ETIHAD CARGO SIGNS MOU FOR SUSTAINABLE PHARMACEUTICAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

News / Airlines

Etihad Cargo has entered into a memorandum of understanding with B Medical Systems. The MOU, which was announced during the BIO International Convention, being held in San Diego, USA, from June 13-16, 2022, will see Etihad Cargo partner with B Medical Systems to develop and launch an airline-specific passive temperature-controlled solution for the transportation of life-saving drugs, vaccines and high-value pharmaceuticals.

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Etihad Cargo will collaborate with Luxembourg-based manufacturer and global distributor of medical refrigeration devices, B Medical Systems, to develop more sustainable temperature-controlled container units that work utilising passive cooling technology. The units will retain temperatures from -80 to 25 degrees Celsius for up to five days without requiring an external power source, with load capabilities ranging from two to 1,500 litres. Through the reduction in power needed to maintain the temperature for temperature-sensitive pharmaceutical shipments, these units will significantly reduce carbon emissions. Further adding to the sustainability of the containers, their robust design and multi-use capabilities enable an operational life of over ten years. B Medical Systems' current product portfolio includes products that use solar energy as well as green refrigerants.

Martin Drew, Etihad Aviation Group's Senior Vice President – Sales & Cargo, said, "While other traditional active container providers are offering containers fit for multi-modal transportation, Etihad Cargo is the first airline globally to collaborate with a partner in the development and launch of units specifically tailored to air transportation.

"Sustainability has been and continues to be a priority for Etihad Cargo," Drew continued. "While the aviation sector only accounts for 4 per cent of global carbon emission today, if the sector continues to grow at its current pace, it could account for up to 25 per cent of emissions by 2050. This is why it is so important for the sector to invest in more sustainable solutions for its customers. Partnering with B Medical Systems is the latest step by Etihad Cargo to achieve its sustainability targets. By replacing legacy active cold chain air transportation containers with aviation-specific units that consume less energy, Etihad Cargo is future-proofing the transportation of pharmaceuticals, providing a better solution for Etihad Cargo's customers, the aviation industry and the environment."

Mr. Jesal Doshi, Deputy CEO of B Medical Systems, said, "Our mission at B Medical Systems is to create technology that helps save lives across the world. Transportation of temperature-sensitive specimens needs a robust cold chain. Etihad Cargo's operational knowledge along with our

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expertise in creating quality medical cold chain solutions will enable us to develop aviation-specific sustainable units for the safe, effective, and environmentally friendly transportation of temperature-sensitive pharmaceuticals and specimens."

Trials of the sustainable container units will commence shortly, and a commercial launch date will be announced following the successful completion of the trials.

Etihad Cargo is participating in the BIO International Convention as part of a high-profile Abu Dhabi delegation headed by H.E. Abdulla bin Mohammed Al Hamed, Chairman of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi (DoH). Comprising government officials, the delegation is visiting the USA to explore prospects for collaboration within the healthcare sector and, more specifically, life sciences. The primary aim of the visit is to establish sustainable mechanisms that empower the healthcare sector in both countries as well as showcase Abu Dhabi's distinguished healthcare ecosystem.

Powered by a solid infrastructure and an advanced healthcare ecosystem, partnership opportunities across the biopharmaceutical and healthcare value chain in Abu Dhabi continue to emerge as a result of the sector's robust growth potential. Abu Dhabi has been leading the transformation of the regional healthcare ecosystem by leveraging sciences and technology, positioning itself as a global life sciences hub and incubator for healthcare innovation.

Under the leadership of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi and the participation of Etihad Cargo alongside other key partners in the Emirate, Abu Dhabi established the HOPE Consortium in 2020 to provide one of the most capable and effective vaccine supply chains in the world. Since its establishment, the HOPE Consortium has distributed and transported more than 260 million vaccines to 60 countries. More recently, Abu Dhabi has strengthened its capabilities as a life sciences hub through a pharma collaboration with Belgium, a leading global pharmaceutical hub, establishing a global distribution corridor between Abu Dhabi and Brussels to serve the world in vaccine delivery and future life science needs.

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