

# Safety with service

## Q&A

In a wide-ranging interview *World Commerce Review* talks to Simon Williams, the Isle of Man's Director of Civil Aviation, about the continued success of the Island's aviation services sector as it celebrates 10 years as a leading aircraft registry

# Congratulations on achieving 10 years as a leading aircraft registry; what moments stand out for you?

Thank you very much - that is very kind of you.

The Registry commenced operations on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 and has grown to become the world's 6<sup>th</sup> largest private/corporate business aviation register whilst maintaining the highest relevant aviation regulatory safety standards.

As our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year draws to a close, the realisation of what we have achieved as a team definitely stands out. There have been many high points. We are very proud of the success of the Isle of Man Aircraft Registry so far but equally we take none of it for granted.

The most satisfying moments stem from when we have been able to make a real difference to the substance of our operation for the benefit of our clients. Some examples include:

- We have gone completely digital and operate a paperless office. All of our original certificates and associated documentation is authenticated and promulgated digitally, reducing courier costs and saving clients significant amounts of valuable time. To the best of our knowledge we are the first aircraft registry to achieve this.
- We have successfully introduced a digital information system which has vastly improved efficiency and eliminated the in-house error rate to virtually zero. This has resulted in a step change reduction to the work load demands placed on the team allowing for much more flexible and responsive operations, so saving our clients further significant time.
- Recognising that business aviation operations are 24/7/365 and that we are responsible for business aircraft

across the entire globe (incorporating most time zones) we successfully launched on line services. They now form a key part of our service, allowing clients to access important information on line even when the office is closed.

- Introducing ICAO Annex 6 Part II Section 3 to our aviation legislation thus bringing our safety standards to the highest appropriate levels.
- Cape Town Convention becoming operational on the Island.
- Repatriating the aviation legislative process to the Island from the UK thus allowing us to ensure that we can be highly nimble and responsive to changes in international aviation law and regulation, so setting the best possible conditions for an international business aviation industry.

*The Isle of Man Aircraft Registry has gained an excellent, award winning reputation for the registering and ongoing safety oversight of private/ corporate business jets*

- Recognition of our regulatory excellence by European member state National Aviation Authorities (NAAs) which has allowed for Letters of Understanding to be signed between IOMAR and those NAAs. The benefit being enhanced cooperation between states thus avoiding any potential for duplicated or contradictory oversight, so allowing Business Aviation to flourish unhindered by unnecessary bureaucracy.

## What is the strategic plan for the next 10 years?

The last three years has witnessed the delivery of some major strategic goals. So for the most part and in simple terms, it is to continue to incrementally build on the foundations laid thus far.

That said, we have so much more planned for the future and are passionate about incrementally/appropriately raising standards of safety and regulatory oversight whilst providing the best possible support to our much-valued client base. There are always opportunities to enhance the efficiency of our operation and we constantly focus on making improvements in this regard.

A key element will be to make the most of repatriating the aviation legislative process to the Island. We intend to make the most of this opportunity by maintaining the highest appropriate levels of ICAO compliance whilst ensuring that the Island aviation legislation is 'bang up to date' by incorporating law and best practice from the UK, Europe and beyond. As a responsible and proactive jurisdiction we intend to set the best possible conditions for Business Aviation and its supporting industries to flourish in a safe, efficient and compliant manner.

## How has the sector changed over the last decade and what does the next one hold?

Those that know me know that I am a passionate advocate of this great industry so I will always adopt a positive perspective. I firmly believe that business aviation has a great story to tell.

There have been periods of remarkable growth, technological advances, new companies appearing and some very positive developments. As with any industry there have been highs and lows and business aviation has faced many challenges over the last decade, with the financial crash being the most obvious low point.

With the future in mind, I have noted several reports recently that highlight sustainable growth in business aviation traffic movements in Europe and beyond. There are more significant technological developments coming too. Hopefully these are indicators that the industry is moving on from what many commentators have described as being flat market conditions.

I have great faith in the resilience and resourcefulness of the people that make up the business aviation industry. They are clever, determined and passionate about what they do. Thus I am robustly optimistic for the future and firmly believe that the industry will always find a way to succeed.

