

Aer Lingus Targets Business Routes As Part Of Airport Switch



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Author: [Aer Lingus](#)

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July 19, 2012, 11:43 am -- /[EPR NETWORK](#)/ -- Aer Lingus is to move to George Best Belfast City Airport in the autumn after five years at Belfast International.

Following a tender process involving both airports, the decision has been taken to base two aircraft at the city airport during the winter and three during the summer.

A new-look winter schedule for 2012 will target two key routes for business, leisure and transfer traffic to London Heathrow and London Gatwick. There will be three flights daily to each airport in each direction.

The summer schedule, which begins from the end of March 2013, will operate daily flights to two sun destinations, Malaga and Faro in addition to the three daily rotations each to London Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

"Northern Ireland's vital London connections are secure with Aer Lingus," said Christoph Mueller, the airline's chief executive, who announced the decision to move airports. "The two aircraft which we normally use in the winter for a mixture of sun destinations and Heathrow will be used for Heathrow and Gatwick with a third aircraft serving two European routes in the new-look summer schedule."

He added: "This is a commercial decision delivering value for our customers and the company. George Best Belfast City Airport delivers a compelling location and a strong history of business flying. We

believe the move will appeal to the 600,000 plus passengers annually who fly with us and especially the business traveller who now has a choice of two London airports with Aer Lingus.

"Indeed business travellers based in the Belfast City centre will now be able to substantially reduce transit times from office to aircraft. Customers who are members of our Gold Circle frequent flyer programme will also be able to use the business lounge facilities at George Best Belfast City Airport. We believe our dual offer of Heathrow and Gatwick supports the local marketplace during these challenging economic times."

Mr Mueller said the 100 jobs created in the £100 million investment made by Aer Lingus in Northern Ireland five years ago remained secure.

"We remain committed to the Northern Ireland marketplace," he said. "Jobs are secured in this move and indeed our plans for new routes in the future, may see employment and investment increase."

Aer Lingus works closely with a number of partner airlines and expects transfer traffic to grow through both Heathrow and Gatwick.

Brian Ambrose, Chief Executive of George Best Belfast City Airport said: "We extend a warm welcome to Aer Lingus and look forward to working closely with the airline in creating a strong base in which to develop a growing route network.

"I am delighted with the frequency of services to London Heathrow and Gatwick. By the end of October, Belfast City will offer Northern Ireland's only linkage to Heathrow with 10 flights per day."

Aer Lingus will commence flying from George Best Belfast City Airport on Sunday 28th October 2012.

About Aer Lingus

Aer Lingus was founded by the Irish Government in April 1936 to provide air services to/from Ireland. The first flight, from Dublin to Bristol, took place on May 27th 1936.

Aer Lingus' low-cost, low fares model is centred on maintaining low unit cost, offering one way fares, maintaining effective fleet utilisation and developing the Aer Lingus brand. Consistent with this low-cost model, Aer Lingus' primary distribution channel is its website

aerlingus.com where customers can find a number of [cheap flight tickets](#) and [flight deals](#) from Ireland, as well as take advantage of the Aer Lingus check in app and purchase travel vouchers.

Aer Lingus provides a cargo transportation service on some of its scheduled passenger routes, including services to the United States and Europe. Aer Lingus provides mail transportation services between Ireland and the United Kingdom.

PR Contact:
Declan Kearney
Aer Lingus Corporate Communications
Aer Lingus Head Office
Dublin Airport
Co. Dublin
Ireland
PA 06-39
00 353 86 6172702
www.aerlingus.com

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