controlled cargo hold of the aircraft in an operation which took more than six hours.

Etihad Cargo operates a fleet of nine wide-body freighters – five Boeing 777Fs and four Airbus A330Fs – which can be configured to carry 75 and 30 horses respectively.

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