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IAG Cargo begins A380 operations to Johannesburg

IAG Cargo has marked another major milestone in its fleet modernisation programme as British Airways celebrated the start of commercial flights to Johannesburg on the brand new Airbus A380.

IAG Cargo and British Airways marked the event yesterday, taking the A380 on its first flight over South Africa.

Replacing the B747 model on the route, the new A380 aircraft offers precision cargo transport opportunities for the South African market. IAG Cargo has specified air conditioning capabilities for the hold, which will prove beneficial to customers wishing to transport temperature-sensitive cargo, such as perishables or pharmaceuticals. The new on-board services are expected to be a welcome feature to the South African perishables market.

IAG Cargo has optimised its A380 for belly-hold cargo by purchasing two additional ULD positions in the hold. IAG will also be the first carrier in the world to receive an A380 with an improved maximum take-off weight, 12 tonnes heavier than other A380's currently flying, allowing it to carry more cargo. As the aircraft is enabled with air conditioning in the forward hold and heating and ventilation in the rear hold it will also be well-suited for the shipment of temperature-sensitive goods, where IAG Cargo will now be able to set and maintain hold temperature to within 1°C accuracy.

Over the next ten years, IAG Cargo will benefit from a completely overhauled and modernised fleet. This programme will see the delivery of 24 Boeing 787s, 12 A380s and 6 Boeing 777-300ER. Additionally, IAG has ordered 18 A350-1000s and plans to convert options on a further 18 787s, both subject to shareholder approval.