

Aer Lingus Regional flies its new plane to Edinburgh



Aer Lingus Regional, operated by Aer Arann, flew the airlines first brand new plane on its maiden voyage to Edinburgh this week. The airline, who operates 72 flights per week to Edinburgh, collected its first new ATR 72-600 plane at a ceremony with ATR, the world's largest manufacturer of regional aircraft, in Toulouse, France last week.

The plane is the first of eight ATR 72-600s ordered by Aer Arann in a contract valued at almost €144 million. Aer Arann celebrated the arrival of its first new plane and the addition of extra flights to the Scottish capital by choosing Edinburgh as its maiden voyage.

The investment in new planes is part of the airline's 'new beginning' strategy, which aims to position Aer Arann among Europe's top tier of regional airlines.

Aer Lingus Regional, which aims to double passenger numbers to over two million over the next five years, has overseen a 32% rise in Aer Lingus Regional passenger numbers in the past 12 months. Specifically, the airline plans to grown passenger numbers on the Dublin to Edinburgh route by 45% in 2013. The new addition to the Aer Lingus Regional fleet will ensure increased frequency on the Dublin to Edinburgh route with up to 6 flights a day in each direction from July to meet the demand of this busy connection. This adds to the already successful connections between Cork and Edinburgh and Shannon and Edinburgh

Aer Lingus Regional recently moved to Terminal 2 in Dublin

airport, this move to Dublin airport's newest terminal will further facilitate Edinburgh passengers to Aer Lingus' transatlantic services, with fast, seamless connections from Edinburgh to Aer Lingus' twice daily service to New York, Boston, Chicago and three times a week to Orlando.

Commenting today, Simon Fagan, Chief Commercial Officer of Aer Arann, said:- 'We recently welcomed the arrival of the first of eight new ATR planes. Our investment in new planes is part of the 'new beginning' of Aer Arann which aims to position us among Europe's top tier of regional airlines.

Specifically, we aim to double passenger numbers to over two million over the next five years. Our service to Edinburgh is one of our key routes which continue to grow. We are delighted that the maiden voyage of our first new plane is on this key route.

'Dublin to Edinburgh is an extremely popular route on our network for both business and leisure passengers. We continue to see steady growth in traffic, with over 180,000 passengers benefiting from an easy, efficient and accessible connection between Ireland and Edinburgh in 2012.

'We look forward to welcoming our Scottish customers on board. The first customers on the new ATR 600s will experience the most modern design in terms of cabin comfort; we're looking forward to welcoming them aboard.'

Speaking today, Gordan Dewar, Chief Executive Officer, Edinburgh airport said:- *"We are delighted that Aer Lingus Regional chose Edinburgh as the destination for its newest aircraft's maiden flight.*

"With passenger choice one of our main priorities, this new aircraft and the additional flights between Dublin and Edinburgh starting this summer will see us offer our passengers significantly more connections to America, opening Scotland up to the rest of the world."

