



Sol Aviation on the rise to global prominence

Sol Aviation Services Limited



Caribbean leader, Sol Aviation Services Limited continues on an impressive ascent to global prominence founded on a vision and mandate for growth since its establishment as part of The Sol Group.

The pioneering aviation company completed a remarkable year in which it doubled its capacity, airports, volume and total business, following its acquisition of Esso's aviation business in the region, as part of The Sol Group's Share Purchase Agreement with ExxonMobil at the end of 2013.

Given its rapid expansion and the responsibility it now holds as the main supplier of services, Sol Aviation is unchallenged as the regional leader, now representing the embodiment – heart, and soul – of the Caribbean Aviation industry on the world stage.

In the wake of the recent acquisition, Sol Aviation has significantly increased its footprint with a number of additional airports at Bermuda, The Bahamas, Grand Cayman, and two in the Dominican Republic at Punta Cana and La Romana. The company is also now administering an expanded portfolio, serving a total of 15 regional airports, and holding a greater stake of the business in Barbados where its operations are based.

Sol Aviation can report enjoying a smooth and seamless transition since acquiring Esso's aviation business, with no disruptions to the flow of its operations. The integrity of its service with customer management centralised out of Barbados has been maintained, while the company has also now leveraged its expanded footprint and synergies to strengthen service to the recently added airports.

Growing bigger has indeed been better for Sol Aviation and its customers, and there is a reason for this: prudent management, putting the right people in place and having a drive and focus for pursuing the right opportunities. The company has in fact attracted several competent and well qualified persons to its staff complement in the last year. Also important is that these persons acknowledge and buy into Sol's philosophy, while the company in turn respects and values their views and contributions, for a mutually beneficial synergy that adds real value to the operations.

With growth, it is also important to consolidate your position, and Sol Aviation is no exception to this. Having doubled its business, and brought new people on board, the company will now look to the next phase of execution, focusing on its philosophy for success and strengthening its business structure.

For those with an interest in maintaining a strong aviation sector in the Caribbean, it is indeed comforting to see that Sol stands at its heart, sustaining a reliable supply of quality fuel and services vital for the success of this region as a hub for travel and tourism.

Staying true to its core values in the best interests of its customers has always been a main focus for Sol Aviation, and the company has not disappointed. Sol had in fact announced that it was on a mission to resolve worrisome supply issues in the Caribbean, and also went on record to report this to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Fast forward one year, and Sol Aviation is pleased to report that supply issues in St. Maarten, with potential ripple effects for the region, and which have been of concern to

customers, have now been solved.

This positive development was achieved with the construction of a 34,000 barrel jet tank at St. Maarten – a very large tank by the standards there – which enhanced our overall capacity to about 45000 barrels, more than the entire industry requirements at any one point in time. This means that should it become necessary, Sol is capable of supplying the entire industry requirements for jet fuel at any point in time, without assistance from competing petroleum operators.

Ensuring continuity and security of supply is paramount, and with the advent of a supply division within The Sol Group, Sol Aviation has taken its destiny in hand. The company is now in a position to access multiple supply points with its own shipping resources, thereby alleviating any supply problems that a regional supplier might have. The recent winter season, one of the busiest times of the year for regional aviation, has provided a good test for the efficacy of the investment in St. Maarten. Suffice to say that the facility came through with flying colours, working well for that location and also adding value in other markets particularly with regard to shipping issues.

Leading by example is important to Sol Aviation, and safety continues to be a primary focus. The company continues to dedicate significant resources into maintaining the aspect of safety, training, and retraining its staff to be always conscious of safety concerns and to conduct their activities with best practice in mind. Added to this, all company operations are constantly monitored either locally or centrally; and customers have access to a feedback system which they can use to submit



their comments, noting any concerns which they might have.

Management and Staff of Sol Aviation are also kept up-to-date with safety training and operations through its membership of IATA, and participation in the fuel forum of the technical fuels group, and the Joint Industry Group, which sets standards for the aviation business worldwide. Sol Aviation also maintains a technical services agreement with Shell Aviation, which provides further technical resource assistance.

It shouldn't surprise us then that Sol Aviation is also on the cutting edge of technological advancements, particularly as it relates to options for automating reporting activities at airfields. Moving forward, the company intends to continually improve its automation, introducing more and more technology to its crewmen with a view to enhancing efficiencies.

Soaring to levels on par with other global leaders, Sol Aviation sees a clear mandate

for itself in the area of brand recognition, and in just a few years, the company has taken the Sol brand to a worldwide audience. In addition to gaining the respect of the international community for its high standards, Sol Aviation's management has stood on the podium to address delegates to the annual IATA conference for two years in succession. The company has held the rapt attention of a global audience, including hundreds of airline representatives and decision makers in the airline community, promoting Sol to the world via Sol Aviation.

Sol Aviation's vital role in tourism and travel, the Caribbean's number one industry and foreign exchange earner cannot be denied. Sol Aviation is an essential part of the structure that makes it possible for airlines to ply the regional skies. Those customers know that continuity and reliability of supply of fuel and related services are very big ticket items for their airlines, and for destinations aspiring to

woo airline traffic to their airports.

That the sky is the limit remains the outlook for this enterprising Caribbean aviation company, where the policy is to continue to evaluate opportunities with a view towards growth and expansion. Having more than proven itself as worthy, Sol Aviation now stands on the threshold of global success for which it has been well prepared. ✈



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Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands (Tortola), Grand Cayman, Dominican Republic, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent and Suriname.

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