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Central German Airports Group

▶ Volkmar Stein Receives the Saxon Order of Merit

Volkmar Stein, who was formerly CEO of the Central German Airports Group and has been in retirement since the beginning of this year, was awarded the Saxon Order of Merit at the end of November.



Volkmar Stein (left) received the Saxon Order of Merit from Georg Milbradt

State premier Georg Milbradt presented the Saxon Order of Merit to Volkmar Stein and eight other people on 22 November. The ceremony took place at the Saxon State Chancellery in Dresden. Volkmar Stein was commended for his special commitment to establishing high-capacity transport infrastructure for air, road and rail traffic. The citation spoke of his major contribution to the economic structure of the Free State and the Central German region.

The Saxon Order of Merit was first presented on 27 October 1997 and it is the highest award in the Free State of Saxony. It is given to national and international figures for services, which have brought great benefits to the general public, particularly in political, social, cultural or economic matters or in relation to environmental issues. 157 people have received the award over the past ten years.



Central German Airports Group

► Survey: Dresden and Leipzig/Halle Top the List

Dresden and Leipzig/Halle Airports are the tops: the users of the Internet portal travelchannel.de selected the airport in the Saxon state capital as the best German facility.



Everything on the spot, modern surroundings, a friendly atmosphere: Dresden Airport performed best in the eyes of those participating in the survey

Dresden performed best among the 23 German airports that were assessed: its mark was 1.69 overall. The airport's proximity to the city centre and the services on the spot persuaded those taking part in the survey. Münster-Osnabrück Airport captured second place with a mark of 1.77. Leipzig/Halle Airport gained the same marks as Münster-Osnabrück in third place ahead of Munich Airport (1.78). Positions five to ten were filled by Nuremberg (1.89), Hanover (1.94), Frankfurt (1.97), Düsseldorf (1.98), Cologne/Bonn (1.99) and Rostock-Laage (2.01).

2,000 travelchannel users took part in the two-week survey, where more than 200 airports in Germany, Europe and around the world were awarded points rather like children at school for the following categories: location, atmosphere, orientation and service.

Helsinki Airport was voted the best in Europe (1.52) and the best in the world was Sydney (1.38), which pushed Singapore and Hong Kong into positions two and three.

www.travelchannel.de



Central German Airports Group

► Combating Ice and Snow with “Elephants” und Large Snow Shovels

Winter has arrived earlier than normal this year. But the gritting and snow clearing services at Leipzig/Halle Airport and Dresden Airport have successfully passed their first test and created favourable conditions for the airlines.



Leipzig/Halle Airport and PortGround GmbH, the company that operates the ground services, have taken delivery of 25 new special machines in good time for the start of the cold time of year. 17 sweeper/snow blowers were handed over to the snow clearing services at the airport. PortGround GmbH also put into service eight “Elephant” de-icing machines. The two companies have invested a total of € 12.8 million in expanding their vehicle fleets.

The eight new de-icing vehicles can cope with planes that include the Antonov 124 or the Airbus A 380; a mixture of water and glycol at 60 degrees Celsius is sprayed on to the planes. PortGround has 16 of these vehicles at Leipzig/Halle Airport now.

PortGround takes on the winter with new “Elephant” de-icing machines

The snow clearing and gritting team at Leipzig/Halle consists of 94 members of staff. They work in different areas of the airport and are trained for their special tasks. They have to clear the runways, taxiways and airport roads as well as the roads and footpaths for passengers and visitors if there is snow and ice on the ground. These “ice men” are responsible for an area measuring approx. 2.9 million square metres – the size of more than 440 football pitches.

The extension to the runway at Dresden Airport has increased the area, which the 140 members of the snow clearing and gritting team have to keep clear from this winter onwards. The area has grown by twelve percent to 543,100 square metres, the equivalent of 76 football pitches.



The snow-clearing and gritting team, which involves members of the traffic and engineering division and the ground services company PortGround, can operate in two shifts round the clock; it works closely with the air traffic controllers at German Air Traffic Control, the airport’s traffic centre and the German Meteorological Service. The snow-clearing and gritting team is on stand-by until 31 March 2008.

During the record winter of 2005/2006, the snow-clearing and gritting team at Dresden Airport covered a distance of almost 40,000 kilometres – which is almost the same as travelling once round the earth.



