

# Blackpool Airport

Newsletter 2  
November-January 2017



## Happy 2017 from Blackpool Airport

by Jay Gates, Airport Manager

It was very heart warming to see how positively the first newsletter was received out in the great community of Blackpool, Fylde, Wyre and beyond. What was equally nice to see was that the newsletter was obviously passed around other social networks, by some of the recipients and we, subsequently, received numerous requests from around the North West to be added to the distribution list for future newsletters. So to you all, and our new found friends out there, Welcome.

Blackpool Airport continues to grow, even with winter being that time of year when aviation normally slows down a little. After the successful growth of the Summer where we hosted not only some of the aircraft displaying at the Blackpool Air Show, as per the previous newsletter, but we went on to host some more of the aircraft that were displaying at the Southport Air Show a month later. For the spotters, a few pictures are included in this newsletter. We hope to attract even more display aircraft in 2017, due to our increased operational fire category.

In November 2016, as a further part of the airports controlled growth, we increased our daily Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) provision to what is known as Category 3. This was as a result of a recruitment drive to attract more local fire-fighters, and all currently retained with the Lancashire County Fire and Rescue Service. This increase in airport category allows the great majority of business and corporate aircraft, plus some of the smaller military aircraft, to utilise the airport at any time they choose. The difference was immediate, as from having just under a dozen foreign business jets visiting in October, we doubled this to over 23 jets visiting in November.

Coupled to this increase in business aviation to Blackpool, was the fact that in December 2016 one of world's most prestigious Air Charter brokers and aircraft providers, Air Charter Service, published the result of a survey poll on the ten best airports in the United Kingdom for Business and Corporate Aviation. Blackpool Airport, proudly, was voted 8<sup>th</sup> best in the country, beating the likes of Northolt and Edinburgh into 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> places, and outshining both Liverpool and Manchester. Air Charter Service have 20 offices, located around the globe, and provided over 10,000 charter flights in the last year. We must be doing something right!!

Another sign that Blackpool Airport is viewed very positively in the aviation industry is that the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) asked if they could bring along four trainee Air Traffic Service Inspectors, who hailed all the way from the Sultanate of Brunei, in South East Asia. The visit was to let them see how we operate our Air Traffic Control and Engineering departments, and how we manage our internal audit responsibilities. They were all suitably impressed with how we did things. It is a good sign when the CAA considers Blackpool Airport as a worthy destination for showing international trainees around, and to let them see how well we operate.

This second newsletter is, as with the first, full of interesting articles from some of our tenants and users, and backed up with plenty of interesting photographs of some of our prestigious flying visitors. I hope you enjoy reading through it. Blackpool Airport is yours and, as you will see, remains something for you and the region to be very proud of.





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## The Energy College

### Work progresses on the new build

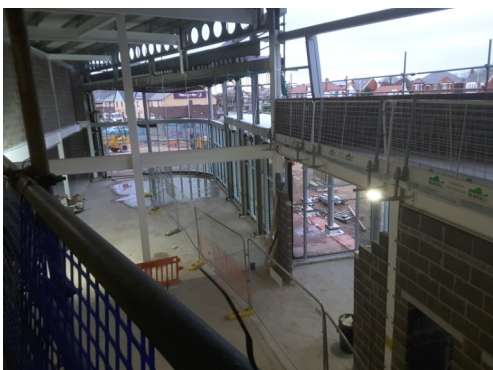
So where were we? Oh yes below is how the build was progressing at the end of October ...



.... well what a difference a few months make - the cladding is in place and work has begun on the glasswork.



And the internal structure is taking shape





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## Visitors

### Find out who dropped by ...

On a lovely sunny day we saw the arrival of this German built Stemme S10-VT self-launching motor glider from Retford. These aircraft use their engines to take off but then glide once airborne.



