



Strictly Embargoed until 13:00, Wednesday 3rd July 2013

Dublin, Wednesday 3rd July 2013

Aer Lingus Announces Major Long-Haul Expansion

- **Dublin to San Francisco and beyond with additional connectivity to major west coast cities with airline partners**
- **Dublin to Toronto and beyond with additional connectivity to key Canadian cities with airline partner**
- **Shannon to New York and Boston: increased frequency and access up to 40 destinations in North America with airline partners**

Aer Lingus today announced significant expansion to its transatlantic route offering for 2014. In addition to its existing services to Boston, Chicago, New York and Orlando, the airline will commence year round direct service between Dublin and San Francisco from April, 2014 with 5 services per week being operated by Airbus A330 wide-body aircraft

Aer Lingus will also commence direct year-round service to Canada from April 2014. A daily direct Boeing B757 service between Dublin and Toronto will operate during the summer season, with up to four weekly services operating during the winter. Two Boeing B757 aircraft will be based in Shannon and will be used to deliver increased frequency on existing services to Boston and New York. Year-round connections from Shannon to the east-coast will be introduced. This expansion will directly support more than 200 new jobs.

In addition to direct access to San Francisco, Aer Lingus customers travelling from a number of UK and European cities via Dublin, will benefit from a wide choice of onwards connections to sixteen popular cities on the West Coast and beyond including Seattle, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and San Diego. The new San Francisco route also represents a business opportunity for Aer Lingus Cargo.

Aer Lingus customers travelling from over twenty UK and European cities via Dublin to Toronto, will also have the option to connect to eight key cities within Canada including Vancouver, Montreal and Calgary.

This growth plan will bring the Aer Lingus long haul schedule to 10 daily transatlantic services, connecting Ireland and Europe with cities throughout North America.

Christoph Mueller, Chief Executive, Aer Lingus, said: "Our transatlantic business goes from strength to strength. This expansion is extremely positive news for Aer Lingus and for the broader economy in terms of business, tourism and employment. Our transatlantic capacity will increase by 24% in 2014, following on from the 13% additional capacity in our 2013 transatlantic schedule. Our operation of the San Francisco route will strengthen Ireland's ties with Silicon Valley and encourage Ireland's development as a technology hub for Europe. San Francisco's Silicon Valley is home to many of the world's largest technology companies and several of these companies have European headquarters in Dublin."

He continued: "Toronto is the sixth biggest North American market out of Ireland. In addition to being a great tourist destination, the city is home to a large Irish community and we look forward to welcoming them on board. We are confident that the increased number of flights from Shannon to New York and Boston will bring additional tourists to the Western region. The increased frequency opens up additional connectivity to almost 40 cities in North America with our airline partners. Very importantly, this expansion will directly support more than 200 jobs within Aer Lingus and our partner airline ASL Aviation Group."

Commenting on the announcement, Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, said: "This announcement of new services by Aer Lingus is fantastic news. This Government has always sought to improve air access to key tourism and business markets, such as the US and Canada. Canada is the world's 11th largest economy and California is reckoned to be the world's 12th largest. I know that the business and tourism sectors are delighted with this news. More than 40% of Ireland's total foreign direct investment comes from Silicon Valley alone. The return of the direct air service to the US west coast is particularly important and I'm very happy to see the route being filled by an Irish airline."

To support the operation of the new routes, Aer Lingus will wet lease three Boeing 757 aircraft from ASL Aviation Group. The aircraft will be configured with an economy and business class cabin. Business travellers will continue to enjoy the same great level of service; with gourmet meals, sleeper seats and an extensive in-flight entertainment selection.

Speaking at the announcement Hugh Flynn, Chief Executive ASL Aviation Group said: "We are delighted to partner with Aer Lingus in bringing renowned excellent service to increasing numbers of business and leisure passengers on new and existing routes. ASL Aviation Group enjoys a world-class excellent reputation for safety, reliability and quality. We are a global company, with almost 90 aircraft operating all over the world under our own brand and for leading airlines, and we are proud to work with Ireland's national airline. We believe the combination of two prominent Irish aviation

companies brings a competitive dimension to the market and significantly increases economic opportunity for Ireland.”

The success of Aer Lingus’ transatlantic operation in recent years is in no small part due to its revised network strategy which has brought major increases in connecting passengers, particularly at Dublin airport. For the continued growth of Dublin as a connecting hub and the success of our increased services from Shannon, the expansion of the U.S Customs and Border Protection service is an absolute necessity.

Flights go on sale today on aerlingus.com with great each way fares, including taxes and charges, starting from;

Dublin to San Francisco €439

Dublin to Toronto €329

Shannon to Boston and Shannon to New York €239

~ ENDS ~

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Photography

**Photos taken today with Aer Lingus CEO Christoph Mueller, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport Leo Varadkar and Hugh Flynn, Chief Executive ASL Aviation Group have been issued on behalf of Aer Lingus by Jason Clarke Photography: contact +353 1 660 7938/9
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Notes to Editor:**About ASL Aviation Group**

The ASL Aviation Group, based in Ireland, is a well established global aviation group providing an unrivalled array of aviation services. The group of aviation companies is made up of three airlines - Air Contractors, Europe Airpost and Safair; two support service companies – ACLAS Global and Air Contractors Engineering; and various leasing entities. Its companies are based in Ireland, the United Kingdom, France and South Africa, but its operations are worldwide with the three airlines operating a mixed fleet of widebody, short haul and turboprop passenger and cargo aircraft under their own brands and for a number of leading airlines. ASL Aviation Group has a staff of 1,200, a fleet of ±90 aircraft and generated a total operating revenue of €380m in 2012. ASL is a joint venture between CMB (51%) and 3P Air Freighters (49%).