

The Marketplace for Global Events

Transport Case Study: Avolus

Rochan Faustmann, 8 November 2010

Avolus is a leading private aviation and executive transport company, providing seamless integrated travel across private jets, helicopters, yachts and limousines worldwide. In this case study written for MEI, Avolus shows how its solutions kept one particular film shoot on track.

Avolus services together present one of the most comprehensive private aviation and executive transport organisations in the world, meeting the needs of corporate and HNWI private aviation users and industry clients worldwide.

Since its formation in 2004, Avolus has provided executive charter solutions for the music and film industry with clients including some of the world's top international DJs, bands and film production companies from across the globe.

Private transport for the entertainment industry is an extremely useful business tool, providing time efficient and reliable solutions and avoiding many logistical hurdles experienced with travelling commercially.

For a recent flight, Avolus was approached by international film production company, Memmento Group, which was facing logistical difficulties with transportation from Dushanbe, Tajikistan to Djibouti, Africa, where it had been filming its latest project 'Forces Speciales'.

Memmento Group had originally planned a commercial flight from Dushanbe to Djibouti, however, due to the film set's remote location the production team had to stop over in Dubai for 24 hours, transforming a six hours flight into a complex operation where the 50 passengers would need to be transferred both ways from the airport to the hotel. Therefore, their transport time to the location was going to take two days.

In addition, all Memmento Group's film equipment was scheduled to arrive via air freight transport, which gave no guarantee that its cargo would arrive in time for filming and raised the risk of damage to the delicate filming equipment.

Avolus assigned Memmento Group a personal account manager to provide an appropriate solution to the problems the company was experiencing with its commercial option. The client gave Avolus the following brief:

- 50 passengers
- one way flight from Dushanbe, Tajikistan to Djibouti, Africa
- 9 tonnes of freight

After a meeting in Paris between Memmento Group's operations team and the Avolus personal account manager, three solutions appeared to match the logistical challenge:

- 1) Avolus would provide a cargo aircraft for the 9 tonnes of material and the passengers would travel commercially.
- 2) Two plane scenario, where one cargo plane would transport the freight while a chartered passenger aircraft would take the clients.
- 3) A 'combi plane' which would transport the cargo and passengers in the same aircraft.

The Avolus team was able to find and secure a direct flight to Djibouti on a Boeing 737-400, an aircraft with the capacity for both the 50 passengers and 9 tonnes of freight. This guaranteed the film equipment would arrive on schedule with the passengers, enabling the production team to begin shooting the movie the day they arrived in Djibouti.

This solution presented the client with a shorter travel time than the commercial

option, at a lower cost; as there was only one chartered aircraft. It also gave Memmento Group the extra flexibility in case of last minute problems. The customer was enthusiastic about this option and booked it straight away.

There was a lot of trouble shooting involved prior to the flight, as a Boeing 737-400 is not specially designed to carry large quantities of freight. In addition, the airport infrastructure was not organised for a passenger/cargo mixed flight. The Avolus operations team took precautionary measures; including preparing a loading plan for the aircraft and checking the airport handling facilities at both destinations, to make sure freight movement would go smoothly.

Avolus wanted to provide a special touch during the flight with premium catering for the 50 passengers that were coming back from a month and a half of shooting in the mountains.

Due to the complexity of the operation in Tajikistan, Avolus arranged for its Russian-speaking representative based in Moscow, Russia to fly to Dushanbe to manage the flight; ensuring the plane was loaded and departed safely. This provision ensured Memmento Group was happy with its flight, that it was well-organised and any problems faced with airport authorities were taken care of.

The flight was a success, despite the entire airport in Dushanbe closing due to a presidential flight. The Avolus representative proved his role as flight manager by effectively dealing with the difficulties and limiting the hassle and delay for the passengers.

The client was very pleased with the solution arranged by Avolus. The producer for 'Forces Speciales', Patrick Santiago Meunier, commented on the flight: "The entire team arrived in good shape to our destination. The crew were very friendly and we had no problems during the flight."

Memmento Group was able to save time on transport and save the cost for the individual air freight delivery. The production team arrived to set on schedule and alongside their film equipment, avoiding the stress and hassles of commercial transport. Meunier continued: "Thank you very much, I will not hesitate for one second using Avolus again in the future."

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