*SB LIM-2*

Thank you to Councillor Jason Roberts for supplying these fantastic photos of the SB LIM-2 (a Polish built version of the Russian MIG-15 Jet Fighter) and a DeHaviland DH Vampire FB52 when they visited the airport for the Southport Airshow . Both aircraft are from the Norwegian Air Force Historical Squadron and both were built in 1952.



*DeHaviland DH Vampire FB52*

A visit by one of our emergency services is always a great sight and below is a picture of one of the new Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) Agusta Westland 139 (AW139) Search and rescue (SAR) helicopters which covers the sea areas and inland mountains around the UK. It is based at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) aerodrome at St.Athan, in South Wales.

The helicopter arrived at BLK in the late afternoon after conducting a local exercise in the Irish Sea to refuel before heading home.



And in early December another Coastguard crew and aircraft visited to carry out 'rotors running' refuelling during a training flight from the new MCA SAR base at Caernarvon Airport in North Wales. This time the helicopter was the larger Sikorsky S-92A.





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## Visitors

### Find out who dropped by ...



And it isn't just aircraft that visit us - this handsome chap is Flint the Springer Spaniel, a Lancashire Constabulary detection dog who came in with his handler to check out some of our flights. A detection dog, or sniffer dog, is a dog that is trained to and works at using its senses (almost always the sense of smell) to detect substances such as explosives, illegal drugs, wildlife droppings, currency, or blood... and he's always partial to a treat or two!

We have also had visits from these fabulous Royal Air Force helicopters who popped in for refuelling during exercises



*SA330 Puma Mk2 helicopter from RAF Benson in Oxfordshire*

*Boeing CH-47 Chinook from RAF Odiham in Hampshire*



2-BOYS, a Rockwell Commander 114B, is a regular visitor from Guernsey and is displaying the new International registration for Guernsey which now has a '2' replacing the traditional UK registration of 'G'

We also had a visit from this rare heritage aircraft which is a 1959 built Piper PA23 Apache. The aircraft flew in from South Cave Airfield in East Yorkshire on a first twin engine solo flight for the pilot who had recently gained his twin rating license.





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## Visitors

### Find out who dropped by ...

Hangar 3 has had some fabulous visitors over the last few months and has shared them with us....

Right: a Bombardier Aerospace Learjet 45 operated by Skyfirst based at Le Bourget Airport in Paris

Below: a Brazilian Embraer E145, owned by Eastern Airways, based in Humber-side has 50 seats



Right: The Austrian Gulfstream G100 belonging to Tyrol Air Ambulance is a Private Air Ambulance Service that repatriates patients to the UK and throughout the World!



Left and below: The BAC 167 Strikemaster MK82A is a British jet-powered training and light attack aircraft which was previously part of the Sultanate of Oman Air Force

It is based at Hawarden Airport near Chester and is owned by North Wales Military Aviation Services Ltd. The Strikemaster Mk82A has a custom built smoke system available for displays



## On the Airport

### Babcock Mission Critical Services Offshore Ltd (Blackpool Operation)



trusted to deliver

Babcock Mission Critical Services Offshore currently operates two dedicated Airbus Helicopters (formerly Eurocopter) 365 N3 Helicopters out of Blackpool Airport primarily to support oil and gas production operations in Morecambe Bay and Liverpool Bay. The N3 helicopter although designed to carry 11 passengers is routinely utilised in a more common 8 seat configuration. This type is currently the helicopter of choice for operations in Morecambe Bay and Liverpool Bay although other types operated by Babcock MCS Offshore have supported the Blackpool operation when required.



Operations are carried out from a bespoke Helicopter Terminal with dedicated hangar facility and helicopter operational area utilising Babcock MCS Offshore staff which includes pilots, aircraft engineers and Ops/Ground Staff and 3<sup>rd</sup> party Survival Equipment staff. The facilities operate 365 days of the year and flights commence at 0700 until 2100 to facilitate the operational production requirements of the offshore facilities.

