



GERMAN AIRPORT SALE BACK ON WITH THREE SUITORS PREFERRED

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Bidders are to be invited for talks on the sale of the Frankfurt-Hahn regional airport – a potential deal that was restarted from scratch after its planned sale to a Chinese company was scrapped last year.

Rhineland-Palatinate state's interior minister, Roger Lewentz, said on Monday talks could begin with three of the six suitors who made "concrete offers". He did not identify any of them but said that new or improved offers could still be considered.

The airport's main claim to fame is that in 2009 it was the host hub for the transit of a generator for a gas power plant in Armenia, including loading frame, which weighed in at a world-record 189.98 tonnes and was put aboard an Antonov 225, the world's largest cargo aeroplane.

Despite the name, the airport is about equidistant between Frankfurt and Luxembourg – about 120km to each city by road. It is closer to the German cities of Koblenz at about 70km and Mainz at about 90km. The airport officially changed the name from Hahn to Frankfurt–Hahn at the same

time as Ryanair started flying there.

In 2002 Lufthansa took out legal proceedings against Ryanair, claiming the usage of "Frankfurt" in the airport's name to be deceptive advertising, however Lufthansa lost.

From this month only one Ryanair flight per day will be offered to London Stansted rather than the current two, according to the Luxemburger Wortnewspaper. Flights to Porto will be reduced from the present nine flights per week to four flights.

Rhineland-Palatinate planned to sell its 82.5 per cent stake in the financially struggling airport to Shanghai Yiqian Trading Company, a logistics and construction company.

But officials cancelled the deal in July because a payment was not made, and cited wider doubts about the reliability of the purchaser.

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