Expansion, consolidation hit Europe

BY CHARLES ALCOCK

recovering traffic levels are driving desire for both expansion and consolidation in the European market for business-aircraft handling services. But at the same time bureaucratic and market-access restrictions at many of the continent’s airports continue to hamper moves to open new FBOs or take control of existing facilities.

And yet despite these opportunity inhibitors, several business-aviation service groups are now actively preparing to build or extend their FBO networks in Europe. Several have indicated to AIN that they intend to complete fresh acquisitions, mergers and partnerships over the next 12 months. Others are much less convinced that the time is yet right for the cycle of restructuring and consolidation that many view as inevitable in the sector.

According to Terry Yeomans, UK representative for flight-planning group Air Routing International, there is a good prima facie case for expanding FBO networks in Europe, but figuring out how to achieve this effectively is by no means straightforward. “Major hubs in Europe are still busy with the ongoing multi-million-dollar redevelopment of the Farnborough site. Len Rayment, TAG’s director of FBO operations at Farnborough, noted that he does not expect to see major new FBO developments and acquisitions around Europe because ‘it is difficult to see how profitable expansion can take place.’”

As a major executive charter operator, TAG is also a significant consumer of handling services in Europe and, as an American with several years of experience in Europe, McMullin himself is well placed to comment on FBO standards. He told AIN that service standards at European bases have, for the most part, improved in recent years, while the infrastructure available to business-aviation users has continued to lag behind—even at some of Europe’s most modern airports such as Milan Malpensa.

Swissport is a classic case in point. Now owned by UK investment group Candover, the former handling division of the near-bankrupt flag carrier Swiss has established FBO alliances at Geneva through the PrivatPort joint venture with PrivatAir, London Heathrow (with Harrods Aviation) and Nice–Côte d’Azur Airport (with Universal Aviation)

With the exception of the PrivatPort facility in Geneva, the company’s business-aircraft handling activities are largely carried out under the Swissport Executive Aviation (SEA) brand name and extend beyond Europe to locations such as Dallas–Fort Worth. Now owned by BBA Group, as well as through independent affiliate FBOs, such as PrivatAir at Paris Le Bourget and the Harrods Aviation bases at London Luton and Stansted Airports. SEA is now actively looking to expand its network, according to

TAG Aviation’s business aviation gateway at Farnborough Airport has been fully open since May. The company is operating the London-area airport under a 99-year lease.
vice president Alan George, who has been hired from Harrods Aviation to lead this effort. He told AIN that the group will consider acquisitions and joint ventures, and might even establish new business-aviation facilities, especially at locations where it already has a strong presence in the scheduled airline handling market. The group’s sole proviso on any deal is that it will always be the majority shareholder in any new business.

Though airline handling and FBOs are generally viewed as being like chalk and cheese, Swissport’s strength in the scheduled carrier support is by no means irrelevant to the future growth of SEA. What the airline handlers may lack in terms of the finesse of the corporate aviation world, they make up for with muscle in being able to command key infrastructure at Europe’s closely controlled airports. For example, airstairs can be more readily borrowed for larger aircraft arrivals and hangar space found at difficult times through an airline’s maintenance operation, such as Swissport’s former Swiss sibing, SR Technics. This is what PrivatAir saw in Swissport, according to Dave Kin-son, its CEO for Europe. “There are difficult handling license issues with airport-handling companies that could have been a problem,” he explained. “We want to be able to offer a network of executive handling” without necessarily having to build new facilities, since this can be very expensive and hard to do. It’s a strong branded presence that we are looking to achieve.”

Nonetheless, Kinson stressed the importance of painstakingly retraining staff from the airline-handling world to avoid what he dubbed “the white overall syndrome” in which aeronautical business, aircraft, their operators and passengers are not accorded sufficient respect and attention.

Swissport has appointed key staff to its SEA operations, such as 31-year Geneva veteran Gerard Sol-ler, who is now the PrivatPort station manager. He presides over the operation from the new Terminal C3, which PrivatAir and the airport built last year. The relationship with Swissport also provides PrivatAir and its other partners with access to supplementary staff to cope with peaks in demand. Soled indicated that SEA’s expansion plans are likely to take in airports like Zurich, where the group already has a strong presence. Kinson said PrivatAir’s targets for prospective new FBOs largely focus on major cities that are popular with the Geneva-based group’s executive charter customers.