## What is the difference offered by the Isle of Man for clients?

The Isle of Man Aircraft Registry has gained an excellent, award winning reputation for the registering and ongoing safety oversight of private/corporate business jets. Our motto is safety with service. This simple phrase encapsulates what we have sought to achieve from the outset. Although much is made of the aircraft numbers, growth and success associated with the Registry, our focus is on 'doing the right thing', and that is striking that fine balance between facilitating high regulatory standards whilst delivering excellent customer service. If we work hard at getting that balance right and delivering with real substance, then the numbers and growth should look after themselves.

The principal benefits of registering an aircraft on the Isle of Man are:

- High regulatory standards
- Excellent customer service levels and award winning international reputation
- Neutral nationality registration prefix 'M'
- Competitive scheme of charges
- Secure mortgage register
- Cape Town Convention
- No insurance premium tax
- European time zone
- Professional infrastructure with significant experience in aviation finance
- The Isle of Man is on the OECD 'white list' of countries complying with the global standard for tax co-operation and exchange of information
- Clear and simple taxation regime
- Stable legal and political environment

## What types of aircraft do you work with?

The Isle of Man Aircraft Registry was established to provide a customer-focused service for the registration, and subsequent safety regulation of high quality private/corporate jets and twin turbine-engine helicopters.

With regards to the aircraft we work with, we have some simple ground rules that have served well and stood the test of time:

- Aircraft may only be operated for private or corporate purposes whilst on the Register - commercial operations are not permitted;
- Owners of Isle of Man registered aircraft must be qualified under the Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015 as amended;
- Aeroplanes with MTOM of 5,700 kg or above may be registered;
- Aeroplanes with MTOM between 2,730 kg and 5,700 kg may be considered if accompanied by significant economic benefit to the Isle of Man private sector;
- Aircraft of any weight owned by Isle of Man residents (N.B. aircraft must be Type Certified);
- Aircraft between commercial leases;
- Twin turbine-engine helicopters.

Based on these ground rules the aircraft we register are centred on client needs and cover a wide spectrum.

We strive to foster excellent working relations with all the Business Aviation manufacturers and go to great lengths to provide them with the very best support and this has spin off benefits for our clients of course too.

## What advice would you give the first-time operator?

In general terms, my advice would be to choose your advisors very carefully. Aviation is a wonderful industry and used wisely a business jet can be a superb enabler. However, there are aspects of purchasing, owning and operating an aircraft that can be complex and these require specialist advice. Timely, impartial expert advice is critical to avoiding potential pitfalls.

From a Registry perspective, I would strongly encourage the first-time operator to commence a dialogue with the Isle of Man Aircraft Registry at the earliest possible opportunity. It is not uncommon for the Registry aspects to be left until the very last minute and right at the end of a complicated purchase transaction process. Timely and effective communication from the outset is an excellent way to avoid some very simple challenges thereby eliminating any potential for unnecessary and frustrating delays.

## What additional expertise is available in the Isle of Man?

The Isle of Man has become a centre of excellence for those seeking advice on the initial purchase, ongoing ownership and safe operation of a business jet. In effect it has become a 'one stop shop' for those needing specialist expert advice across the entire spectrum of business jet matters.

For aviation safety and regulatory matters please speak to the Isle of Man Aircraft Registry team:

- Telephone: +44 (0)1624 682 358

- Fax: +44 (0)1624 682 355
- Email: [aircraft@gov.im](mailto:aircraft@gov.im)
- Web: <https://www.iomaircraftregistry.com/>

Address: Ground Floor, Viscount House, Ronaldsway Airport, Ballasalla, Isle of Man, IM9 2AS, British Isles

We also provide an *Aviation Business Directory* for specialist advice on legal, tax, importation and other matters which can be downloaded from our web site at:

- <https://www.iomaircraftregistry.com/about-us/overview/isle-of-man-aviation-directory/>

## In conclusion, how would you sum up the last ten years?

Demanding...great fun...professionally and personally very satisfying. I am very lucky to work with a fantastic team and that makes all the difference. I look forward to the next ten years with great enthusiasm. ■