Leipzig/Halle Airport

▶ Lufthansa Cargo Moves Freight Flights to Leipzig/Halle

Lufthansa Cargo officially marked the start of its freight flights to and from Leipzig/Halle with a flight to Singapore when the new timetable was introduced at the end of October.



Carsten Spohr, chairman of the executive board at Lufthansa Cargo AG, said: "Leipzig has now become the most important cargo base for Lufthansa Cargo after Frankfurt/Main." Spohr announced that Lufthansa Cargo would build a new logistics centre at Leipzig/Halle Airport by the spring of 2009. He added that investments in this project would total approx. € 25 million.

Leipzig/Halle Airport will become the home base for the new joint cargo airline operated by DHL Express and Lufthansa Cargo from the spring of 2009. The airline will mainly fly to destinations in Asia and the USA using eleven new Boeing 777-200 LRF planes.

Lufthansa Cargo connects the European continent with logistics centres in Asia and the USA with 21 weekly flights; this is part of its intercontinental joint venture with DHL Express

www.lufthansa-cargo.com

Leipzig/Halle Airport

▶ DHL Expands Route Network

The Deutsche Post Express subsidiary DHL is gradually expanding its network of routes at Leipzig/Halle Airport.



32 DHL aircraft – 18 more than in the past – have been using the Central German airport every day since the end of October. The expansion of flight operations is a further step in the establishment of the air freight hub so that it becomes DHL's main European trans-shipment centre. More than 50 cargo flights will take off and land at Leipzig/Halle every day when the hub is officially opened next year.

500 tonnes of freight are already being handled on weekdays now and then transported to other destinations. When full operations begin in 2008, 1,500 tonnes of freight will initially be moved per night and this figure will rise to approx. 2,000 tonnes a day by 2012. DHL is using Airbus A 300, McDonnell Douglas MD 11 and predominantly Boeing 757 cargo planes for these flights.

DHL has been flying to destinations like Wilmington in the USA, Hong Kong, Delhi and Bahrain from Leipzig/Halle since October



Leipzig/Halle Airport

▶ Court Provisionally Confirms Ban on Night Flights for Passenger Traffic

The Federal Administrative Court in Leipzig has rejected applications made by two airlines to grant an interim court order.



Air Berlin and Condor wanted to continue operations at Leipzig/Halle Airport at night. The Leipzig Regional Council had ordered in July 2007 that passenger flights could no longer use Leipzig/Halle Airport between 11.30 p.m. and 5.30 a.m. as from the start of the summer timetable on 30 March 2008. The Federal Administrative Court had criticized what had been largely unrestricted night flight operations in its ruling on 9 November 2006.

Provisional confirmation from the court: passenger planes will remain on the ground at Leipzig/Halle at night in future

The airlines justified their need for night flights by stressing that they were being forced to use their aircraft to the maximum extent because of the tough competition in the tourist traffic market. They added that their operations at Leipzig/Halle were

only profitable if they were able to use the airport throughout the night too. They also argued that the opportunity for unrestricted night flight operations was needed to satisfy customer demand. Tourists, they said, who were flying to the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands, the Middle East or Turkey were particularly interested in cheap flights and travelling in the early hours of their first day and arriving at their destination to be able to make full use of the first day of their holiday. They concluded by saying that the last day of the holiday should also be spent fully at the tourist destination, so return flights often ended in the middle of the night.



Dresden Airport

► Timetable Conference – Participants Would Like to Return to Dresden

Six months ago representatives from 250 airlines from 136 countries around the world met in Dresden to coordinate slots for take-offs and landings. They agreed on the timetables, which are now in force during this 2007/08 winter season, at the 120th IATA Timetable Conference. This was an important meeting, which laid the foundations for all the timetables around the globe during this period.



Quellenangabe: pixello

The flight planners met for the 121st conference in the Canadian city of Toronto in mid-November

The timetables are not the only things that have been available for some time – the results of a survey of the four-day conference have been published too. According to them, half of the participants came from Europe, 15 percent travelled from North America, 10 percent from South East Asia and 7 percent from the Middle East. The remainder were split between Africa, the South West Pacific, Japan/Korea and other parts of Asia.

