

Exclusive - Finally – CV Takes off to Zhengzhou

After being forced to postpone their previously announced Zhengzhou flights twice due to missing traffic rights, Cargolux will finally commence serving Zhengzhou beginning next weekend. The first Boeing 747-400 freighter bound for the central Chinese city is scheduled to leave Luxembourg on 14 June, at 8 p.m. local time.



Soon en route to Zhengzhou - one of a total of eleven Boeing 747-400Fs operated by Cargolux / source: CV

It was a sigh of relief. "We have obtained all necessary approvals a week ago. So everything is cleared for the first Zhengzhou flight to take to the air," confirmed Cargolux's CEO Dirk Reich when asked by Cargo Forwarder Global about the status of the up to now more than bumpy and for the airline quite annoying China project.

Reich himself will be on board the Boeing freighter to attend the modest welcoming ceremony to be held on Sunday, planned by Zhengzhou officials and representatives of the airline's stakeholder (35%) Henan Civil Aviation Development & Investment Co.,Ltd. (HNCA).

Via Baku and Novosibirsk

As from the start all eastbound flights will be routed via Baku in Azerbaijan, confirms Head of Communication Martine Scheuren. On the way back the freighters stop over at Novosibirsk in order to refuel.

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The frequencies are slated to be doubled at phase two that is scheduled to commence already next month. In September, flights number five and six will be added, of which two will be routed via Milan on their way to Zhengzhou.

The road has been cleared

As it stands, all obstacles which hampered the project seem to have finally been set aside, including personnel changes like the replacement of Cargolux's former VP Asia Pacific, Robert Song by successor Kevin Shek.

According to original plans, presented in early spring by the carrier's management together with representatives of partner HNCA, Cargolux operated roundtrips between Luxembourg and Zhengzhou should have been normality by now. But first the inaugural flight scheduled for April 24 had to be canceled only hours before takeoff, and then the follow-up flight planned for 29 May had to be scrapped from the list as well. Both events went to ashes due to the Chinese Civil Aviation Authority's refusal to concede the required traffic rights. This they torpedoed, because they stated that the submitted documents were insufficient and did not comply with the official requirements. This is the official version. Unofficially, different parties had put a lot of pressure on the authority, people close to the case claim, to fast nod the Zhengzhou flights through. This however, didn't prove to be very helpful.

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