



# ENSURING ALL YOUR CHARTER NEEDS ARE MET

## INTERVIEW WITH MR. SEONGBAE CHO, KOREAN AIR BUSINESS JET SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Interview by Litalia Yoakum

Offering flexible schedules, hassle-free boarding, maximum and ultimate safety, Korean Air Business Jet was established in 2007 to cater to the growing demand from clients, including foreign dignitaries, senior executives and celebrities. Today, the charter division of Korean Air has grown to become one of the largest operators in the country, and in Northeast Asia. Clients can now expect an easy-to-access charter service committed to meeting every need.

### How did the business jet division of Korean Air come about?

Korean Air, as the national carrier of the Republic of Korea (ROK), is performing a pivotal role in enhancing Korea's growing reputation in the aviation industry. As of 2016, Korean Air owns 160 aircraft and operates scheduled flights to 131 cities in 46 countries worldwide. The airline established the Private Charter Business Department in 2007, which exclusively manages the commercial charter sales and operations. At that time, the company only owned one corporate G-IV jet, and today Korean Air is one of the leading operators in Northeast Asia with five business jets and seven helicopters.

### How large is the business jet fleet and what aircraft models are included?

Korean Air currently operates a fleet of five business jets for customers – two BBJ, two Global Express XRS, a brand-new G650ER.

Our BBJ has a special seating feature which can be customized to accommodate 16 seats or 26 seats, per our clients' needs. The

Global Express XRS provides 12-13 spacious seats which include a convertible sofa-bed which allow passengers relief from fatigue during long-distance travel.

Our newest aircraft, a G650ER, is one of the most beloved business jets in the world for its extended long-range performance as well as its spacious and sophisticated interior, featuring panoramic windows and 12-13 seats, including convertible bed seats that offer passengers the utmost comfort. These aircraft ensure passengers will have the most premium experience from Korean Air.

### What are some of the requirements for a charter operator in Korea?

In Korea, it is more common for operators to use commercial aircraft than small aircraft for charter operations. Therefore, the related regulations are similar to those of commercial aircraft charter.

In addition, most of the charter operations are international flights and thus, the entry barrier tends to be very high. Currently, there are eight international carriers registered, including Korean Air, and five operators who are registered with small aircraft of less than 50 seats.

Moreover, due to the special circumstance that South and North Korea are divided, most of the small domestic airports are controlled by the ROK Air Force, and therefore only pre-registered aircraft, such as Korean Air Business Jets, can depart and arrive for domestic routes.

Under this requirement, Korean Air is one of the operators that can provide international-domestic services that connect the main international airports, such as Incheon, Gimpo and Gimhae, directly with local cities using our business jets and helicopters. Recently, we are seeing an increase in customer inquiries for jet services to the cities located near Pyeongchang, where the 2018 Winter Olympic Games will be held.

### What is the target market for Korean Air Business Jet?

CEOs and senior executives of global companies are our key customers, while famous international celebrities and leaders of nations also use our business jets to travel around Asia attending special events. Korean Air is always continuing to develop possibilities for new markets and customers.

### How does the business jet division differ from some of the other charter companies on the market?

Incomparable professionals: Our well-experienced pilots are what we define as the critical differentiator. They are trained not only for business jets but also for other aircraft, which creates an all-rounded crew for the airline. They can handle different situations flexibly, regardless of whether it is a short-haul or long-haul flight. As a leading airline company, which houses a well-reputed infrastructure for training and maintenance, Korean Air can assure travelers will have a pleasant trip delivered by our professionals.

Cost-effective and seamless connection: Passengers can schedule their journeys smartly by combining our business jet service and regularly scheduled flights, enabling them to experience our seamless one-stop connection. For instance, if a passenger wants to travel from New York to Hong Kong, he or she may choose to fly with our scheduled flight from New York to Incheon in our first-class cabin, well-known for its luxurious service and spacious seats. In no time, the passenger can continue his or her journey with our business jet, which will be waiting at the airport for the passenger. This is a cost-effective and timesaving option, optimized to fit our clients' needs.

Confidence in airline safety: With a history of 48 years and experience in extensive training, Korean Air has strong background and experience to offer passengers safe flights with the utmost comfort.

Excellence of Service: At the airport, our dedicated staff will directly assist VIP customers from check-in to boarding to ensure their travel experience is simple and quick. Our unsurpassed in-flight service is well-supported by a group of attentive cabin attendants, all specially trained to offer customers the best service.

In-flight dining: Delicious and memorable, our award-winning meals are created by a team of chefs de cuisine using the finest ingredients to tantalize the palates of our customers.

As a premium airline, Korean Air puts service quality as the most important factor. We are very responsive to customers' feedback and are always ready to listen.



**What does Korean Air Business Jet do to ensure that a client is satisfied on each flight?**

Korean Air Business Jet puts service quality as our most important factor. Therefore, we are very responsive to customers' feedback and are always ready to listen. We believe that satisfying our customers is a top priority and the ultimate goal for the company.

**What is the company doing to keep up with hi-tech and constantly connected clientele?**

We have a dedicated desktop and mobile website for Korean Air Business Jet, which provides customers easy access to Biz Jet charter service offerings. Our mobile site has specific information about our fleet including pictures and specifications in six different languages – Korean, Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Russian and English. Additionally, customers can easily send their inquiry by clicking just one button on our mobile site, ensuring the utmost convenience. This way, we can stay connected to our customers of diverse global markets and the growing needs of the industry.

**Korean Air is the only business jet operator in the Korean market and it is a key driver contributing to the expansion of the business jet market.**

**What are some of the successes the company has achieved over the last year or two?**

Providing a one-stop solution covering all processes from aircraft maintenance, ground service and to operation, Korean Air has been providing long-term charter contracts with our regular customers for several years. These are encouraging results for us to establish a fixed and stable passenger demand and driving further business. Recently, we introduced our latest aircraft, G650ER, which strengthened our competitiveness in the market.

**Are there any challenges that the business aviation industry in Korea faces?**

Unlike the advanced business aviation markets in North America and Europe where there is stable demand, the Korean market is likely to be influenced by external factors such as political and economic factors. Furthermore, Korea has a relatively low domestic demand due to the small territory and it is also lacking in airport infrastructure and dedicated facilities for business aviation .



**What does the future hold for Korean Air Business Jet?**

Korean Air is the only business jet operator in the Korean market and is a key driver contributing to the expansion of the whole business jet market. We expect the demand for business jet operations in Northeast Asia will continue to grow constantly.

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