Most of the guests described travel to and from the conference location as “easy” or “very easy”, 34 percent found the trip to Saxony “rather hard”. 81 percent of the timetable planners also used their stay to see some of the sights in Dresden and

almost two thirds of them spent plenty of cash in local shops. If the flight planners had their way, they could well meet again in Dresden soon. More than two thirds of the flight planners who were questioned were in favour of IATA selecting Dresden as a conference centre again.

Representatives of the airlines meet twice a year for the International Air Transport Association (IATA) timetable conference; the organisation is based in the Canadian city of Montreal. The flight planners coordinate what are known as slots – when an airline may take off and land at a particular airport. The number of slots available depends on the number of runways at an airport and their configuration, what kind of passenger check-in facilities are available, the mix of aircraft, high-speed taxiway turnoffs or weather conditions.



Dresden Airport

▶ Landing Even in Poor Visibility

After the launch of the new runway and the demolition of its old concrete predecessor, a further important part of this project costing millions of euros has been completed.



The tests on the Instrument Landing System (ILS), which went on for several weeks, have been concluded; this opens the door for flight operations in any weather conditions. Dresden Airport is once again certified for Cat IIIb precision instrument approaches for those flights landing in the direction of Dresden-Hellerau.

Cat IIIb precision instrument approaches are now permissible at Dresden Airport again

▶ News from the Central German Business World

▶ Business Initiative Offers Prize Money for the 2008 Central Germany IQ Innovation Competition

For the very first time seven Central German cities are competing in the IQ Innovation Prize. The cities of Leipzig and Dessau, Halle and Jena and the East Thuringian region of Gera, Greiz and Altenburg are all holding local IQ competitions. Participants have a double chance of winning as they automatically take part in the Central German competition.

The competition is being sponsored by the Business Initiative for Central Germany. It is offering prize money worth € 60,000 and membership in the association and it is directed at small and medium-sized enterprises, students and scientists.

The main prize, which is worth € 15,000, is also being sponsored by the three Chambers of Industry and Commerce in Leipzig, Halle-Dessau and East Thuringia for the first time. This competition, which is unique in Germany, runs until 15 March 2008. Applications can be only submitted online at www.iq-mitteldeutschland.de in the following sections: automotive, biotechnology/life sciences, chemistry/plastics, energy/environment, the food industry and information technology.

Key companies affecting the structure of the region and chambers and cities from Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia are involved in the Central German Business Initiative.

**▶ Axel Klug is New Chairman of Supervisory Board at the Business Initiative****Axel Klug is the new chairman of the supervisory board at the Central German Business Initiative.**

Mr Klug is responsible for the Eastern German business operations at the gas producer Air Liquide and he is one of the founding members of the local initiative, which is backed by about 50 companies, chambers and cities. He succeeds the former managing director of TOTAL Raffinerie Mitteldeutschland, Manfred Gieseler, who has gone into retirement.

▶ Production Complex for Line V at Q-Cells AG Inaugurated in Style**Q-Cells AG in Bitterfeld-Wolfen in Saxony-Anhalt has launched its fifth production line. The complex located in the “Solar Valley Thalheim” comprises a cell factory, a new office building and central stores for the factories belonging to Q-Cells AG and its subsidiaries.**

After the completion of this ramp-up in normal operations, the factory now has a production capacity for 240 megawatt peak power (MWp), more than two thirds of the capacity of the existing lines I – IV. This makes line V the largest solar cell factory in Europe and one of the biggest in the world. 212 members of staff will work directly on the production of solar cells on this line around the clock.

More than 2,500 people already work in Solar Valley, which is currently the largest solar power location in Europe. More than 5,000 people are expected to be working in this sector here by 2010. Q-Cells and EverQ and CSG Solar are already manufacturing solar cells and they will be joined by the subsidiary and holding companies Calyxo, Brilliant 234 and Solibro in the production of thin layer solar cell modules either this year or next year. Work is expected to start on Q-Cells' production line VI in 2008.

Q-Cells AG was founded in 1999 with four members of staff and is now the largest independent manufacturer of solar cells in the world. The company, which is listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, has branches in Hong Kong, China and Japan.