Paris Le Bourget is just such a location, and in the almost three years since it acquired the former FBO PrivatAir has made a major investment in upgrading this facility. The largest of three hangars at the site has been refurbished, as have the lounge and office areas, and the pilots’ work and rest areas have been improved and enlarged.

According to manager Richard Webb, a lot of time has been taken to train and develop staff to fully grasp the degree of commitment and flexibility required in the corporate handling business. “Our staff need to develop an instinctive feel for when customers are not happy and to be able to admit mistakes and put them right promptly, rather than trying to bury problems,” he said. “With the right experience, even the unpredictability of this business can be predicted and planned for.”

### What’s Keeping Europe’s FBO Managers Awake At Night?

“Get the bureaucrats and airports off our backs” is the prayer that most FBO managers seem to be uttering as they try to get some hard-earned rest. For this European FBO Special Report, AIN queried some 200 companies about current market conditions and got full responses from about 55 of them and partial responses from about 25 more. When asked about the greatest difficulties they face and the changes they would like to see, the majority highlighted excessive bureaucracy; lack of understanding on the part of airports and government agencies; restrictive trading conditions; and inability to improve airport infrastructure or procedures.

Just about the only FBO to enjoy anything resembling full control of its own destiny is TAG Aviation’s new Farnborough facility in the UK, where it operates the private airport under a 99-year lease from the government. But the company had to battle away for close to four years before it got this deal, and even then had to accept an annual limit of 28,000 movements.

En route and airport slots continue to present obstacles to smooth and flexible business-aviation operations in Europe. Many FBOs said they are essentially powerless to improve the situation and wished their customers could be more understanding of the limitations under which they operate.

One concern that has not explicitly surfaced in previous special reports on the same subject was greater price sensitivity on the part of aircraft operators—especially charter firms, where profit mar-gins have been squeezed over the last couple of years. “We are seeing increasing attempts by operators to save small amounts by paying only for a few of the available services, which must be considered available [at the FBO’s expense] in cases,” commented Jet Aviation Geneva deputy manager Ian McArdle.

Aside from labor costs, the most serious rising expense for FBOs is security. More than two years after 9/11, costly new requirements—such as X-ray machines, closed circuit television and security personnel—are filtering through from the airline arena. The problem for FBOs is that these requirements are often not being clearly communicated by the authorities and are certainly threatening the cherished flexibility of business aviation.

“Getting a clearer direction from government as to what is actually required,” said PrivatAir Le Bourget general manager Richard Webb. “Almost all business aviation enclaves at airports are unique and have not evolved with security in mind.”

The London-area Harrods Aviation FBO chain appealed for con-sistency in the security regulations applied to business aircraft operations. “In its view, there also needs to be greater uniformity in customs and immigration procedures worldwide.”

The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) has been trying to help its members make sense of the new security environment and in early September held a workshop on the issue in Berlin. Jet Aviation Zurich manager Robert Whitehead, who at- tended the event, reflected that FBOs need to be seen to be proac-tive on the security front. “We need to convince governments that we are doing enough or we could have even more requirements forced on us,” he warned.
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George also predicted that Europe’s major airports will become more interested in business-aviation traffic as the average size of aircraft increases—and especially those arriving from North America. In his view, this could prove problematic for FBOs that have purposefully set up shop at secondary airports in the belief that their clients cannot gain access to the main hubs due to congested airline activity.

Another large-scale player that has steadily raised its presence in Europe over recent years is ExecuJet Aviation. The South Africa-based group is also active in the Middle East through its Dubai subsidiary in the United Arab Emirates, as well as in Australia.

In May ExecuJet opened a new FBO at Copenhagen’s Roskilde Airport and in August it acquired the former Zimex FBO at Zurich. According to group managing director Niall Oliver, its expansion into handling is part of a conscious strategy to develop ExecuJet as a comprehensive business-aviation service provider that also encompasses aircraft sales, executive charter and maintenance. ExecuJet has close ties to Bombardier as a sales representative in Africa, the Middle East and Australasia.

