

## Hahn Looks to a Bright Cargo Future

This time last year it looked like Germany's Frankfurt-Hahn Airport had lost all hope of being able to operate successfully after the drama experienced concerning the acquisition of the airport by what turned out as a shady outfit. That has changed for the better since the HNA Group stepped in this year.



Cargo flights have gone up at Hahn Airport lately - credit: HHN

### Hahn was constantly in the news

CargoForwarder Global as well as various other aviation related media and local German press have followed and reported on Hahn's dilemma and the subsequent takeover of 82.5% of the airport by China's HNA Group. There is still the question on the remaining 17.5% which is owned by the German state of Hesse. It seems that they are still in no great hurry to divest themselves of this minority holding. Many think that it makes no sense for Hesse to hold on to this share as the airport has no relevance for them seeing that they themselves are a majority shareholder in Frankfurt Rhein-Main Airport. By holding onto the share, maybe they are just wanting to keep an eye on future developments in Hahn considering that the HNA Group has stated that they will invest heavily there.

### Cargo is the name of the game

Hahn Airport was well known for its Low Cost Carrier traffic - specifically, Ryanair which at one time had up to twelve aircraft stationed there. The cargo business was also running well until the end of 2015 when various all freighter operators pulled out and diverted to airports such as Munich and Amsterdam.

That, it seems, has all changed now and the Hahn management and the new owners are intent on bringing the airport back into the cargo fold. Basically it makes sense. 24/7 operations, lower costs for carriers and in the meantime a fast and reliable handling set-up. All of this along with a good road infrastructure would be interesting for freighters.

It seems this is coming about.

### Freighter operator list is growing

A taskforce under the leadership of Christoph Goetzmann, Hahn's new COO, has been set up with the aim of pushing Hahn as a freighter hub for other carriers. A road show is in progress with the intention of attracting new international traffic to the airport. Cargo tonnage for the first six months of this year doubled compared to 2016. A total of 58.000 tons were handled and it can be expected that well over 130.000 tons will pass through the airport by the end of the year.

The list of cargo operators flying into Hahn is quite impressive and if some or many of them were to increase their frequencies, then the airport could indeed become a notable cargo hub.

Our records show that presently there are around 30 weekly cargo aircraft movements through Hahn. The list is long with carriers such as Etihad Cargo, AirBridgeCargo, Nippon Cargo, Silkway, Air Bright and so on. All operating with B747 freighter equipment, with the exception of Etihad Cargo who use B777F equipment.

AirBridgeCargo has three weekly operations which are rumored to be increased to five a week shortly.

CargoLogicAir, another Volga-Dnepr daughter company will transfer their weekly Frankfurt-Main to Tel Aviv B747F service through Hahn as of December this year.

The passenger business will not be neglected by Hahn's managers, but it seems the cards are on the expansion of air cargo at the airport.