

Gulf Air signs MoU with Etihad Airways

Joint codeshare operations as preferred partners between and beyond hubs

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Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom, and Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, are set to explore deeper cooperation following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the Bahrain International Airshow.

The wide-ranging MoU covers scope to introduce joint codeshare operations between Abu Dhabi and Manama, as well as on the global flight networks beyond the two carriers' GCC hubs.

The MoU also contains plans for greater commercial cooperation in the fields of cargo, engineering, guest experience and the optimisation of pilot training facilities.

The MoU was signed on the first day of the Bahrain International Airshow, currently taking place at the Sakhir Airbase, by Tony Douglas, Group Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Aviation Group, and Krešimir Kučko, Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Air.

Mr Kučko said: "The relationship between Bahrain and UAE is strong in many fields including aviation and today with the signing of this MoU we enrich the



Mr Kučko, Mr Douglas signed the MoU on the first day of air show yesterday.

relationship by cooperating with Etihad Airways. This is an example of how two airlines can work hand in hand for greater mutual benefits. We are happy to work with our friends and colleagues in Etihad and support each other to achieve bigger goals."

Mr Douglas said: "The deep ties between Abu Dhabi and Manama are well-known in the avi-

ation world and date back nearly 70 years. Therefore the natural way to build upon those ties is to examine ways in which the two flag carriers – Etihad and Gulf Air – can work more closely together to improve business operations and enhance the experience for our guests.

"We look forward to the Etihad and Gulf Air teams coming

together during the next few months to look at how we can put that in place, whether it is in codeshare, engineering, cargo, or through our frequent flyer programmes."

In addition to exploring codeshare operations, the teams at Etihad Guest and Gulf Air Falconflyer loyalty programmes will shortly begin discussions

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MR KUČKO

which would see members of each programme being offered reciprocal earn and burn opportunities.

The teams in both carriers' engineering and cargo divisions are also set to begin talks about greater cooperation. These discussions would look at optimising MRO (maintenance repair operations) opportunities, as well as ways to increase volumes of freighter traffic flowing into and out of Abu Dhabi and Bahrain.

Gulf Air currently operates four return daily flights between Bahrain and Abu Dhabi while Etihad currently operates three return daily A320 operations between Abu Dhabi and Bahrain.

Airbus among participants at air show

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Airbus is among the prominent participants at the Bahrain International Airshow 2018, which kicked off yesterday at the Sakhir Airbase.

The European aviation giant is presenting its market-leading products and innovative technologies and will be delivering Airbus Foundation's renowned youth development programme, Airbus Little Engineer.

Gulf Air had become the first national airline in the region to receive and operate Airbus' leading single aisle aircraft, the A320neo. The aircraft is being displayed on Gulf Air's static display at the show.

The A320neo family incorporates the very latest technologies including new generation engines and Sharklets, which together deliver at least 15 percent fuel savings at delivery and 20 per cent by 2020, the company said in a press release.

"With more than 6,100 orders received from over 100 customers since its launch in 2010, the A320neo Family has captured some 60pc share of the market."

Hospitality, healthcare agreements signed

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Key contracts aimed at elevating hospitality and healthcare services at Bahrain International Airport (BIA) were awarded on the first day of this year's Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS), the airport's operator and managing body, Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) said.

Hala Bahrain, the premium hospitality and passenger services provider at BIA, awarded a catering contract for all four of its lounges to Bahrain Airport Services (BAS), ensuring guests enjoy a wider variety of dining options.

BAC Chief Executive Officer and Hala Bahrain Chairman Mohamed Yousif Al Binfalal and BAS Chief Executive Officer, Salman Al Mahmeed signed the one-year agreement in the presence of representatives from both companies.

The BAC also awarded a contract for the operation of the new Passenger Terminal Building's airport clinic to Bahrain Specialist Hospital.

BAC in deal with Gulf Engineering House

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The Civil Aviation Affairs (CAA) building, which once served as the Kingdom's main airport, will be transformed into a private aviation terminal to cater to VIPs and business leaders, the Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) announced.

The new, state-of-the-art facility is expected to be completed by 2020 and will offer various services to meet the needs of private jet owners and users travelling through BIA.

The agreement, which is to design and renovate the 4,000 sqm CAA building, was signed by BAC Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Yousif Al Binfalal and Gulf Engineering House General Manager, Nawal Abdulkarim, in the presence of Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Gulf Air Group Holding Chairman, Kamal Ahmed and officials from both companies.

The signing ceremony took place on the first day of the Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS) 2018.

Leonardo to strengthen ties with Kingdom

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Leonardo is taking part in the Bahrain International Airshow, which began yesterday at the Sakhir Air Base.

Chalet A24 hosts Leonardo's offer in air defence, avionics and communications, the company said in a press release.

Leonardo's surveillance radars, ships, upgraded systems and air defence technologies already set to guarantee Bahrain security, it added.

"Leonardo has a long track record of significant achievement in Bahrain. Key projects including the supply of two

primary surveillance radars and three Mode-S secondary surveillance radars for Bahrain's Civil Aviation organisation and Royal Bahraini Air Force, enhancing the safety and efficiency of national airspace management.

"In 2015, Leonardo was awarded a contract to upgrade the six Royal Bahrain Naval Force ships, and the first one, called Al Manama, was delivered in December 2017 – two months ahead of schedule – proving the strong commitment of Leonardo in supporting the Royal Bahrain Naval Force as well as all the Bahrain Defence Forces."

MENA Aerospace inks deal with ARMI

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MENA Aerospace, the GCC-owned entity based at Bahrain International Airport (BIA), and a provider of comprehensive quality niche aviation and aerospace services, is set to grow its already significant offerings in the GCC through a partnership with US-based aviation support solutions provider Aircraft Recovery Modification International (ARMI).

The strategic collaboration agreement was officially signed on the sidelines of Bahrain In-

ternational Airshow (BIAS) 2018, the Middle East's fastest growing airshow.

The partnership fits within MENA Aerospace's strategy of promoting safe and quality repair, modification, parking and hangarage, executive jet management and charter facilities in the region through agreements with global partners who are specialists in their fields.

Managing Director and Founder of MENA Aerospace Dr Mohammed Juman commented: "It is about offering a balanced platform



Dr Juman with Mr Gillette at the air show.

solution at its facilities in Bahrain. Our geographical location, access to high quality engineering staff, and the support of progressive government initiatives combine to offer the Bahraini and GCC aerospace community a real choice when it comes to a wide range of avionic and airframe modification programmes."

ARMI Managing Partner Morgan Gillette added: "At ARMI we always believe in quality work at a fair price. ARMI has built a strong reputation for providing a wide range of quality repair and

modification options throughout the USA, winning contracts with major maintenance companies and providing teams to accomplish major structural and avionics contracts. ARMI maintains a highly professional, mobile workforce that can readily adapt to all environments delivering quality, on time, every time. And it's not only heavy structures we specialise in; ARMI also delivers a myriad of avionics, airborne Wi-Fi and inflight entertainment system upgrades across a wide range of fixed and rotary wing aircraft."