**► Closing the Gap – Work Continues on Motorway between Dresden and Prague****An important section of the A17 motorway was opened to traffic in December last year.**

The A17 goes from Dresden southwards via Pirna to the Czech border and continues from there as the D8 to Prague. Work on one of the important cross-border transport projects between Germany and the Czech Republic has been moving forward again this year. In November work started on the stretch of the D8 motorway between Rehlovice and Lovosice, the one part that has still not been built. The section, which passes through the Czech central uplands, is about 16 kilometres long and is due to be completed in 2010.

Saxony's Minister of Economics, Thomas Jurk, believes that the new Dresden-Prague motorway is an important tool for bringing Europe closer together. The route has brought a marked increase in the tourist sector in Saxon Switzerland. The numbers of people spending a night in the area have risen noticeably this year. But there are also advantages for the business world. Czech and Saxon industrial centres are better able to link up. Medium-sized companies in the Free State are already offering their services in the neighbouring country and Czech companies have also recognised the advantages of this fast road and are venturing into Germany.

The catchment area for Dresden Airport is also growing as a result of the fast road link; traffic has been moving on the stretch from the A4 motorway to Ústí nad Labem since the end of December 2006.

► Miscellaneous**► Queen Elizabeth II Accepts Patronage of the 2009 Handel Festival****Every year since 1952 at the beginning of June Halle has put on a festival in honour of its famous son, George Frideric Handel.**

The Handel Festival will enjoy a special honour in 2009: the British Queen Elizabeth II has accepted the invitation to be a patron of the festival. She will hold this honorary position with German President Horst Köhler. 2009 is the 250th anniversary of Handel's death.

The British Queen's private secretary informed the director of the Handel House, Dr. Philipp Adlung, in a letter that the British monarch was happy to be a patron of the festival in honour of the Baroque composer. It is still unclear whether Queen Elizabeth II will actually visit Halle in less than two years' time.

More than 30,000 music lovers from Germany and abroad attend the festival in the city every year. George Frideric Handel's music is not the only thing that continues to attract them – the Handel House is also registering increasing numbers of visitors. The house, where Handel was born on 23 February 1685, is home to a collection of musical instruments.

www.haendelfestspiele.halle.de



► Tourism – Strongest Growth in Leipzig

Leipzig is currently the German city, which is registering the strongest growth rate in the number of nights spent by American tourists.

Michaela Klare, the regional manager of the German National Tourist Board (DZT) for the USA, announced this result at a meeting in Leipzig. She spent some time in the city with her American supervisory board and representatives of the most important tour operators in the USA for an advisory board meeting.

Leipzig recorded the highest growth in the number of overnight stays spent by American tourists last year – an increase of 57.6 percent over 2005. Trailing some way behind, second and third place went to Hamburg (31.7 percent growth) and Berlin (10.8 percent).

This positive trend has also continued this year. Leipzig recorded growth figures of 73.6 percent in the number of overnight stays up until August – way ahead of other German cities. This means approx. 36,000 overnight stays. This means that more US tourists visited Leipzig by August than had done in the whole of 2006 – the annual figure then was 34,733 bookings. Themes like the city's musical past, the New Leipzig School art movement, the Reformation and the peaceful revolution in 1989 are very popular in the USA.

► Frauenkirche Dresden – 4.4 Million Visitors within Two Years

The restored Frauenkirche in Dresden (Church of our Lady) is the city's most important tourist magnet.

So far 4.4 million visitors have been to the church since it was reopened on 30 October 2005 after being destroyed in the Second World War. Between 5,000 and 7,000 people want to visit the impressive domed structure every day. As many as 10,000 believers and visitors come to the Church of Our Lady at weekends and on public holidays. The Saxon State Lutheran Church had assumed before the reopening that only about 3,000 guests would come on a daily basis.

The Church of Our Lady, which had dominated the city skyline for centuries, collapsed after the Allied bombing raids on 15 February 1945. The rubble, which drew attention to the destruction of Dresden, was the dominant feature of the New Market Square in Dresden for decades. The reconstruction of the church, which is more than 91 metres high, began on 27 May 1994 when the first stone was removed; the dome alone is 24 metres high. The reconstruction work cost almost € 183 million – almost € 103 million of this came in the form of donations, gifts or legacies.

Nowadays services are not just held or concerts given in the church – it is primarily an open church, which can be visited on almost any day.

www.frauenkirche-dresden.de



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