



## **News Release**

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### **Next generation air traffic technology goes live at NATS Prestwick**

A new technology platform that will transform air traffic management in the UK has successfully entered service at NATS' Prestwick Control Centre.

The system – called iTEC - is the next generation of air traffic management technology. It includes a range of tools to help reduce air traffic controller workload, increase airspace capacity and improve safety by automatically detecting potential aircraft conflicts ahead of time.

It also helps reduce aircraft fuel burn and emissions by enabling the future introduction of 'Free Route Airspace' above 28,000 feet, allowing aircraft greater flexibility to fly optimum routes and to take advantage of prevailing weather conditions.

iTEC entered limited operational service at Prestwick Centre late on 21 January, with a Jet2 flight from Stansted to Edinburgh being the first to be controlled using the new system. It is now being used periodically during increasingly busy times to ensure a safe and smooth transition to full operational service in the early summer.

The system is initially being used to only control aircraft in Scotland's upper airspace sectors, but will be rolled out across the entire NATS operation at Prestwick and Swanwick centres over the next five years.

Alastair Muir, NATS Operations Director at Prestwick Centre said: "Delivering iTEC into Prestwick upper airspace is a major achievement for NATS that wouldn't have been possible without the support of everyone involved. In time, iTEC will become the single technology platform for our entire UK operation, helping to make us more flexible, efficient and resilient with big benefits for our airline customers."

The iTEC platform has been developed by Indra to be interoperable with air traffic management systems across Europe. Its introduction at Prestwick – only its second deployment - represents a major milestone for NATS and helps bring a Single European Sky closer to reality.

Gonzalo Gavín, Director at Indra ATM Europe, said: "The delivery and deployment of iTEC into the Prestwick Centre is a truly significant collaborative achievement for both NATS and Indra. The system is designed to support two vital future ATM operational concepts: 4D trajectories and interoperability across Europe.

"Trajectory based operations will mean that airline preferred routing can be applied wherever possible, while iTEC is also able also to predict where a flight will be in advance. This will help support conflict-free flight plans that avoid the need for multiple tactical clearances. The controller will then be free to focus on monitoring the plan rather than giving instructions to maintain separation, enabling them to handle more traffic and thus reducing the cost per-flight."

The successful deployment of iTEC at Prestwick is part of a broader technology transformation programme at NATS that will see the air traffic management company investing £600 million over the next five years.

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**Note to editors:**

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**About NATS**

NATS is a leading air navigation services specialist, handling 2.2 million flights in 2014/15, covering the UK and eastern North Atlantic. NATS provides air traffic control from centres at Swanwick, Hampshire and Prestwick, Ayrshire.

NATS also provides air traffic control services at 14 UK airports including Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow; at Gibraltar Airport and, in a joint venture with Ferrovial, at a number of airport towers in Spain.

Building on its reputation for operational excellence and innovation, NATS also offers aerodrome, data, engineering and consultancy solutions to customers worldwide, including airports, air traffic service providers and Governments. There is more information on the NATS website at [www.nats.aero](http://www.nats.aero)