The facility is operated in the same manner as regular airport terminal albeit with no public access. Check-in desks, security search area, passenger search, baggage and freight handling, X-ray scanning, waiting lounges and departure and arrival lounges. As our passenger are travelling to work in a hostile environment the viewing of specialised aircraft safety briefings and ancillary equipment take part prior to each flight and the donning of this safety equipment is required as part of the offshore travel process

Flights depart Blackpool Airport on a daily basis taking workers offshore on a rotational working basis which can be for up to 2 or 3 weeks offshore, as well as specialist vendors on shorter duration visits. Monday to Friday, each day is a crew change day for somebody. Whilst the helicopters can be seen coming and going frequently, the distances from Blackpool to the installations are relatively short – the closest installation being 10 miles from the airport which can mean a short 20 minute round trip, the furthest installation being 34 miles. However, some flights can take in excess of 2 Hours as the process to move workers from the manned platforms to unmanned platforms takes place every day, leaving essential workers on the manned installation to continue daily operations. Usually the first flying activities of the morning are utilised to move teams to work on remote platforms ["normally unmanned installation or NUI"] for the day and then in the evening reversing the process, taking personnel back onto the manned platforms at the end of their working day, this can involve 20 + offshore helideck landings during one flight.



Sunset arrival

At any one time up to 250+ personnel could be living and working off the coast of Blackpool. This figure increases during seasonal extra work requirements and during any use of additional mobile platforms/vessels to support offshore maintenance operations throughout the year. Extra operations to support fossil fuel exploration work, specific vessel operations and offshore wind farm developments in both Morecambe Bay and Liverpool Bay have also been operated from the Blackpool helicopter terminal facility.

Urgent flights for the carriage of vital equipment needed offshore to maintain oil and gas production for the UK are also flown out as required, as well as any requirement to assist in medical or emergency situations. Particularly bulky freight may be carried as an under slung load.



## On the Airport

### Babcock Mission Critical Services Offshore Ltd (Blackpool Operation)



trusted to deliver

Babcock MCS Offshore (formerly known as Bond Offshore Helicopters) has been operating from Blackpool Airport since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010, and since this date has carried in excess of 100,000 passengers out and in via Blackpool Airport.

In respect of daily offshore operations the number of passengers transferred infield is a figure in excess of 320,000 in the past six years, with just short of 4,00,000 kilograms of passenger baggage flown. The number of flights operated in the period Jan 2010 to Dec 2016 from Blackpool Airport is in excess of 16,800 which has included 65,000 offshore installation landings. This does not include the number of flights carried out by previous helicopter operators in the period 1980 to Dec 2009 supporting the earlier operations from the Helicopter Terminal facility.

Gas production for the UK energy market has been supported from Blackpool Airport from the early to mid 1980's and actually started on a sporadic basis in the 1970s when exploration was taking place offshore with a variety of visiting jack up rigs, with helicopter support flights originating from Blackpool Airport and on rare occasions the port of Fleetwood Dock complex, on a very limited basis.

Gas produced from reserves in Morecambe Bay was first fed into the National Grid during 1985 and still continues to this day. One main manned processing platform with a co linked accommodation platform and a number of unmanned installations make up the Morecambe Bay field. With gas reserves being fed into two Gas Processing Terminals located in Cumbria. The main Morecambe Bay processing platform is 20 miles offshore from Blackpool.

Oil and Gas is currently produced in Liverpool Bay, having first been discovered in 1990 with production commencing in 1996. One fully manned platform, and a number of unmanned platforms and an offshore oil storage unit make up the Liverpool Bay operation. Oil is produced from an unmanned Platform just offshore from Southport and this is sent to the offshore storage unit, this is a fully manned unit, before being offloaded into tankers which locate alongside for transfer of oil. The offshore storage unit also seems to be a favourite location for the local seal population to sunbathe when not on the hunt for fish!



Seal Population take a break from hunting fish!