The well appointed Zurich facility (built courtesy of Signature) has been completely rebranded under the ExecuJet name. ExecuJet Switzerland managing director Mike van Berkelse reflected that many FBOs around Europe are in need of serious refurbishment, but questioned whether current economic conditions would allow such investment to be recouped over an acceptable timeframe. He suggested that some of the continent’s newest business aviation facilities might prove to be white elephants for the companies that have built them.

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Room for Improvement: The Flight Planner’s Perspective

In search of a semi-detached overview of the European FBO business, AIN interviewed Terry Yeomans, UK representative for flight-planning group Air Routing International:

How do you rate service standards at European FBOs? Isn’t it true that there are big variations in the quality of service across the continent?

Levels of service in Europe are pretty hard to gauge since there are so many FBOs from airport to country to continent. It would also be unfair to compare the service provided at a major hub with that of a minor municipal airport. The truth is that no one goes out of their way to provide an inferior service, but it might just happen that way due to a number of factors (political and logistical) beyond the control of the handler.

The trick is working with the FBO/handler to make the best of what you can get. Changes are you won’t get the multimillion-dollar facilities often seen in the U.S. But what you will get is enthusiastic staff trying to do their utmost to please.

With the EC (European Commission) competition rules allowing additional handling companies access to airport service provision, there is always the potential for a dilution of quality, but I have not seen any cases in the corporate/business aircraft field thus far. It will be interesting to see what effect the 10 new European Union members might bring to the fore next year.

In terms of significant variations in standards, those FBOs at major hubs should be most able to provide consistent levels of service, but with larger staffing levels it’s harder to build up person-to-person relationships. Here, the outcome is generally satisfactory, but not outstanding, service. We tend to find the best feedback is from the smaller-airfield FBOs where the personal touch is more prevalent.

What changes and improvements would you like to see at European FBOs?

That step from satisfactory to outstanding service should be every-one’s goal. FBOs should not rely solely on annual survey time to gauge their performance. The question is how much actually contact the clients or flight-service providers to ask for feedback when there aren’t votes to be counted? Listen to what the clients are telling you and act promptly when and where you can to resolve issues.
sked to outline the main difficulties facing them today, many European FBO managers cited the obstacles they must overcome to improve or expand their facilities. The fact is that most European airports are unwilling or unable to give FBOs free range to develop infrastructure as they see fit.

One of the more critical restrictions and difficult market conditions, the past couple of years have seen some important developments at the continent’s FBOs. The highest-profile new facilities can be found in the UK, Geneva, Stuttgart and Copenhagen.

At Farnborough Airport—35 miles southwest of London—TAG Aviation’s purpose-built business aviation center has been fully open since May. It consists of three hangars and adjoining offices (covering 120,000 sq ft), as well as a new control tower—all located on the north-west side of the airport, which TAG controls under a 99-year lease from Britain’s Ministry of Defence.

Demand for space in the new facility has been so strong that TAG is now preparing to commit to the second phase of this major development, which will see another set of hangars, an executive terminal and 40,000 more square feet of office space completed by spring 2005. Meanwhile, the company is having the temporary terminal building that it occupied since 1997 moved next to the new hangars to serve as an operations base until the new hangars are ready.

The Farnborough site now offers 18 acres of ramp space and TAG is understood to have spent in excess of $100 million to transform the airport into a dedicated business aviation gateway. At press time TAG was about to complete the acquisition of the Farnborough Aviation Services maintenance facility, which it intends to develop as a service center for one or more leading business aircraft manufacturers.

At Leeds-Bradford International Airport in northern England, Multiflight has just opened its new Business Executive Aviation Centre at a cost of some £13 million. The development includes a new taxiway and more than 67,000 sq ft of additional hangar space, taking its total covered parking area to around 104,000 sq ft. There is room to accommodate up to four Boeing BBJs, at Luton and turned it into its first factory-owned service center in Europe.

The next task for Signature at Luton is to modernize its lounges and flight-planning rooms. The scope and timetable for this work has yet to be determined. Signature claims to operate the London area’s only 24-hour FBO in the sense that it is physically staffed around the clock rather than operated at nights on an as-needed basis.

