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Swissport and PrivatAir co-found ground handling company in Geneva and lay plans for global collaboration

Swissport and PrivatAir are to establish a new joint company at GenevaAirport. The new company, to be named PrivatPort, will enable the partners to play a substantial role in the exclusive executive private jet handling business. As a second step in the partners' new collaboration, PrivatPort aims to offer similar ground handling services to this customer segment at other airports around the world.

PrivatAir, which is best known as the owner and operator of exclusive private aircraft and is primarily active in the business travel sector, is to embark on a global collaboration with Swissport (which is already active in Geneva) in the ground handling field. The new joint venture will ideally combine the skills and expertise of the two partners in their respective core businesses. The initial activities in Geneva – which recently saw the opening of a new private passenger terminal with its own VIP lounge – mark the first step in a projected global collaboration between the two partners.

“As the seat of so many international organisations and with its established market of private aircraft movements, Geneva is an excellent place to offer this much-enhanced service to our customers,” says Dr. Ludwig Bertsch, Executive Vice President Corporate Services and Private Aviation at Swissport International. Greg Thomas, CEO of PrivatAir, is equally optimistic: “We’re convinced that, with Swissport, we have found

the ideal partner to continue our expansion,” he explains. “All the more so when we consider that Swissport already offers these services at more than 40 airports worldwide.”

The exclusive business aviation sector continues to develop well, despite the current economic difficulties – a trend which is due in no small part to the additional security measures now in force at airports around the world. Private aviation, with its small and medium-sized jets, has experienced annual global growth of some ten per cent over the past few years.

PrivatPort will work with its partners to provide all the ground handling products and services demanded by this discerning top customer group. These will include flight planning and rostering, airport handling, limousine services, catering, safety and security measures, and VIP services of all kinds.

PrivatAir, which was founded in 1977, is one of the world's leaders in the business aviation market. The company operates over 50 aircraft ranging from Learjets to Boeing 757s, and generated total operating revenue of some USD 100 million last year.

Swissport International Ltd., which is majority-owned by Candover Partners Ltd., a leading European buyout specialist based in London, handles 60 million passengers a year at more than 150 airports in 29 countries, together with 2.5 million tonnes of cargo for 600 customers. The company employs some 18 000 personnel on five continents, and recorded total operating revenue of CHF 1.1 billion (around USD 750 million) last year.