



## **Press Release**

**18th June 2012**

### **Air Charter International seeing upward trends for charter**

Air Charter International (ACI), the Dubai-based aircraft charter and leasing company, is experiencing an upward trend in the number of charters involving unusual or complicated requirements, along with an increase in charter requests from the African continent. "Business is up by 20% compared with this time last year in this particular segment of the market and we've seen charter requests from the African continent raise by 25%" said Caroline Jongma, Charter Sales at ACI.

In early May the company tackled a logistically complicated charter in the Middle East to support a luxury car company which is currently rolling out a worldwide launch of a new vehicle. The launch, which will be announced officially in 2013, saw over 100 VVIP customers flown from GCC countries including Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman to Dubai. In a unique operation ACI chartered three Cessna 208A amphibian seaplanes from its subsidiary company, Seawings to fly the guests into Dubai for the presentation.

The logistics were complicated by the fact that all 100 passengers had to be flown in and out in one day. Using its expert knowledge and local network Air Charter International was able to gain approval from the Gulf Civil Aviation Authority to enter Military Airspace and land on a private airstrip in Dubai. With a tight schedule ACI had to be specific on timings to ensure aircraft landed and departed on schedule. "We are seeing a growing trend in luxury brands utilizing our services for special events such as car launches and desert challenges. Organisers recognise the benefits of private jets, helicopters and seaplanes in creating an unforgettable experience," says Ms Jongma. "ACI has the expertise and contacts needed to handle the complicated challenges presented by such events and are consequently seeing a growing demand for this type of service," she continues.

Further demonstrating its expertise in the unusual, ACI was responsible for the urgent delivery of two hydraulic cylinders from Amsterdam to Dubai in May. This is the second time that ACI has been involved in this specific type of charter with the first being dispatched last year. To manage the charter ACI project manager Ian McEwan, who has over 25 years' experience in the field, was dispatched to the Netherlands where the cargo was originating. He advised on how to construct cradles for the cylinders to prevent them falling through the aircraft floor and was on site to ensure safe loading. An Emirates Sky cargo nose loader 747-400 freighter carried the shipment on a seven hour journey from Holland to the UAE.

“Handling cylinders that are over 11 meters long, weighing over 36 tons, and of extremely high value requires specific expertise to handle,” added Ms Jongma. “Ian was the perfect man for the job and we utilized his unique knowledge and wealth of charter experience to deliver an extremely challenging load.”

ACI has been working with outsized charter for over 20 years as it regularly ships machinery and equipment for the oil trade to Nigeria, Angola and Sudan. This year however it has seen an increase in business charter from the African continent. “We believe the higher demand is resulting from businesses realizing that executive charters, as well as cargo charters, are valuable tools that can underpin their day to day work. Passengers can land conveniently close to their destination, some of which are quite remote, at the time that they want, with the people they need to be with, which is valuable from a security perspective for the region. They are also familiar with our service and know that we have an excellent set of contacts in the region. We often win deals as we manage to source aircraft that others cannot and through bespoke knowledge can provide alternatives to meet the clients' needs,” comments Ms Jongma. Already a growing market, ACI anticipates that the African continent will become an increasingly important source of business, particularly for reliable, well maintained and secure charter aircraft.

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#### **About Air Charter International**

Air Charter International (ACI) a leading aircraft charter and leasing company based in Dubai, UAE, has been in operation since 1994 and covers 4-A region, namely: Arabia, Africa, Asia and Asia Pacific and services long and short term aircraft requirements. ACI has also made a strategic move into Aircraft Management through its 100% owned subsidiary: Jet Ops which

operates and manages three Cessna 208A Amphibian seaplanes for a commercial tourism operation named Seawings. Seawings provides seaplane operations within the United Arab Emirates and is the only seaplane sightseeing service in the region, considered a must-do for visitors to Dubai. The resource pool of ACI includes professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds & nationalities with a strong focus on aviation related industry and experience.

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