Meanwhile, Signature’s Southampton base has added a crew rest area and has provided Internet connections. However, in August, Signature’s maintenance division at the south coast of England airport. Also at Luton, Harrods Aviation (formerly Metro Business Aviation) now has a new facility, which it opened this year to contend with continued traffic growth. The new building is largely dedicated for passenger use, offering a spacious lounge with meeting rooms and a VIP suite. The company’s original premises at Luton, which are right next to the new building, are now used by pilots and the company’s operations department.

On the south side of the British capital, Jet Aviation is now offering handling from its new facility at Biggin Hill Airport. Its building, which opened in April last year, offers direct access to the company’s dedicated ramp, as well as on-site customs and immigration facilities. There are passenger and crew lounges, a flight-planning suite, a kitchen and a pilot snooze room.

Meanwhile, Biggin Hill’s owner, Regional Airports Ltd (RAL), is set to build a new 80,000-sqft hangar adjacent to the main terminal and also has further plans to add four more hangars next to the facilities of growing executive charter firm Gold Air International. RAL also now offers business-aircraft handling at the Northolt Royal Air Force base in west London.

Just a year ago, London City Airport opened its own Jet Centre, with separate entrance and security facilities for business aircraft operators
Despite some depressed weeks at the height of the Iraq War, volumes of business-aircraft traffic have generally been rising at Europe’s airports over the last year or so. FBOs surveyed by AIN reported traffic levels for the past 12 months as being up by an average of 11.7 percent from the previous 12 months. However, behind this seemingly encouraging statistic are some important riders. First, the average was significantly bolstered by a small group of FBOs that enjoyed phenomenal growth (as high as 98 percent) either because they had only recently opened or due to other exceptional circumstances. Second, the 12-month period against which the last 12 months have been measured encompassed the period immediately following 9/11 when flying activity was suppressed. Third, in some cases, fairly marked growth was almost inevitable.

On average, the FBOs that supplied figures are handling around 320 aircraft (as opposed to movements) per month. And again, behind this average there are enormous fluctuations, with some bases dealing with no more than a few aircraft each month, while others receive between 1,000 and 2,000 aircraft during busy months.

The AIN survey also sought to gauge variations in handling prices around Europe. This was far from being a straightforward task due to the different fees systems are set. In some cases, the survey requested a price to provide handling for a Dassault Falcon 2000 (mtow 35,800 pounds) carrying four passengers and associated landing and passengers fees levied on behalf of airports. Nonetheless, some nimble number-crunching revealed a ballpark average of €693.63 (converted from local currencies at mid-Sep
tember exchange rates). The price quotes ranged from €532 to €1,103—apparrently reflecting vast differences in cost structures around Europe.

Frankfurt (EDDF)
General Aviation Terminal
Tel 49 69 690 73660; r.payne@fraport.de

Frasers started life out in the far east of Russia with a mission to assure visiting Western business aircraft operators a reasonable level of ground support at what were then very much Soviet-era airports. Subsequently, it has successfully taken this formula to some 60 airports throughout Russia, the Common-wealth of Independent States and eastern Europe, and now coordi-
ates all activities from a new operations center in Prague. Now, after more than a decade spreading western services standards in the former communist states, Frasers is setting up shop back in the West. By month-end it will have established operations at Ger-
many’s three Berlin airports—Tegel, Schoenefeld and Tempelhof—as well as at Frankfurt Airport. Next month it is set to start operations at Munich Airport.

Feras, which is a partner in Uni-
versal Weather & Aviation’s UV-
global Network, has built its business at locations where the han-
dling infrastructure is limited or even virtually nonexistent. As company founder Chris Cartwright put it, “What airports lacks in services and facilities, we make up for with excel-
 lent service personnel who can navi-
gate difficult service environments.” In most locations, the English-
speaking Feras teams are essentially supervising third parties who physi-

cally perform the handling tasks, but without their interventions it is far from certain that the job would get done to the standards of corpo-
rate operators. They also play a vital role in navigating the bureauc-
cracy of overtight and landing per-
mits, as well as crew visas and security arrangements.

To get to Cartwright, direct ramp access continues to be an ob-
stacle at many of the locations where Feras works. He would also like to see a more pragmatic approach taken by customs and immigration officials, but hinted that progress on this front has been knocked back by post-9/11 security concerns.

