

KOREA'S FIRST FBO SET TO DEBUT

News / Business aviation



With the opening of the **Seoul-Gimpo Business Aviation Center** just months away, members of the **Korea** Airports Corporation (KAC) and Avjet Asia are here at the NBAA show (Booth C13029) to provide information about the new facility and the services it will offer. KAC owns the facility, and Avjet Asia will assist in its management. The Seoul-Gimpo Business Aviation Center is South Korea's **first** dedicated **FBO**.

"Seoul-Gimpo Business Aviation Center is suited as the business aviation hub of Northeast Asia," said KAC president and CEO Kim Seok-Ki, who is on hand to welcome show attendees. "Its opening will be the catalyst for the future growth of the business aviation market." Private aviation traffic at the airport has risen considerably over the last decade, from 179 flights in 2005 to more than 1,100 last year, spurring the need for a modern FBO.

Construction of the \$411 million facility at Gimpo International Airport, located less than 10 miles from the capital's downtown business district, is expected to be completed by the end of the year, with a grand opening to follow next April.

The location includes a 32,000-sq-ft two-level bizav terminal operated by KAC, with onsite customs, immigration and quarantine control, passenger and crew lounges, and a 10-seat a/v-equipped conference room. The 255,000-sq-ft hangar will be able to simultaneously accommodate eight G550s, with parking available on an hourly, daily or monthly basis. Ground handling and line service will be provided by Avjet and will also include line and AOG maintenance and interior and exterior aircraft cleaning. "With its world-class VIP facilities and services, Seoul-Gimpo BAC will be the perfect gateway for global VIPs visiting Korea," noted Kim.

While aircraft parking space may be an issue at other Asian airports, Gimpo, which features a pair of runways longer than 10,000 feet, offers 72 parking stands, including four dedicated to business aviation use located directly in front of the terminal. According to government-owned KAC, which operates 13 other airports across South Korea, that network provides easy transfer to any major city in the country, while its surplus slots at Gimpo, which is currently operating at 60 percent of peak capacity, guarantee no delays during operational hours. Added benefits to operating in the region include low costs and a short and straightforward permitting process.

In addition to attracting traffic specifically operating in and out of South Korea, Avjet chairman and CEO Marc Foulkrod believes the new FBO will become a popular transit stop for business aviation traffic in northeast Asia. “People are still having a lot of difficulty [operating] in China, and Seoul is less than a two-hour flight to Beijing and also convenient for Hong Kong,” he told AIN. “South Korea is English-speaking and a much easier place [to do business] than China. Some people are pulling their aircraft out of China and basing them elsewhere.”

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