



NEWS UPDATE FROM THE LONDON HELIPORT

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The London Heliport, London's only licensed heliport, handled 11,900 total movements (including exempted movements) in 2017, representing a 5% increase in activity, slightly less than 2016. The trend toward medium to large twin-engined executive helicopter movements also continued into 2017 with types like the Leonardo AW169 recently becoming available for public charter for the first time (with Halo and Starspeed).

Interlining with business jets activity accounted for 20% of traffic during the year with the likes of Castle Air, Capital, Atlas, Halo Aviation and Starspeed departing London Biggin Hill, Luton, London Oxford Airport, Farnborough and Stansted Airports. The London Helicopter sightseeing flight company, based at Battersea and Redhill and now under the ownership and AOC of A2B Aero is into its sixth year. Its offering continues to be popular, especially among overseas visitors or for those looking for that special occasion.

London Heliport is undergoing a major investment to upgrade its communications equipment, including a new transmitter and receivers to meet the new 8.33 MHz spacing regulations for VHF Ground-Air communications. New voice-switch and recording equipment is part of the upgrade which is due for completion by the end of April.

Early this year a partnership agreement was ratified with the Meteorological Office to upgrade available sensor equipment enabling the London Heliport to disseminate METAR data widely to the aviation community and make official forecasting available for the first time in history using skilled qualified met. observers within the heliport ATC team. Preparatory work is complete and installation of new sensor equipment is expected to commence this month, with regulatory approval from the CAA anticipated following a three-month trial to prove the reliability of observations and the data produced. This will result in a significant enhancement of weather information available to air crew of conditions when entering the challenging airspace and operating environment of the London heli-route system.

Work also continues with the regulator and airspace manager to secure the future of the London Heliport as the airspace and operating/regulatory environment evolves and new helicopter types and technologies emerge.

Representatives from the London Heliport will be at EBACE, co-hosted with sister company London Oxford Airport on fuel provider Air BP's **Stand B29**.

19 APRIL 2018

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