Nonetheless, when asked what changes he has seen in his territory since the introduction-to-varying degrees—of market economics, Cartwright said that while most of the infrastructure has not changed markedly, procedures at airports have generally become somewhat more user-friendly. In some cases, airports in eastern Europe and the CIS have become more attuned to business-aircraft needs, as exemplified by the move to convert Prague Airport’s former passenger terminal into a more efficient executive facility.

Feras uses its own proprietary software to allow all its stations to monitor operations in real time, so as to be ready to meet customer needs. Even so, explained Cartwright, short-notice changes to itin-
eraries or handling requests can still create much bigger headaches for its staff in this part of the world than they would in the West. “Operators still don’t fully appreciate the lack of flexibility this part of the world,” he conclud-

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Cologne-Bonn (EDDK)
Airport Handling Services
Tel 49 223 40 43 45; fax 49 223 40 27 83
athanasios.f.itanos@koeln-bonn-airport.de

Dusseldorf (EDDL)
Jett Aviation
Tel 49 211 454 970; fax 49 211 454 3423
jdu@jetaviation.com; Contact: Theo Rutter

Frankfurt (EDDF)
General Aviation Terminal
Tel 49 69 690 73660; r.payne@fraport.de

Feras Germany
Tel 49 69 695 90925 or 72568; fax 49 69 380 99500
frankfurtops@feras-cis.com; Contact: Sven Sroka

Heraklion (EGFS)
Euro Aviation
Tel 30 10 35 36 119; fax 30 10 35 37 809
info@aero-dienst.de

Helsinki (EFHK)
Finnair
Tel 358 960 73000; ops-service@finnair.com

Hannover (EDDH)
Aviation Handling Services
Tel 49 511 977 2588; fax 49 511 733 661

Munich (EDDM)
General Aviation Terminal
Tel 49 89 975 214 96; generalaviation@munich-airport.de

Nuremberg (EDDN)
Aero-Dienst
Tel 30 10 35 36 119; fax 30 10 35 37 809
info@aero-dienst.de

Stuttgart (EDDS)
Kurz Aviation Service
Tel 49 711 948 3482; fax 49 711 948 3481
operation@kurz-aviation-service.com; Contact: Barbara Kick

ATHENS

Europa Aviation Services
Tel 30 210 353 717; fax 30 210 3532 407
aas@compunix.gr or athenasv@aethensairport.gr

Contact: Jitte Boulens
(The company also serves 22 other Greek airports, with all requests coordinated through the Athens base.)

Euro Aviation
Tel 30 210 353 4315; fax 30 210 3532 624
euroaerop@euroairport.gr; Contact: Yannis Arkioulis

Interplan
Tel 30 10 35 36 119; fax 30 10 35 37 809
info@interplan.gr

HUNGARY

Budapest (LHBP)
General Aviation Terminal
Tel 36 1 296 6292; fax 36 1 296 8449; gat@bud-airport.hu

Feras—see Czech Republic listing

ICELAND

Reykjavik (BIKF)
Flight Services
Tel 33 552 1611; fax 33 552 9221
fletter@falcon.is; Contact: Sveinri Bjornsson

Keflavik (BIKF)
South Air
Tel 354 421 2020; fax 354 425 0521; ops@southair.is

IRELAND

Dublin (EIDW)
FBO Dublin
Tel 353 1 844 4455; fax 353 1 844 4488; ops@fbdublin.com

Shannon (EINN)
FBO Shannon
Tel 353 61 475 444; fax 353 61 475 222; ops@fbo.ie

Ocean Bridge Handling
Tel 353 61 712 059; fax 353 61 712060
Ireland@uvglobalnetwork.com

TAG Aviation’s Farnborough Airport facility can handle any size business aircraft, includ-
ing this Boeing Business Jet.

Traffic Climbing, Prices Largely Stable

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from its base at Universal’s London Stansted Airport location, the EOC can now conveniently coordinate complete trip-support requests for Europe-based operators traveling within Europe. The move was in response to the demands of the Euro-
pean customers, who no longer need to contact the group’s mission con-
trol center in Houston.

Another new initiative from the flight-planning group is a joint ven-
ture with the UK-based Menzies Aviation Group called Ocean Bridge Handle at Ireland’s Shan-
on Airport. The full-service facil-
it, which opened in July in the general aviation wing of Shannon’s main terminal, is part of Universal’s UV’Global Network of FBOs and handling supervisors.

