

PRESS RELEASE

19 February 2010

**Celebrating 100 Years of Aviation in the West of England
Airbus, Bristol International Airport and easyJet Launch BAC 100 Celebrations, and recognise
£11.5 billion industry in the UK**

An easyJet Airbus A319 was today named “Sir George White” to commemorate 100 years of aerospace design, engineering and manufacturing in the Bristol region. Today’s ceremony, which is the launch event for centenary celebrations of aviation in the West of England, was marked with a VIP champagne reception at Bristol International Airport, a commemorative flight over the city of Bristol, and a ceremony at Airbus’s site at Filton.

Sir George White founded the Bristol Aeroplane Company (BAC) at Filton, near Bristol, in February 1910. From these humble beginnings, globally significant enterprises that are now major parts of UK aviation giants Airbus and Rolls-Royce plc, and an environment that supports aerospace suppliers across the country, was born. Sir George’s pioneering spirit also lives on in the world-class scientific research to be found throughout many UK universities and industrial sectors.

Today, aviation supports 200,000 jobs directly, and 500,000 indirectly, in the UK, and is worth more than £11.5 billion in GDP. These jobs cover skills from designing complex IT systems, advanced engineering and manufacturing, to customer services. All are vital pieces to the UK economy.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown said: “It gives me great pleasure to support the celebrations marking the centenary of aviation in the West of England. Since the Bristol Aeroplane Company was founded by Sir George White, the industry has pioneered some of the most significant technological developments and innovations. Today, Bristol and the South West can be proud of its position as one of the world’s leading centres for aerospace engineering and advanced manufacturing. It is truly a British success story. And its position in the UK economy will only be enhanced as we look to sectors like aerospace and advanced technology to underpin strong, sustainable growth in the future.”

Tom Williams, Airbus’ Executive Vice-President of Programmes, said, “BAC 100 celebrates technology, innovation and advanced engineering in the West of England, past, present and future. For 100 years, Airbus and hundreds of other companies have led the technological development of our industry, and designed and manufactured some of the world’s leading aircraft and engines right here in this quiet corner of the UK. Working hard, we have built a £11 billion industry for the UK and influenced aviation around the world. It is fair to say we proudly hold and nurture the „crown jewels“ of UK aerospace in our very capable hands. Airbus is proud of our heritage in Bristol, and proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of the industry during the BAC 100 celebrations this year.”

Andy Harrison, CEO of easyJet, said: As the UK’s largest airline, we are proud to honor Sir George White’s pioneering spirit. Like Airbus, which has evolved from modest roots in Bristol to become a world market leader, easyJet has grown from a small airline with two aircraft to Europe’s number one air transport network in just 15 years. Today, easyJet is Airbus’ largest European customer with one aircraft being delivered to us every 14 days, which will allow us to carry 50 million passengers on 400 routes this year. Just as Airbus has been a pioneer for the last 40 years, we are now looking for the

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next pioneering steps in developing the next generation of cleaner, greener aircraft to allow the industry to reduce carbon emissions.”

Robert Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer of Bristol International Airport, said: “With easyJet basing 10 Airbus aircraft at Bristol International Airport year-round, we see the incredible results of Sir George White’s vision every day. These aircraft link the South West to destinations across the UK and Europe, connecting the region’s businesses to new markets, helping families and friends stay in touch and enabling local people to achieve their travel aspirations from their regional airport. We are proud to play our part in today’s celebrations and to serve a region synonymous with aviation excellence.”

The 2010 BAC 100 programme will commemorate and promote the West of England’s technological achievements through education and arts projects, exhibitions, publications and community-based events, among other activities. The year-long celebration is a collaboration between local authorities, businesses and business organisations, heritage groups, arts organisations and other bodies, including Airbus, GWE Business West and Rolls Royce. Events will not only look at a landmark in aviation history but also explore future challenges and aspirations in aviation design and travel, and consider the wider role of science and technology in shaping the region. For more information about BAC 100, go to www.bac2010.co.uk.

Additional Quotable Quotes

“This is a fantastic project, dealing with a part of the Bristol story which is of international significance. The events and activities which are taking place over the next ten months will reach out to people who might otherwise think that heritage is not for them, and encourage them to think about the past - and their ownership of it - in a fresh new way. And the project's lasting legacy will enable the communities of Bristol and South Gloucestershire to discover, explore and celebrate a century of achievement which belongs to them.”

--Adrian Tinniswood, Committee Chair-**Heritage Lottery Fund South West**

“The **Royal Aeronautical Society** is absolutely delighted to be associated with the celebrations recognizing 100 years of aviation in the West of England. Sir George White, founder of the Bristol Aeroplane Company, made a pivotal contribution in establishing Bristol as a world class centre of design and manufacturing, which it continues to be to this day.”

“On behalf of **UNITE and our union predecessors** I would like to wish BAC100 a successful year of celebration to mark the centenary of aviation in the West of England. The contribution made by the hundreds of thousands of men and women who brought such success to the UK economy should be appropriately recognised. Many of them made immense sacrifices and played an important part in Great Britain’s place in the global aerospace industry. We look forward to this success continuing.”

--Hugh Scullion, General Secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding & Engineering Unions

“The **RDA** is delighted and very proud to support the BAC 100 celebrations. With the top 10 UK aerospace companies based or operating in the South West, the region is known around the globe for its world-class, innovative aerospace technology and design, as well as its research and development. All of this began with Sir George White's pioneering vision and technological foresight 100 years ago today which has led to the establishment of Bristol as an aerospace centre of excellence.”

--Graham Harrison, Director of International Business, RDA

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"GWE Business West is delighted to support the BAC 100 celebrations as we recognise the outstanding contribution the West of England aviation industry has made to this region as well as nationally and globally. The story of Bristol businessman Sir George White setting up his pioneering aviation company at Filton, and the unique legacy that he helped to build, and from which we continue to benefit, is an inspirational one for business people today."

--John Savage, GWE Business West.

"The UK is number one in Europe for aerospace, second only to the US globally, directly employing over 100,000 people in the sector that is responsible for £20 billion per year to the UK economy. None of this would be possible without the foundations that Sir George White laid down alongside other British aerospace pioneers. The country owes them a debt of gratitude. A|D|S proudly joins the celebrations of the centenary of BAC and looks forward to the continuing success of aerospace in Bristol through the world-leading UK-based companies that now call the area home."

--Ian Godden, Chairman of A|D|S

"All of Airbus shares your joy as Filton celebrates Centenary Day. This proud moment in history is one to be treasured, and I am certain there are even more special times to come as your BAC 100 events unfold throughout 2010. This celebration coincides with Airbus' 40th anniversary and provides a great opportunity to showcase the innovative spirit that has made this region's aerospace industry so successful. I am delighted that easyJet, one of our biggest customers, are a key partner in the activity and I wish to thank them and the other partners for their support."

--Tom Enders, CEO, Airbus

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

The BAC 100 programme has been developed over the last three years by a partnership that brings together representatives of industry, volunteer heritage groups, local authorities and cultural organisations, along with individual aviation enthusiasts. It is an initiative of Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (Arts Council England, Bristol City Council and GWE Business West) working with Airbus and Rolls-Royce. Sponsors of BAC 100 are: Airbus, BAE Systems, Bristol International Airport, Component Coating and Repair Services Ltd., GKN, MBDA, Rolls-Royce, University of the West of England. The Heritage Lottery Fund has made a grant towards the project and Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council are also funding BAC 100.

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