

Diese Meldung kann unter <http://www.presseportal.de/pm/12274/1563409/eans-news-air-berlin-plc-air-berlin-intensifies-its-cooperation-with-niki-and-increases-its> abgerufen werden.

Air Berlin PLC

EANS-News: Air Berlin PLC
Air Berlin intensifies its cooperation with NIKI and
increases its participation

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management decisions

London/Berlin (euro adhoc) - Air Berlin PLC announces an increase of its participation in NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH. The contracts were notarized on 17 February 2010. Air Berlin PLC and its subsidiary Air Berlin PLC & Co. Luftverkehrs KG have contractually agreed with the Privatstiftung Lauda (private Lauda foundation) that Air Berlin PLC & Co. Luftverkehrs KG will indirectly acquire 25.9 percent of the shares of NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH and thereby increase its current participation in NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH from 24 to 49.9 percent. The purchase price for the shares is EUR 21 million.

In connection with the increase of its participation, Air Berlin PLC & Co. Luftverkehrs KG will grant the private Lauda foundation a EUR 40.5 million loan. The private foundation has the option to repay the loan in three years, either in cash, or through the transfer of the remaining 50.1 percent of NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH's shares.

Andreas Nikolaus (Niki) Lauda will remain at NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH's disposal for at least another three years. The implementation of the measures described above remains subject to receiving the necessary anti-trust approvals. NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH will be fully consolidated within the Air Berlin Group. NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH will remain a legally independent company with its own management. The "NIKI" brand will continue to exist in the foreseeable future.

Joachim Hunold, CEO of Air Berlin PLC, commented on the increased participation, as follows: "Following years of successful cooperation and partnership with NIKI, the increase of Air Berlin's participation is a logical development. NIKI's network complements Air Berlin's network very well. For Air Berlin, the Vienna hub opens up an additional access to the fast-growing markets of Eastern Europe."

Ulf Hüttmeyer, CFO of Air Berlin PLC, added: "The increase of Air Berlin's participation in the profitable NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH which - counter to the trend witnessed in the airline sector - continued to expand in the past year and can show respectable financial figures, increases the value of Air Berlin."

Niki Lauda, the founder and Chairman of NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH, commented on the participation, as follows: "It is important to me that we can provide NIKI with a broad base for future growth. The intensified cooperation with Air Berlin will make us more profitable, more efficient and more attractive to the passengers."

NIKI's integration into the Air Berlin Group increases Air Berlin's fleet size by eleven aircraft. Based on the provisional figures for the 2009 business year, the number of passengers transported by the Air Berlin Group will increase by 2.6 million - at a fleet capacity utilization rate of 77 percent. According to the provisional figures, NIKI Luftfahrt GmbH achieved a revenue of EUR 260.2 million (i.e. an increase of 17 percent over the previous year) and an EBIT (Earnings before interest and taxes) of EUR 23.1 million, i.e. an increase of 71 percent over the 2008 business year.

For the current business year, NIKI has planned an expansion of its network. The planned connections include Sofia, Bucharest, Copenhagen and Nice. Additional flight routes to Olbia/Cagliari, Belgrade and Barcelona complement Air Berlin's existing flight network.

end of announcement

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