West Meets East Meets West
Specialist handling supervisor
set away from the main terminal at the southwest end of the airport. The two-story building features passenger lounges, a flight-planning suite, showers, a kitchen, offices and customs/immigration facilities. LCY intends to double the size of this facility.

The airport has also invested in a new 92,000-sq-ft apron that can accommodate about 20 aircraft. There are plans to triple this parking space with additional ramps to the north and south of the Jet Centre. This work is provisionally slated to start next spring, but a go-ahead will depend on further traffic growth. The FBO has eight full-time staff. LCY has also just opened a new holding area at the east end of the runway. In the absence of a parallel taxiway, this will allow up to four aircraft to be “backtracked” down the runway between movements and should be complete by year-end.

Also new since the last AIN European FBO special report in May 2001 is Geneva Airport’s Terminal C3, built jointly by the airport authority and the PrivatAir executive charter group. In May PrivatAir established a handling operation in the new facility through its newly acquired PrivatPort joint venture with handling group Swissport—the former division of flag carrier Swiss that is now owned by the UK-based Cardover Group. PrivatAir has sublet space in the new building to rival FBOs TAG Aviation and Jet Aviation.

On the other side of the field, Transarco (part of the Pilatus group) offers an alternative business aircraft handling operation in the airport’s old general aviation terminal. It is now establishing a fully operational flight dispatch department to interface directly with the Geneva controllers and weather service. This should be ready by next summer. Transarco has also introduced its own direct link to Eurocontrol’s central flow management unit for en route slot allocation, as well as complimentary shuttle services to local hotels.

This year has seen the opening of the first all-new FBO in Germany since the opening of the new Munich Airport back in the early 1990s, and the first ever in the country to be built by a private company. At Stuttgart Airport, Kurz Aviation Services has built a new general aviation terminal with a pair of adjoining hangars with space for 42 aircraft up to the size of a Gulfstream 550.

The impressive new building features a VIP suite and two semi-circular conference rooms with a panoramic view of the ramp. There are also crew rooms and a well appointed briefing center staffed from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. by specialists from both the German weather services and the German air travel safety organization. Outside these hours pilots can still use the facility themselves.

The FBO offers handling, catering, aircraft cleaning and passenger and crew support. It can provide security for aircraft and personnel through its subsidiary Heidenheim Security and Guard Service, and also has its own car-rental firm on site.

Through a joint venture between Copenhagen Airport and ExecuJet Scandinavia, Denmark’s first dedicated FBO opened its doors in February at Copenhagen Roskilde Airport. The new building is extremely pilot-friendly, with rest areas, a gym and flight-planning facilities.

Roskilde now promotes itself as a 24-hour alternative business aviation gateway to the crowded Scandanavian hub at Copenhagen Kastrup. Although Kastrup is slightly closer to the heart of the Danish capital, the total transit time from Roskilde can actually be quicker, according to ExecuJet Scandinavia managing director Henrik Burkhal, because of its more straightforward handling process.

Last month Dassault Falcon Service (DFS) embarked on a major, three-phase redevelopment program at its Paris Le Bourget facility. The main part of its $8 million investment is a new three-floor building, dubbed H7, that will provide 38,880 sq ft of space for offices, a café and a restaurant. This should be complete by the end of next year, and it will also feature an underground parking lot.

Also by that time, DFS will be converting its existing parking lot into an apron area for aircraft, with further space to be provided on the site of the current flight-operations building, which is to be demolished once the new building is open. This expansion will create room for an additional six midsize business jets. Total ramp capacity in the area immediately outside the DFS hangars then will be for 15 aircraft. The final stage of the restructuring will see the DFS executive charter operation relocated into the existing H1 building.

On the Italian island of Sardinia, Olbia Airport’s Eccelsa Aviation FBO now offers a wholly refurbished executive terminal. The facility handles most of its traffic in the summer vacation season, when the world’s rich and famous descend on the nearby Costa Smeralda resort area (see AIN, September 2003, page 108). Eccelsa now offers a 17,200-sq ft terminal with five passenger lounges, a VIP lounge, operations desk, crew rest and work rooms, showers, a shop selling local products, a complimentary buffet, real-time satellite newspaper service and aircraft and yacht charter offices. Next year the company intends to add further shopping facilities, a new fueling area, and a new flight-planning room and wireless Internet connections.

