

VICTOR

PEOPLE - PLACES - PLANET

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BUSINESS AVIATION

- **Private aviation doubles market share since COVID outbreak**
- **Business travellers turn to safety and efficiency of private charter for essential travel**

June 26th, 2020 - Private aviation is set to see significant growth in the coming weeks and months according to new data compiled by leading global on-demand aircraft charter company Victor (www.flyvictor.com). 75% of European countries' borders are now open to travellers, although with some restrictions, and fliers are increasingly looking to the efficiency and safety of private jets.

Victor anticipates greater opportunities for the sector as a result of reduced commercial airline capabilities, the lower risks of contracting COVID-19 versus flying commercial, and on-demand access to 7,000 aircraft worldwide, in addition to the other benefits that unscheduled aircraft charter provides.

Key Market Data

After a 55% drop in global business aviation flight activity in May (WingX, May 2020), the sector is showing signs of recovery. Business aviation has doubled its share of fixed wing activity since March by facilitating essential and emergency flights.

Despite a significant drop in activity at the start of the outbreak, in May Victor saw a 90% increase in customer requests in the EMEA region, and a 70% increase in overall bookings. With a number of countries beginning to relax border controls to tourism and demand for essential business travel increasing, new customers are exploring aircraft charter as their travel solution.

The business aviation landscape has been evolving rapidly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant peaks and troughs in demand, new customer profiles and unusual request types as the pandemic unfolded.

When cases first hit in Europe and the U.S., more than 75% of Victor's flight requests were last-minute for departure within one week, where frequent flyers and new customers were turning to aircraft charter as means to reach home and family quickly, efficiently, and with less risk of exposure to other flyers.

When the world locked down business aviation suffered just as the airlines did, operating at approximately 15% of its capacity in April to support critical-only missions. With high numbers of cancellations of future leisure and business trips due to travel bans many business aircraft operators grounded their entire fleets as it wasn't economically viable to service the small amount of essential travel.

Rescue and Key Worker Flights

Victor's emergency aviation team – Victor Rescue – flew into action to support the COVID-19 crisis with medical evacuation, repatriation and keyworker flights, carefully managed in correspondence with the FCO and relevant government officials.

Examples include the repatriation of a British family who found themselves stranded in Morocco when the borders closed and needing to reach home urgently as the youngest child had an underlying medical condition. Other examples include transporting a group of NHS heroes to provide extra resource in Gibraltar before a COVID-19 spike, and flying construction workers to building sites across Europe where further hospitals and medical facilities were required.

Now, in June 2020, Victor is experiencing an increase in regional air charter for corporate and keyworker shuttles due a lack of scheduled service options and health concerns associated with flying commercial. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) does not expect the airlines to return to 2019 flight volumes until 2023 at the earliest, which Victor predicts will be a catalyst for business aviation growth.

Protecting Travellers

One of the major benefits of aircraft charter in the pandemic is the ability to minimise infection risk during travel. According to research by GlobeAir the COVID-19 risk is 30 times lower when chartering an aircraft. On a single commercial flight there are 700 touchpoints exposing passengers to the risk of contagion, versus 20 when using business aviation. As well enjoying exclusive use of an aircraft, social distancing can be respected in private terminals and FBOs with separate check-in, security, and lounges from those flying commercially.

In addition, fliers value the ability to stay in control of one's own schedule optimising time on the ground by landing closer to the end destination and avoiding layovers, indirect routes and delays common on scheduled flights. Moreover, business aviation offers flyers a reduced risk of contamination with other members of the public.

For corporates and individuals who choose to charter for their health and safety, but are concerned for the environmental impact; Victor is the world's most environmentally responsible air charter company and the only aviation provider in the world to mandate 200% carbon offsetting on every flight. This is at no extra cost to the flyer, with the option of sustainable aviation fuel to be added as soon as logistically possible on a large scale.

Victor Founder, Clive Jackson, comments: "During the COVID-19 emergency and with the ever-changing travel rules, we've seen that those that need to fly value the personal element of our service more than ever before. Our Victor Rescue team has been on hand to provide expert advice no matter the size of the logistical challenges and time-pressures to deliver.

"Private aviation is beginning to be perceived more broadly as a fundamental mobility and business tool, as evidenced by the current greater corporate interest in our service. As for leisure travel, we look forward to being able to support those countries with a huge economic reliance on tourism - typically our summer hotspot destinations - by bringing travellers to them in a controlled, considered and environmentally responsible manner when border control allows."

Access the latest government travel guidance and border regulations using Victor's COVID-19 travel portal. Sign up for updates at www.flyvictor/covid.

Victor membership is free to join. To become a Victor member, please visit www.flyvictor.com or call +44 (0)20 7384 8550

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ABOUT VICTOR:

Victor is a leading on-demand air charter provider that combines smart technology with unrivalled customer service to ensure flyers are always connected and in control. Launched in 2011, the company has rewritten the rulebook for private jet charter with a subscription-free digital marketplace offering access to thousands of aircraft via a global network of over 200 partner operators. Victor members receive fully transparent, competitive quotes, allowing them to quickly check pricing options and aircraft specifics before booking the flights they need. From door to door, each trip is coordinated right down to the last detail. Victor is the most environmentally responsible charter provider, with every Victor booked flight 200% carbon offset as a standard as part of its award-winning approach to sustainability.