



PRESS RELEASE

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More cargo in corona times at Ostend-Bruges Airport

Airport activities at the airport by the sea are virtually absent when it comes to passenger flights. With the exception of a few essential flights, such as repatriation flights, medical flights, inspection flights for offshore and minimal activities on Apron 3 for general aviation {including business aviation}, there is no more traffic with passengers. This unseen crisis is deeply affecting aviation when it comes to regular air traffic.

Cargo

This is in sharp contrast to the currently good cargo activities at Ostend, usually with medical equipment and relief supplies. The figures for April are very good. For example, the traded volume increased from 1,846 tonnes in April 2019 to 5,284 tonnes in April 2020. This means that Ostend processed 83% more volume year-to-date compared to the same period last year. This result is in line with the rock-solid first quarter of 2020. The airport processed almost 10,000 tonnes during the first three months of this year, compared to the 6,500 tonnes in the same period last year (+ 53%).

Corona is one of the causes of the remarkable increase in the total freight volume. Due to the disappearance of intercontinental passenger flights and their cargo capacity, there is a worldwide need for full-cargo capacity to which Ostend airport can also contribute during corona times. These additional charter flights spiked the volume traded at the airport.

Assets

When cargo airlines are looking for new bases, Ostend has major assets: the proximity to two seaports, the smooth mobility network around the airport and the good location for distribution within Northern Europe but also the UK. On top of that, there is more than enough available capacity at the airport, which is open 24/7 without any slot coordination or restrictions.

Future

Ostend airport is now fully preparing for a restart of passenger flights in the coming weeks via an internal working group. The focus will be on two new core values for passengers, namely the aspect "health and safety". In addition to the DNA of "fly relax, fly regional", the airport will also communicate in the coming months under the heading "fly safe, fly healthy".

"We are preparing for the future with a healthy dose of sense of reality, hope and confidence," said Marcel Buelens, CEO of Ostend-Bruges Airport and Antwerp.



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