Amsterdam Schiphol Airport has promised to build a new general aviation terminal with five passenger lounges, a VIP lounge, operations desk, crew rest and work rooms, showers, a shop selling local products, a complimentary buffet, real-time satellite newspaper service and aircraft and yacht charter offices. Next year the company intends to add further shopping facilities, a new fueling area, and a new flight-planning room and wireless Internet connections.

Upgrade

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ITALY

Bologna (LIPB)
ALOA
Tel 39 051 647 2131; fax 39 051 647 2234; ops@aloa.it

Florence (LIRF)
Delta Aerotaxi
Tel 39 055 200 450; fax 39 055 301 092
handling@delta-aerotaxi.it

Milan Malpensa (LIMC)
G.S. Aviation
Tel 39 02 5858 3666; fax 39 02 5858 3344
handling@gasvation.it

Milan Linate (LIML)
Universal Aviation
Tel 39 02 7020 0424; fax 39 02 7020 0406
linops@univ-Wea.com; Contact: Lorenza Carrario

Naples (LIRN)
Gesac Handling
Tel 39 081 789 6659; fax 39 081 789 6226; handling@gesac.it

Olbia (LIO)
Eccelsa Aviation
Tel 39 0789 563 480; fax 39 0789 563 481
handling@eccelsa.com; Contact: Francesco Cosso

Rome Fiumicino (LIRF)
Air Consult
Tel 39 06 541 3724; fax 39 06 541 0608
air@airconsult.it
(Art Consult supervises executive aircraft handling in Rome and at all other major Italian airports.)

Rome Ciampino (LIRF)
Aeroporti di Roma
Tel 39 06 6955 9511; fax 39 06 6955 9400
mercanti.i@adri.it; Contact: Ivana Mercanti

ALOA—see Bologna listing

Turin (LIMF)
Sagat General Aviation
Tel 39 011 567 6456; sagat.handling@sagat.trn.it

Venice (LIPZ)
Avia Partner
Tel 39 041 541 6853 pier.luigi@aviapartner.aero

Eagle Services
Tel 39 041 260 3579; ops@eagleservices.veniceairport.it

Save General Aviation
Tel 39 041 260 6900; fax 39 041 260 6909
vaviation@veniceairport.it; Contact: Giovanni Barbitta

MALTAL

Valetta (LMLM)
Sierra Aviation
Tel 356 79 492433; fax 356 21 37 5958
Stanley@sierra-aviation.com; Contact: Stanley Bugeja

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam (EHAM)
KLM General Aviation
Tel 31 20 649 2455; fax 31 20 648 8180; operations@klmg.nl

Amsterdam Jet Center
Tel 31 20 405 3535; fax 31 20 405 3534
bo@amsterdamjetcenter.com; Contact: Simon Lobrij

Eindhoven (EHBE)
Eindhoven Handling
Tel 31 40 251 61 42; generalaviation@eindhoven.nl

Rotterdam (EHDR)
Rotterdam Jet Center
Tel 31 10 298 4949; fax 31 10 298 4948
bo@roterdamjetcenter.com

LELYSTAD (EHLE)
Lelystad Airport
Tel 31 320 284791; info@lelystad-airport.nl

POLAND

Warsaw (EPWA)
Feras Polska
Tel 48 22 650 3394; fax 48 22 650 3395
polandops@feras-cis.com; Contact: Borys Slawomirski

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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sweden</strong></td>
<td>Stockholm Arlands (ESSA)</td>
<td>Novia</td>
<td>Tel 46 8 797 80 34; fax 46 8 593 611 31; <a href="mailto:claust.poulsen@novia-handling.com">claust.poulsen@novia-handling.com</a></td>
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<td>Bromma Handling</td>
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<td>VIP Service</td>
<td>Tel 46 8 797 6210; <a href="mailto:vip.service@lx.se">vip.service@lx.se</a></td>
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eral aviation terminal to replace the old building on the east side of the site. The modest 7,850-sq-ft facility was to have been ready during the first half of next year, but in September the Dutch airport’s management announced that the project is being delayed to 2005 due to financial constraints.