Gas is produced from the Unmanned Platforms and part processed on the main Liverpool Bay platform before travelling via pipeline to a gas terminal on the North Wales Coast. The operation is supported by an offshore jack up/support vessel which fully supports the operation and frequently moves around the Liverpool Bay Asset in support of remote platform operations.

A number of state of the art safety vessels are always located in both fields to provide safety, support and emergency coverage requirements, and vital supplies are delivered via dedicated supply vessels from Heysham Port on a regular basis.

## On the Airport

### The North West Air Ambulance Charity – your lifeline 365 days a year

Blackpool Airport is very proud to be a base for one of the North West Air Ambulance Charity's three helicopters. The aircraft fly 365 days a year, with the doctors and paramedics on board to provide lifesaving rapid treatment and hospital transfers to patients across the entire North West.



Today's crew from right to left:  
Mark Evans - Clinical Services Manager,  
Simon Stephens - Paramedic  
and Chris Tomlinson - Pilot

### The Blackpool Team & Helicopter

There is one helicopter, known as Helimed 08, plus pilots and five HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) paramedics based at Blackpool Airport. This team predominantly covers call-outs from Carlisle to Stoke, as well as supporting the charity's missions across the North West as required.

The EC135 aircraft is small and light, and specially designed for efficiency to ensure paramedics and doctors can get to incidents quickly and land in tight spaces. Many of the charity's call-outs are to remote places that cannot be easily reached by land, so this is of crucial importance for the safety of patients and crew alike.

Flying at speeds of up to 150mph, each aircraft carries advanced lifesaving equipment to give patients the best chance of survival. This includes a ventilation unit, suction unit, vacuum mattress, patient monitor and defibrillator, all of which are

funded by the generous donations of people in the North West

The Blackpool team's day starts at sunrise. They check their kit, oxygen levels and that their bags are stocked. Once the helicopter preparation is complete, the team will have a daily briefing to discuss any air restrictions or warnings, weather, team responsibilities followed by daily tests. Responsibility of a paramedic varies shift to shift – either placed in the back of the aircraft to attend to patients or sat at the front to assist with navigation, landing and take off together with patient treatment.

They can be called out to a number of jobs per day, with each one presenting a different challenge, so the crew must be ready for a mission at any given moment when on shift. When the siren goes, it has a galvanising effect on the team. The co-ordinates are taken and written on flight suits, the medication prepared and the appropriate crew assembled. Then, it's helmets on, final safety checks for the aircraft, and off to the scene. On landing, the team will carry the backpacks containing all the medical equipment to the patient – whether that means scaling a rocky hill, leaping a barbed wire fence, negotiating a muddy field or running across a motorway. The patient is assessed and any necessary treatment administered at the scene, before being stretchered to the helicopter. Once the patient has been safely transferred and the helicopter flown back to base, the crew will have an informal debrief and log the mission in their records.



### How the Charity makes a difference

Anyone, of any age, anywhere and anytime may one day need emergency critical care and the need for the North West Air Ambulance Charity has never been greater, with specialist medical care becoming centered in fewer locations. There is an increasing urgency and importance in getting patients over longer distances to the most appropriate places for treatment. The charity's helicopters allow rapid access to a wide range of incidents and an average response time of just 14 minutes from call-out to arrival on scene. The crew attends more road traffic collisions and medical incidents than any other, demonstrating why their service is such a vital one. Whether flying to the region's busy motorways, remote countryside or city centers, the charity covers an area of 5,500 square miles and 8 million people across the region.

### We count on you so you can count on us

Just as many critically injured patients would not survive without the service that the charity provides, the North West Air Ambulance Charity would not be here without the support of its community of fundraisers and partners. Any donation, no matter how large or small, can make a huge difference to a patient's outcome and help to save lives. For example, £9 could fuel a helicopter for one minute in the air, and £13,500 could fuel one of the charity's aircraft for an entire month. Time is precious; with your help we can make every second count.

