



DEVELOPING THE INDUSTRY WITH KOREA'S FIRST FBO

INTERVIEW WITH MR. WOOSANG CHO, AVJET ASIA CEO & PRESIDENT

Interview by Litalia Yoakum

Providing 35 years of world-class, executive jet charter, aircraft management, completions and sales management services to clients across the world, Avjet entered the Asia market in 2008. Established by Mr. Marc J. Foulkrod, former owner of Avjet Corporation, along with Mr. Wooksang Cho, former Executive VP of Samsung's Business Jet Operations Team, the duo saw the importance of the China market and the potential of the Korean market. From there, Avjet Asia was born, offering multi-lingual, multi-national operational support around-the-clock.

In 2016, the Avjet Asia team was at the forefront of opening Korea's first fixed-based operation (FBO) in Seoul. Working with Korea Airports Corporation (KAC), the FBO has allowed Korea to become a business aviation hub, as well as providing the country with the right tools to continue to develop its industry.

Why did Avjet come to Asia and specifically Korea?

With a growing number of business jets in the Asia-Pacific region, we believed a dedicated facility was needed in the Korea.

Operating 14 Airports in Korea, KAC agreed to the construction of an FBO but was new to the concept and operation. They requested concrete and abstract assistance from Avjet Asia, because our staff has extensive experience with ground handling and flight support services. Avjet Asia was fully involved in the process – from the conceptual ideas of the FBO, to the required environment and equipment, operational issues, and safety measures.

Opening in June 2016, the Seoul-Gimpo Business Aviation Centre (SGBAC) functions as a VIP terminal, with private lounges and where customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) clearance is done. KAC operates the Business Aviation Centre to control regulations and procedures, specifically for CIQ. Adjacent to the terminal is the maintenance hangar operated by Avjet Asia.

Korea now has the potential of being a major transit stop within Northeast Asia because it is located two hours from major cities such as Beijing and Tokyo. We see good growth prospects for business aviation here in Korea.

What services does Avjet Asia provide?

As the first and only FBO in Korea, Avjet Asia provides services that are dedicated to business jets. To fulfill this, we have continuously put in effort to develop a well facilitated FBO.

We offer all the necessities for a smooth flight, all done under experienced experts from the Flight Support Team and Aircraft Maintenance Team. Requests for permits and permissions, flight plan filing and slot coordination are responded to 24/7 and secured at a suitable time. For ground handling, we provide all the requirements including full ramp services, VIP escort, aircraft cleaning and refueling, in-flight catering, hotel booking, and transportation arrangement.

We have our own equipment designated for business jets available, including a towbarless tractor, oxygen, nitrogen, LAV, and POT. We have secure parking spots committed to business jets in front of our hangar. Apart from supervisory agents, we also provide end-to-end services by allocating our staff to crew and passengers respectively.

Our maintenance hangar is available for aircraft parking and minor maintenance work. Fully integrated, the 5,130m² hangar can accommodate six G550s, as well as overnight or long-term hangar storage. We also have FAA AMP-licensed engineers.

What challenges were business jet travelers faced with, prior to the new FBO?

Before the FBO opened, there was no facility designated for business jets travelers, meaning that one-stop FBO services were not available in Korea. Speedy, private CIQ procedures were unavailable, so passengers and crew had to clear CIQ at the commercial terminal with commercial passengers. Also, amenities that are available in FBO terminals such as crew/passenger lounges, conference areas, and relaxation rooms were not available.

There was no ground support equipment for business jet and no other option but to use airline facilities and equipment for ground handling. Parking spots purposed only for business jets were limited, making it hard for ground handlers and agents to secure spots for the aircraft.

How has the new FBO improved Korea's business aviation industry?

Functioning as a VIP terminal, the SGBAC

improved the business aviation industry by giving a positive flight experience to travelers. Time-effective CIQ procedures with privacy guaranteed, as well as the aircraft in safe hands led to an improvement in customer experience. The reaction from the local aviation industry and customers is very positive.

What can business jet travelers expect from the FBO?

From the fixed structure, travelers will be provided a less than 10-minute CIQ clearance through the FBO. Other amenities include an open lounge, three private lounges for crew and passengers, shower and relaxation rooms, conference rooms and a refreshment stand.

The FBO was specifically constructed at the Gimpo International Airport (RKSS) because of its ideal location just 30 to 40 minutes from Seoul's downtown district, making it easy to access the city. The airport also provides ample parking stands and plenty of slots.

Clients that are traveling at length in Korea and require parking can also use the FBO at RKSS. Unlike other airports in Korea, hangar space is available for overnight and long-term.

“ Before the FBO opened, there was no facility designated for business jet travelers, meaning that one-stop FBO services were not available in Korea.



