

# Air BP Looks Forward to New Al Maktoum GA Fuel Terminal

Fuel supplier Air BP believes it has much more to offer general aviation in the Middle East after playing a central role in establishing a new fuel terminal at Al Maktoum International Airport. The airport serves as the venue for MEBAA and the Dubai Air Show (which will next be held in November 2019).

The UK company, which operates some 20 aviation fuel facilities in the Middle East, said it is winning competitive bids through a focus on technical expertise that can help airports and local fuel companies. This includes a “complete aviation fuel consultancy service” including the design, build, and operation of fueling facilities.

According to Michel Saba, Air BP manager general aviation for the Middle East, Air BP is currently providing technical services to customers in 11 countries across the region.

At Al Maktoum International, the company was selected in 2015 as lead participant by the joint venture designing a new general aviation fuel terminal. Work has just commenced at the airport to connect the main fuel hydrant to the new general aviation terminal, which is home to Jet Aviation, Jetex, ExecuJet, DC Aviation, and Falcon Aviation. The work is expected to be completed next year, Saba told **AIN**.

He noted that other recent successes include a technical services agreement with ADNOC, at Abu Dhabi International Airport, to interlink two existing ship unloading lines at the Anabeeb fuel terminal, “enabling greater efficiency and flexibility in fuel supply” and the project management of the tank farm refurbishment at Erbil International Airport in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. “This latter project is expected to

commence next month and is anticipated to offer airlines visiting the airport a more reliable fuel supply," said the company.

According to Bony Chacko, Air BP operations director for the MENA region, Air BP's GA experience includes setting up avgas/jet-A fuel supplies at the Emirates Airline Flight Training Academy (EFTA) which opened last year at Al Maktoum International Airport. The academy has a fleet of 22 aircraft. Air BP supplied the equipment and has an initial three-year operating contract.

Saba said having a mixed-fuel solution presented a challenge. "We're one of the few suppliers that can do a mix. Avgas is not an easy product, but we have long experience with it. The academy now has the largest avgas feed in the region." One key aspect is "misfuel prevention handling," he noted.

"Business aviation is an interesting market, which has had slow growth," Saba said, but it is a healthy market because there are many high-net-worth individuals in the region. He noted that Air BP has a tourism arm within its UAE fuel business to supply helicopters used in the tourism sector, as well as for filming.

The company also is putting a strong emphasis on low-carbon solutions, and it is the first aviation fuel supplier to achieve carbon neutrality for into-plane fueling services across its international network, which includes more than 250 facilities. This includes Air BP operations at Dubai International Airport (DXB, where it has been since 1960) and Sharjah Airport.

Air BP is also investing further in alternative fuels. BP ventures invested \$30 million in U.S. company Fulcrum BioEnergy and signed an agreement with Neste of Finland in October to seek ways to increase the availability of aviation biofuel.

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