

## Press release

Liege Airport, 9 May 2019

### A new business aviation centre at Liege Airport

#### **Liege Airport and ASL (Private Jet Services) are joining forces to develop a business aviation centre at Liege Airport.**

The Belgian private jet company ASL and Liege Airport have signed a contract for the construction and operation of a hangar and a business aviation terminal, as well as the exclusive provision of ground handling services for all business flights operating at Liege Airport.

This contract was awarded to the company ASL following a call for tenders which it won in September 2018. The contract established between the two companies focusses on two major areas of collaboration:

1. **The construction of an apron, a terminal and a hangar entirely dedicated to business aviation.** In order to accommodate these buildings, Liege Airport commissioned SOWAER to build an apron at the north of the airport site on which ASL plans to build a first hangar covering 2,100 sq. m. and an aviation terminal ("GAT") with an area of 250 sq. m. This hangar and terminal will be entirely and exclusively dedicated to the reception of private and business jets, their customers and their crews. In addition to the ASL staff offices, the business aviation terminal will include a reception lounge for passengers and crews.

The contract between ASL and Liege Airport also provides the possibility for ASL to build more hangars around the new apron in the coming years, in order to accommodate more aircraft (depending on the success of the activities). Due to its location at the airport and its isolation from other commercial aviation activities (passenger terminal and cargo), the terminal will have direct access to the apron and aircraft parking areas, thus offering a level of comfort, security, confidentiality and efficiency specific to business aviation.

2. **The provision of ground handling and maintenance services for business and private flights operating from and to Liege Airport.** For this purpose, ASL has an FBO (Fixed Base Operator) certificate enabling it to offer handling services to business aviation customers (including both commercial and private operators). The handling services include, among others, parking aircraft, reception and care of passengers and crews, supply of fuel, provision of catering on order, provision of waiting, relaxation and work areas or lounges for passengers and crews, coordination of customs services etc. This activity will be fully supported by ASL at the Liege Airport site from 2020, once the new business aviation terminal is opened and operational.

Construction of the apron is expected to be completed in May 2019. Construction of the general aviation terminal and the ASL hangar will begin in late summer 2019, with the inauguration planned for the summer of 2020.

This partnership between ASL and Liege Airport underlines the growing importance of the business aviation sector in Belgium (Europe), as well as Liege Airport's strategic position in the development of these activities. The opening of this business aviation terminal will result in the recruitment of 20 people for ASL in the first year, but will also have a considerable impact on indirect employment and satellite activities related to the services that will be offered by the company.

## Back to their roots

For Luc Partoune, CEO of Liege Airport, this development of business aviation reflects the interest of the socio-economic milieu for Liege: "Business aviation is a growing niche segment at our airport. Last year, more than 3,000 passengers used private jet services, an increase of 24% compared to 2017. The advantages of this new terminal will be speed, discretion and flexibility (open 24 hours a day). The business aviation centre will be directly connected with the motorway and will allow entrepreneurs, executives and investors to move around quickly."

Project partner SOWAER has played the role of project owner as Luc Vuylsteke, Chairman of the Management Committee explains: "The developments of this new airport platform were studied, as were the earthworks, water recovery, infrastructure and electrical equipment, including runway lighting in particular. All together, the works represent a budget of 3.5 million euros. SOWAER acts as the builder and allows Liege Airport to offer its customers an impeccable infrastructure".

For ASL, this also in some way means getting "back to their roots", since the company began its air taxi business with its first aircraft (a Piper Seneca twin-engine piston airplane) around 25 years ago, before leaving Liege Airport to set up its business on other platforms.

Indeed, Philippe Bodson, CEO of ASL Group, stresses the doubly important nature of this project for the company: "On the one hand, it is a very symbolic project for our company, whose full name is Air Service Liege. Actually, it was right here, at the airport of Liege, that everything began almost 25 years ago, with our very first aircraft. We now have 35 and it is therefore a real homecoming to come back to our roots and set up our business project at this airport that is full of assets for our activities. And besides the symbolic aspect that is so dear to me, this is also a very important economic project for us and for our Liege Airport partners. We want to make Liege a modern and exemplary hub for business aviation in Europe!"

### About ASL:

ASL (Air Service Liege NV) is a Belgian company, founded in 1997 by Mr Philippe Bodson, specialising in services related to business aviation, particularly in management and operation of private jets. It holds, among others, an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) issued by the Belgian aeronautical authorities in accordance with European regulations, allowing it to operate commercial and private flights with a fleet of more than 20 aircraft. In 2014, ASL merged with JetNetherlands (Netherlands), enabling it to become one of the leading players in the business aviation sector in Europe. The ASL-JetNetherlands group is present at most national and regional airports in Belgium and the Netherlands and also offers handling services for business aviation at the airports of Antwerp, Maastricht, Groningen and Liege.

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### About Liege Airport:

Liege Airport, the 7<sup>th</sup> largest cargo airport in Europe and the 1<sup>st</sup> in Belgium, is the only European airport that gives priority to full cargo (#freightersfirst). It specialises in express transport, e-commerce, pharmaceuticals and perishables, as well as live animals. Liege Airport, and its brand Flexpress, is an airport operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without restrictions, offering a service quality that is flexible and fast, all in less than one day by truck to the heart of the Amsterdam-Paris-Frankfurt golden triangle, reaching 400 million consumers.

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