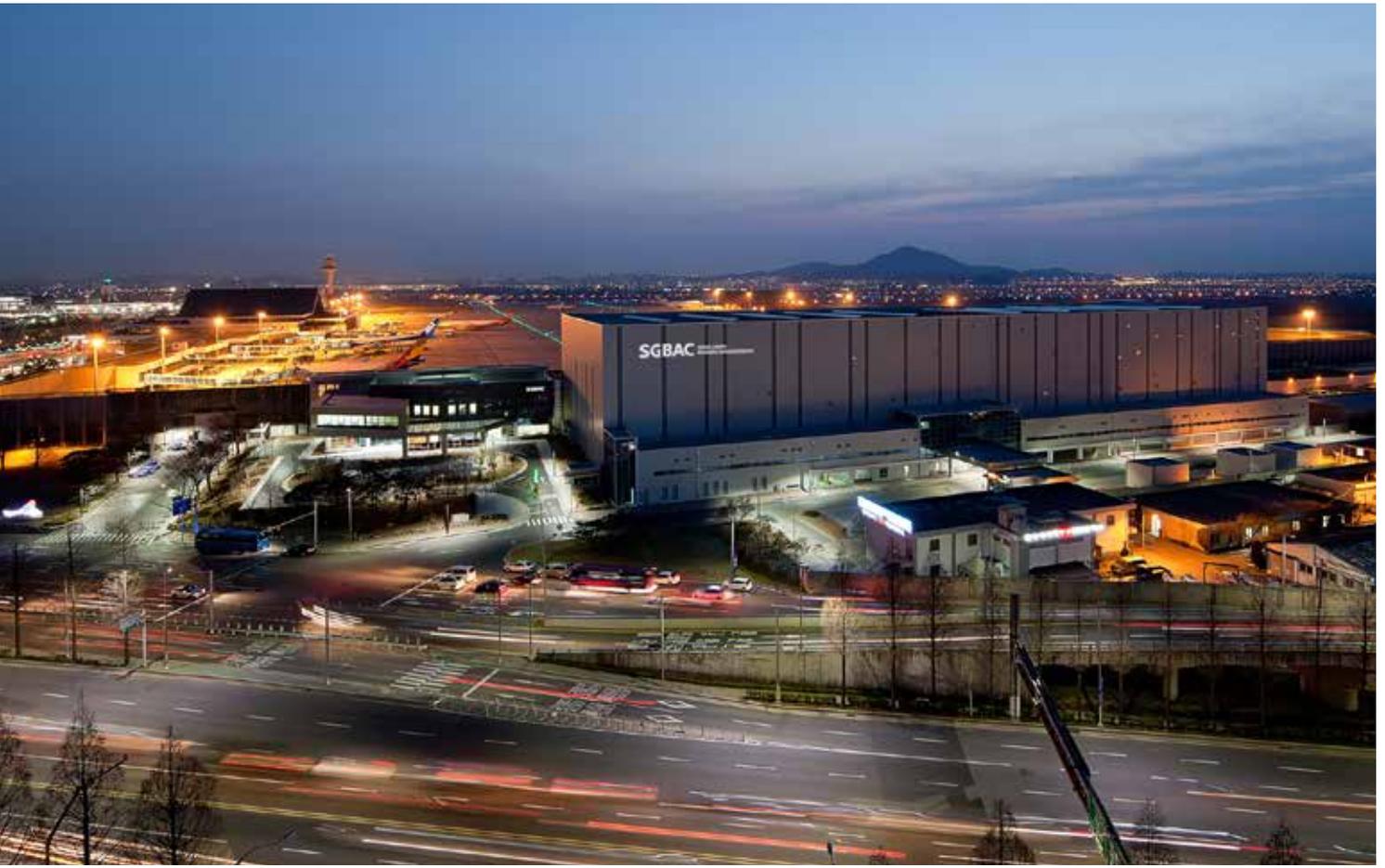
What are some of Avjet Asia's latest successes in the market?

With the dedicated facility, we have been able to handle all flights including private jets with a larger number of passengers, including China's national football team. We've also provided a high level of privacy to celebrities and other highly recognizable individuals that need such services fast, particularly efficient CIQ clearance.

We have initiated a program to develop maintenance work for business jets. With an FAA-certified maintenance team, we provide maintenance support and space, and are in the process of expanding our maintenance capacity by cooperating with local aviation companies.

What are some of the ongoing partnerships Avjet Asia has developed?

Avjet Asia has a partnership with KAC under a ten-year contract, operating the maintenance hangar. We are planning to attend 2017 ABACE (April 11-13, 2017) with a joint operating booth to promote the SGBAC and FBO services.



“ We know we have the potential to be more. With our expertise and wealth of experience, we will show how Korea’s business aviation market will develop.

Avjet Asia is expecting to join the Air Elite Network during the first half of this year. We are proud to be the next to join in Northeast Asia, following Deer Jet, to add to the value of the network.

Avjet Asia also collaborates with five-star hotels in Korea for in-flight catering. We provide the best of services to travelers, and consider the catering experience important as well. We offer a wide-range of menu choices to meet specific tastes, requirements and dietary restrictions.

What can the industry expect from Avjet Asia over the next few years?

As the first and only FBO in Korea, Avjet Asia is becoming more involved with the planning of other FBOs, and continuing to expand and develop within the region. We aim to provide the best quality ground handling services by advancement in both human resources and maintenance/GSE equipment. We also expect a demand for aircraft to be based in Korea from nearby regions, and will provide the required services and requirements for assistance.

We anticipate our business will expand to aircraft maintenance and management. We know we have the potential to be more. With our expertise and wealth of experience, we aim to lead the development of Korea’s business aviation market.

www.avjet.kr