BUSINESS AVIATION IN COVID19 CRISIS - WHAT COMES AFTER?

News / Business aviation

European Business Aviation Association, the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, as well as national associations together urged European policy-makers and regulators to protect the continuity and survival of the Business Aviation sector in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its open letter, the European Business Aviation community calls on policy-makers and regulators in the EU Institutions, Member States, Switzerland and the United Kingdom to:

- **Maintain full and effective coordination with our industry** and the associations supporting our sector in Brussels and in the Member States, Switzerland and the United Kingdom;
- **Ensure basic operational continuity** for Business Aviation operators, service providers, manufacturers and supply chain to maintain essential flight operations such as – but not limited to – medical flights, supply of medical equipment, repatriation of citizens to their home countries and the supply of aircraft and parts to ensure such operations can continue;

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- **Implement all measures as soon as possible** to ensure that Business Aviation can resume its normal activities as soon as the crisis is over. The packages recently launched by the European institutions will definitively support our sector but additional measures – proposed here – are also essential in consideration of the magnitude of the crisis.

The 374,000 people who work in the European Business Aviation sector are facing a crisis of unprecedented magnitude and uncertain futures. In the last week of March, EUROCONTROL had observed a decrease of 72% in business aviation traffic across Europe compared to the same time in 2019 (with some variations between countries).

Furthermore, a pan-European survey of 130 European Business Aviation CEOs conducted by EBAA (see note to editors) revealed that estimated financial losses for the thousands of SMEs that make up the sector range from 50-90%. The most pressing issues for the CEOs surveyed are staff retention costs, fixed location costs and taxes.

Commenting on the joint letter, Athar Husain Khan, EBAA Secretary-General said: “The measures detailed in our letter today aim at the same objective; helping to safeguard as many companies as possible in our sector. Business Aviation has a vital role to play in the fight against COVID-19 and the post-crisis European recovery”

Pete Bunce, President and CEO of GAMA commented: “The General and Business Aviation industry pays tribute to all those working tirelessly to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Our industry stands ready to work in partnership with the EU institutions and national governments to continue to support relief work, deliver medical supplies, and to implement the measures outlined in this letter, which will help pave the way for recovery both in terms of health and the economy.”

Many operators specialised in medical and emergency flights are currently providing essential services to communities fighting the pandemic, including for the transport of health workers. But all other medical emergencies have not stopped, and are being handled by Business Aviation operators despite numerous operational challenges and restrictions. Along with medical and emergency flights, Business Aviation also provides cargo flights, ensuring the transport and delivery of critical medical supplies in Europe and around the world. Business Aviation is also supporting European and national governments’ efforts in reuniting families through repatriation flights.

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