



BRITTEN-NORMAN DELIVERED FIRST OF TWO NEW ISLANDER TO FALKLAND ISLANDS

News / Manufacturer



Falkland Islands Government Aviation Service got the delivery of first of two brand new BN2B-26 Islander aircraft by Britten-Norman. The Islander's ability to operate with ease as a high-frequency, short-sector, passenger and freight aircraft has made it ideal for hopping around the Falkland Islands' dramatic landscape. The second Islander is scheduled for delivery in 2021. FIGAS is Britten-Norman's Southern-most operator and has employed Islanders since the 1970s. The current fleet of four Islanders serve in a variety of roles and are essential in keeping the Falklands, and some of its more remote communities, connected. In addition to commuting flights, regular missions include air ambulance, postal carrier, freight, environmental monitoring and scenic flights.



The new Islander's registration honours Sir Miles Clifford, whose name has been inscribed above the pilot's door. As Governor of the Falkland Islands he was responsible for the launch of the air service in 1948. The service, which became FIGAS, was originally aimed at providing medical evacuation capabilities but it soon broadened to include mail delivery and passenger flight services. These changes were key to connectivity between the communities of the Falklands and are vital roles Britten-Norman Islanders continue today.

FIGAS' latest Islander is fitted with Garmin's world-renowned, high-end avionics suite, aiding safety, navigation and situational awareness. This includes the next generation G600TXi primary display, GTN 750Xi & GTN 650Xi Nav/Comm/GPS and EIS TXi advanced electronic engine instrumentation system. The Garmin suite also provides terrain alerts and integration with a radar altimeter, both of which are of particular benefit to pilots navigating the Falkland's rugged landscape and harsh weather systems. A Spidertracks installation provides additional safety by allowing the operations team to track aircraft in real-time and by enabling satellite based two-way communication.

Richard Hyslop, Falkland Islands Government Representative to the UK and Europe, commented: "Britten-Norman's Islanders are iconic. A real lifeline. We use them for everything from mobile polling stations to medevacs, tourists and people taking their animals to the vet, they are the real glue that keeps the Islands together."



Grahame Stone, Commercial Director at Britten-Norman, commented: "With such varied roles, FIGAS really put our Islanders through their paces. Britten-Norman is incredibly proud to be part of the Falkland Islands community. I am thrilled we have been able to deliver another aircraft to their growing fleet."



Kurt Whitney, Quality Manager at FIGAS, was involved with the commission and collaborated with Britten-Norman throughout the entire production of the aircraft. He commented: "Islanders are a perfect fit for the Falkland Islands. They can handle a variety of conditions that other aircraft cannot – FIGAS only operate out of two surfaced runways, the rest are clay, sand and grass. The Falklands has an increasingly busy tourist season. In recent years we have seen passenger numbers rise from 5,800 to 8,800. Despite some initial Covid-19 disruption, we are confident this will keep on increasing."

Photo credit: Thomas Cubero



07 DECEMBER 2020

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