Amsterdam’s two existing FBOs–KLM General Aviation and the newly formed Amsterdam Jet Center (AIC), which opened for business at Schiphol in April–will share the new building. AIC has already signed an option to occupy up to 3,200 sq ft in the new terminal. Schiphol’s management is building the new executive terminal despite the fact that it would prefer to minimize the amount of business aviation traffic at the busy hub. According to AIC managing director Aad Ruigrok, European Union rules on airport access have prevented the airport from imposing a complete ban on business aviation, but it has continued to restrict the availability of slots to nonscheduled operators. The airport has said that it intends to virtually eliminate business aircraft movements between 10:25 p.m. and 7 a.m. as part of its bid to appease political pressure to reduce night-time noise.

AIC is owned by the established Rotterdam Jet Center (RJC), which is the sole FBO at Rotterdam Airport–40 miles to the southeast. Ruigrok told AIN that RJC has seen a 20-percent increase in traffic over recent months, with increasing numbers of larger corporate aircraft flying in from North America and Asia.

Also in the Netherlands, Eindhoven Airport is remodeling its general aviation area, with the addition of a new operations department and a lounge for both passengers and crew. The move is a victory for business aviation, which has previously faced the prospect of eviction due to tough environmental proposals. According to Spanish executive handling group United Aviation Services, Madrid Barajas Airport is to open a new executive terminal in 2005, which will coincide with the opening of its fourth runway. Capacity constraints at the main gateway have driven business-aircraft operators to use the city’s military-controlled Torrejon Airport as an alternative, but this will cease to be an option once the redevelopment of Barajas is complete.

Other recent or planned investments by Europe’s FBOs include:

- Hamburg, Germany–Acciona Airport Services, which provides business aircraft handling at all three Berlin airports, is planning to open a new base at Hamburg’s Pudilshuettel Airport in January. No further details of the development are currently available.
- Florence, Italy–Delta Aerotaxi opened a new facility in September. It includes a lounge, a crew room with satellite television, a flight-planning suite and offices. The airport itself has recently opened a new ATC tower and has also commissioned its long-awaited ILS approach.
- Larnaca, Cyprus–Skylink Services has added two new Mercedes V-Class executive minivans for passenger and crew transport and a Mercedes S500 for carrying VIPs.
- Athens, Greece–According to Athens Aviation Services, negotiations are under way to build a separate general aviation terminal at the Greek capital’s new international airport. Currently, business-aviation operations are handled through part of the main passenger terminal. The Greek handling group has recently upgraded its own operations suite.
- Dublin, Ireland–The airport now offers a dedicated fuel service for business aircraft operators to alleviate problems with refueling during peak periods. Meanwhile, the Execair group’s Dublin facility has bought a Lektor tug to facilitate pushback and interstand towing for aircraft up to the size of the Bombardier Global Express.
- Birmingham, UK–Execair has installed its own refueling facilities and has bought a new Lektor tug. The FBO group is now planning a full refurbishment of its Edinburg facility. At its Glasgow base, Execair has doubled the size of its lounge to create a “quiet area” for passengers and crew. This month it expects to open a dedicated pilot briefing room and a meeting room.
- London, UK–Harrods Aviation at Stansted Airport has just opened a dedicated airside departure lounge that can accommodate up to 50 security-cleared passengers. It also now has mobile baggage and cargo screening units to facilitate new security procedures.
- Berlin, Germany–Acciona Airport Services has created a dedicated rest area and now has Internet connections for use by flight crew at its Tegel Airport facility.
- Venice, Italy–A new crew lounge has been opened this year by the airport’s general aviation department. Dedicated fuel supplies are to be made available to business aircraft operators by year-end.
- Istanbul, Turkey–Gozen Air Services has opened an office at Istanbul’s new Sabiha Golenk Airport, which is on the Asian side of the Bosphorus River.
- Gloucestershire, UK–The terminal building has been extended to accommodate a growing number of executive operations, with new offices, a lounge and reception area. The existing hangar is being extended and another new hangar will be built by next May, with further plans for two more hangars (with a total area of 25,000 sq ft) to be in place just a few months later. The runway is being resurfaced to handle larger business jets.
- Valetta, Malta–According to local FBO Sierra Aviation, there are plans to build a dedicated executive terminal building at the island’s Luqa International Airport. This facility could be open by the end of next year.