

ANTONOV TRANSPORTS BRISTOW'S S-92S FROM NEW IBERIA TO NORWAY

News / Business aviation



On August 15, 2016, an Antonov 124, one of the largest aircraft in the world, arrived at Bristow's New Iberia base to transport two Sikorsky S-92s to Norway.

In preparation of the aircraft movement, Bristow's maintenance crew in Galliano completed the Bristow Continuous Airworthiness Maintenance Program tasks on one of the S-92s and also ensured that the aircraft was updated with Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast and Sky connect systems. The aircraft was then moved to New Iberia where the hangar maintenance crew performed further modifications and painted the aircraft in Bristow colors. The other S-92 was prepared in Canada and then flown to New Iberia where both aircraft underwent final preparations for shipment. There was a tight schedule for these aircraft, and the maintenance teams did the necessary work to ensure that all deadlines were met.

In order to transport the S-92s, the helicopters were required to be reconfigured with a 25% fuel load, and struts lowered to accommodate the Antonov's ceiling height. To load the S-92s, the front of the Antonov was lowered to the ground and the nose opened to create enough room. The main and tail rotors, stabilizers, and spare parts were crated and secured into the aircraft, along with the S-92s.



"The coordination involved in this effort is a true testament to our employees and Bristow's global collaboration," said Bristow Americas Regional Director Samantha Willenbacher. "A significant amount of work went into preparing these aircraft for operations in Norway. Even in the midst of the historic Louisiana flooding, the team worked tirelessly to ensure the helicopters were ready to be loaded so the Antonov could depart on time. James Kennedy and his team did an incredible job to support our global operations."

"The coordination between the regions, as well as among the operations, fleet, legal, compliance and finance teams behind the scenes, were also critical to the relocation of these aircraft," said Bristow Senior Vice President, Chief Legal and Support Officer Chip Earle. "Both aircraft are leased to Bristow, so our legal and finance teams had to work closely with the lessor of the aircraft on the relocation of the aircraft out of the U.S. The aircraft will also be outfitted with ITAR-controlled equipment, which required our compliance team to work closely with our lessor and the U.S. Department of State to seek the authorization necessary for the export of the ITAR-controlled equipment to Norway."

The New Iberia base is one of the few airports that has the capacity to handle an aircraft as big as the Antonov 124. Its secondary runway is big enough to accommodate the space shuttle. The Antonov has a wingspan of 240 feet and maximum take-off weight of 392 metric tons, which enable it to handle the two S-92s, which each have a width of 17.3 feet and body length of 56 feet, and weigh 15,500 pounds each.

18 AUGUST 2016

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