

Press Release

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE CHIEF EXECUTIVE RECOGNISES FLYBE AS AMBASSADOR FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

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The Chief Executive of the National Apprenticeship Service, Simon Waugh, has made his first official visit to the South West since his appointment to visit Flybe's Training Academy at Exeter Airport.

Flybe, Europe's largest and most successful regional airline, currently has 32 Engineering Apprentices training at the Academy, all of whom are promised employment with the airline as a Licensed Engineer on successful completion of their apprenticeship.

Simon Waugh commented: "In the current economic climate it is more important than ever that businesses invest in their future. Apprenticeships are a key weapon in increasing a business' competitiveness in the marketplace, not only by providing a highly skilled workforce but also by boosting productivity and staff retention.

"Flybe is a great example of a South West company that is committed to investing in the skill set of its workforce in these challenging economic times and I would very much hope other businesses in the region follow their lead."

Simon Waugh was appointed Chief Executive of the National Apprenticeship Service in February 2009. The National Apprenticeship Service will encourage a very significant increase in the number of apprenticeship opportunities in the coming years, whilst making apprenticeships easily accessible to both employers and learners.

To find out more about Apprenticeships, visit apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600

In welcoming Mr Waugh to Flybe's Exeter headquarters, the airline's Director of Safety, Quality & Training, Simon Witts, highlighted the ways in which Flybe has developed its in-house apprenticeship training with a focus on meeting the particular challenges facing the aviation industry in its ongoing need for highly skilled workers.

He said: "Flybe has bucked the global aviation industry trend by continuing to develop and thrive as a business and one of our key areas of focus has been training to ensure that we have access to a continual supply of highly skilled workers. We hope our successes to date will help encourage other companies to reflect on the many benefits to be gained from developing comprehensive schemes to train their employees."

The number of apprenticeships in the UK has risen from 75,000 to 240,000 in the last ten years. In the South West alone, there are almost 49,000 learners on apprenticeship programmes offered by more than 17,000 companies across the region.

Over the next decade, more employers across the country will be encouraged to offer apprenticeships with the aim of supporting one in five young people. The number of places on offer to 16 to 18 year olds will increase by 90,000 by 2013.

- Ends -

Notes to editors

For further media information contact:

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

The NAS was launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service will drive forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships. The service aims to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships. The NAS has total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships including: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based vacancy

matching system. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants. The service has ultimate accountability for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of the funding for Apprenticeship places. It will act to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme and assume responsibility for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.