For more information on how to support your local air ambulance charity, please visit [www.nwaa.net](http://www.nwaa.net) or call 0800 587 4570.



## Airport Operations



### Our Airport Fire and Rescue Service

The emergency response at Blackpool Airport is provided by the Airports own Fire and Rescue Service. Currently staffed by 13 qualified fire officers and fire fighters. They provide an emergency response from 07:00 – 21:00 daily 365 days a year for the Blackpool Airports 33,000 aircraft movements per year.

Recently we were pleased to announce that, following a recent Fire Fighter recruitment drive, where we saw the recruitment of the Airports first female fire fighter, the level of fire cover provided daily has been increased from Fire Category 2 to Fire Category 3. This means that larger aircraft can again use the Airport.



Red Watch

dent Unit (Trailer) and in reserve 1 Major Foam Tender. The fleet of vehicles are always ready to respond immediately to any emergency incident.

All the fire officers and fire fighters attend the International



Blackpool Airport Fire & Rescue Service Training Exercise

the team to simulate aircraft incidents under controlled conditions, from small aircraft fires to larger major incidents.

In the event of a major incident the Airports Fire and Rescue Service is fully supported by the Local Authority Fire and Rescue Service (who also use our facilities for training exercises), North West Ambulance Service, Lancashire Constabulary and other external emergency services.

On a day-to-day basis the team also carry out various other functions such as fire safety inspections, testing of fire service equipment, wildlife and habitat management, airfield safety inspections, aircraft marshalling, fuelling support and security patrols.

### Fire Training for local businesses & organisations

Fire & Safety Training is a vital part of all businesses and the Airport Fire and Rescue Service has an in-house facility and provides training for staff and external companies for **Fire Awareness (inc Fire Extinguisher training), Fire Wardens, Manual Handling courses**. Our fully qualified instructors deliver these courses in our on-site training facility.

**If you would like further information about these courses for your business please contact us on 01253 343434 and quote NEWS2SAVE10 for 10% off (discount offer valid for courses booked by 31 March 2017)**

Daily duty crewing is covered by two watches, Red and Blue watch. Staffed by one Senior Airport Fire Officer, two Fire Officers and three Fire Fighters per watch, ready to respond instantly. This level of Fire cover is sufficient for the types of aircraft that currently operate daily at Blackpool Airport.

The fleet of fire vehicles based at Blackpool Airport consists of 1 Major Foam Tender, 1 Rapid Response vehicle, 1 utility vehicle, 1 Major Inci-



Blue Watch

Fire Training College at Teesside, for initial and promotional training and development courses every 4 years. Regular training continues on the fire station to maintain core skills and competencies.

This training takes place at the Airports fire ground situated on the south side of the Airport.

This state of the art training facility allows

Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service Training Exercise



## Take Care

### Please Don't Drone On

Did you or anyone you know get a drone for Christmas? Drone use is growing at a rapid rate, both commercially and for pleasure, and our skies are some of the busiest anywhere in the world, so it is VITAL that drone users in the UK learn how to fly their drones safely and legally, without endangering others.

The objective is not to stop drone users having fun; it's to help ensure that drone users have the information that will help ensure that while they're having fun, they're not posing a risk to any other aircraft or people. Please note that if you are considering using a drone for commercial purposes you must be licensed as a drone pilot by the CAA

### THE DRONE CODE - BE DRONE SAFE

When you fly a drone in the UK it is your responsibility to be aware of the rules that are in place to keep everyone safe.

Follow these simple steps to make sure you are flying safely and legally.

