



Multihog

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14 Multihogs for Gatwick Airport

Gatwick Airport has taken delivery of a fleet of fourteen Multihog multi-purpose implement carriers which have been fitted with winter resilience equipment in preparation for the upcoming winter period. Twelve Multihogs will be deployed airside for stand clearance, with the remaining two destined for landside operation in car parking and forecourt areas.



Gatwick is the UK's second largest airport and the busiest single-runway airport in the world. It serves more than 200 destinations (more than any other UK airport) in 90 countries for around 33 million passengers a year on short- and long-haul point-to-point services.

Airports across Europe were affected by extreme weather conditions last year. At that time, in December, Gatwick invested £8 million in new snow clearing equipment which has enabled the airport to double the size of its snow kit to 95 vehicles compared to the 47 vehicles last year. The expanded fleet includes snow ploughs, brushes, cutters, blowers and de-icing vehicles as well as tractors and other small plant equipment. A focus was on finding a method of clearing snow and ice from around aircraft parked at stands, which ideally required a smaller machine than the tractors that had traditionally been used for this task.

“We were looking for something compact and manoeuvrable which could access the whole of the stand area for efficient clearance”, says Airfield Operations Safety Standards and Training Manager David Charman. “We liked what we saw on the Multihog website and were even more impressed when we saw it in action at a demo here on site. Its powerful hydraulics enable it to be fitted with implements both front and rear, which is a great benefit, as the tractors could only operate with front attachments.”



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Gatwick's Multihogs are fitted with a front snow plough and brush combination, which was developed according to the airport's requirements. David comments: "We had had experience of this on other vehicles and recognised it as the most effective solution for initial ploughing and final sweeping. Multihog's manufacturers have a very 'can do' philosophy towards customer initiatives and their designers quickly came up with the exact specifications that we wanted. Together with the rear attachments we have in effect a '3 in 1 machine' at our disposal." Rear mounted 1,200 litre de-icing sprayers are fitted to the airside vehicles, with 1m³ gritter units being chosen for the landside operation.

Members of Gatwick's repair and maintenance team underwent workshop training at Multihog's manufacturing facility in Dundalk, Ireland to ensure the day to day smooth running of the fleet, and extra airport personnel have been trained to operate the vehicles should weather conditions be particularly severe. "We have had nothing but positive experiences with Multihog since we embarked on this project," says David. "The machines were all delivered on schedule, the sales team and manufacturers have been very accommodating to our demands, and we now have a system in place that should minimise disruption to passengers and ensure clear working conditions for ground service, baggage handling and refueling personnel airside. Landside the Multihogs will enable us to offer a new and enhanced service for customers. The all-seasonal ability of the vehicles also means that we will be able to look at further applications for the warmer months of the year."

The diesel powered, hydrostatically driven Multihog is fully designed and manufactured in Ireland with particular focus on the ability to remain operational all year round, thus increasing product utilisation, decreasing operating costs and minimising labour requirements.