



10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERIES 400 TWIN OTTER FIRST FLIGHT

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer



Viking Air celebrated the 10th anniversary of the inaugural flight of its Series 400 Twin Otter and recognizing a significant milestone in the company's Twin Otter production program. Ten years ago, Viking's first production Series 400 Twin Otter, Manufacturer's Serial Number (MSN) 845, took its maiden flight in the skies above the company's final aircraft assembly facility in Calgary, Alberta. MSN 845 was the first Twin Otter aircraft to be built since the original De Havilland Canada factory shut down its production line in 1988 after 844 legacy Twin Otters were produced.

Viking launched its Series 400 production program in 2007 as a natural progression from acquiring the Type Certificates for the out-of-production De Havilland Canada fleet (DHC-1 through the DHC-7) and after receiving overwhelming demand and operator support for a new-build Twin Otter.

Five months after its first test flight and just two weeks after receiving Transport Canada Type Certification, Viking delivered its first Series 400 production aircraft to launch customer Zimex Aviation at the 2010 Farnborough International Airshow. Since delivery, MSN 845 has borne Swiss-registration HB-LUX and has been providing essential humanitarian relief and corporate charter services in Africa and the Middle East.

“As a launch customer of the Series 400 Twin Otter, we proudly send our best wishes to Viking on the 10th birthday of the Series 400 as well as the upcoming 50th birthday of Viking itself,” commented Daniele Cereghetti, CEO for Zimex Aviation. He added, “MSN 845 has been reliably, economically and safely serving our organization in various special missions in Africa and the Middle East. These missions are primarily dedicated to providing humanitarian aid and industrial support in the oil and gas sector. After 4,250 cycles, we are looking forward to many more happy landings with MSN 845.”

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Series 400 Twin Otter’s first flight, Viking president & CEO David Curtis said, “It’s hard to believe it has been ten years since that memorable day I was able to witness MSN 845’s first flight from the cockpit’s right seat. When I take a moment to reflect on the Series 400 program from the launch to where we are now celebrating the 10th anniversary of the maiden flight, I am truly amazed at what Viking has accomplished.”

In the past 10 years, Viking Series 400 Twin Otters have been exported to 37 countries around the world in various roles including regional commuter, critical infrastructure support, environmental monitoring, cargo, maritime surveillance, medevac, parachute, industrial support, private VIP, and commercial seaplane operations.

Among the list of Series 400 Twin Otter customers, the largest fleet operator is the Fuerza Aerea Del Peru (Peru Air Force) with twelve Viking-built aircraft based in Iquitos that provide environmental patrol and critical infrastructure support to remote communities in the Amazonian region of north east Peru.

MASwings, a subsidiary of Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG), is the largest commercial operator of Series 400 Twin Otters with six aircraft accumulating 60,000 flight hours in commercial service providing a vital lifeline to remote rural communities in Borneo. Other commercial operators of the Series 400 include Air Seychelles, Fiji Link, First Flying (Japan), Aurora Airlines and ChukotAVIA (Russia), Daily Air (Taiwan), Tara Air (Nepal), Reignwood Aviation (China), and Loganair (UK) whose operation is world-renowned for landing on the beaches of Barra, Scotland.

One of the more notable operators of Series 400 Twin Otters is the Vietnam Navy, whose purchase of six aircraft from Viking marked the first time Vietnam’s Ministry of Defence had acquired aircraft of any type from a western-based manufacturer as well as initiating the formation of the Navy’s first fixed-wing Air Wing.

The Series 400 Twin Otter has now been Type Certified by thirty-two different regulatory bodies, including Transport Canada, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Russian Interstate Aviation Committee Aviation Register (IACAR), and the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC). The CAAC certification is noteworthy as Viking was the first company to benefit from a Bilateral Aviation Technical Arrangement (BATA) between Canada and China signed in 2015 that opened the doors to the vast Chinese market for the Series 400 Twin Otter.

Since its first flight ten years ago, the Series 400 fleet has accumulated nearly 300,000 flight hours

and over 500,000 cycles providing essential services to remote communities around the world. Viking is now building its 156th production aircraft that will bear Manufacturer's Serial Number MSN 1000 marking it as the 1000th Twin Otter to be built since the design was first introduced by De Havilland Canada in 1965.

19 FEBRUARY 2020

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