**1** Always keep your drone in sight

This means you can **see** and **avoid** other things while flying

**2** Stay below 400ft (120m) to comply with the **dronecode**

This reduces the likelihood of a **conflict** with manned aircraft

**3** Every time you fly your drone you must follow the manufacturer's instructions

Keep your drone, and the people around you, **safe**

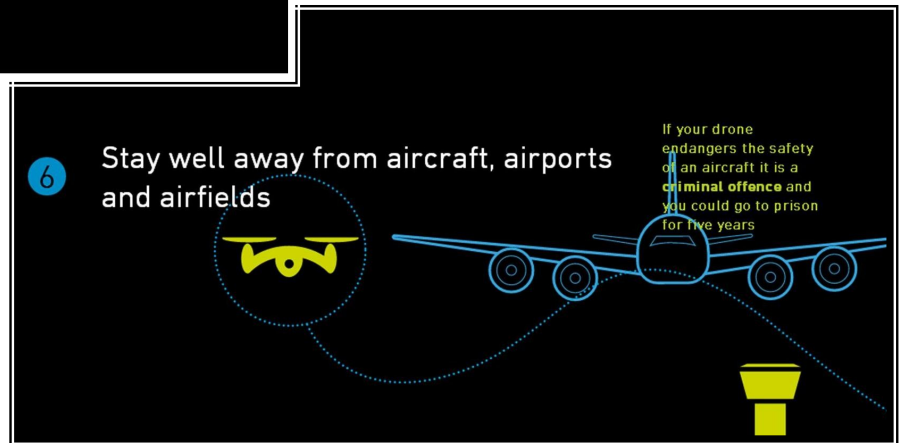
**4** Keep the right distance from people and property

People and properties  
- 150ft (50 metres)  
Crowds and built up areas  
- 500ft (150 metres)



## Take Care

### Please Don't Drone On



A great video on the basic drone regulations has been made by the First Person View drone association:  
[youtube.com/watch?v=A6uU1LTdl8M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6uU1LTdl8M)

Recently this activity has been highlighted in the press and on TV with pilots reporting increasing numbers of near misses involving drones flying very near their aircraft - not only is this a major distraction to the pilot but if the drone is ingested into the engine or caught in a helicopters rotors could cause a serious accident.

There has been a steep rise this year in reports of drones flying near passenger jets. The UK Airprox Board received reports of 56 such incidents up to October, compared with 29 in all of 2015 and six the year before.

One such incident involved a passenger jet that was taking off narrowly avoiding a collision with a drone, which came within 5 metres of the aircraft's wingtip. - The pilot spotted the large, black and yellow drone immediately after the Airbus A319 took off, but it was so close there was nothing he could do to avoid it, and it was agreed that "chance had played a major part" in avoiding a collision.

As recently as 23 January 2017 a Warwickshire man was arrested for flying his drone too close to a local airfield without permission in contravention of the Air Navigation Order 2016.

So far Blackpool has not experienced any of these incidents and Air Traffic Control are pleased to report that they have developed a good rapport with local users who do inform them if they are using drones in the area but it is vital to raise awareness in new users.

This is potentially so serious that the Government is considering putting in place new measures stating that anyone who buys a drone in the UK may have to register it and take a safety test to prevent potential collisions with passenger aircraft. Measures proposed by ministers also include criminal liability for anyone who flies a drone in "no-fly zones" surrounding airports and prisons, and an increase in fines (which currently cannot exceed £2,500).

**So please enjoy your drone safely, securely and respect the privacy of others**

## ZERO HARM



## 1000 Days!

And last but no means least - Safety at Blackpool Airport is paramount and we are very proud to report that on Sunday 22 January 2017 Blackpool Airport achieved 1000 days since the last RIDDOR ( 28 April 2014)

RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

Employers, the self-employed and those in control of premises are required by law to report specified workplace incidents, such as work-related deaths, major injuries, 7-day injuries (those causing more than seven day's inability to carry out normal duties), work related diseases, and dangerous occurrences (near miss accidents).

It is a legal requirement to report incidents and ill health at work and the information gathered enables the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and other agencies to gather the information about how and why risks arise and to investigate serious incidents.

It is a credit to everyone at Blackpool Airport who work so hard to make our environment a happy and safe place to work .



## TAKE CARE

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter