

British midland and mexicana airlines welcomed to the star alliance network

VIENNA, June 26, 2000 – Chief Executive Officers of Star Alliance airlines, meeting in Vienna, Austria, today welcomed British Midland and Mexicana Airlines to their global airline partnership. Both airlines will officially join the alliance on July 1, bringing the total membership to 13.

British Midland serves 32 destinations throughout Europe from its main hub at London Heathrow and is the UK's second largest scheduled carrier. Last year the airline, which employs more than 6,000 people, carried 6 million passengers with a fleet of 60 aircraft. When British Midland joins Star Alliance on July 1, London Heathrow will be transformed into the only airport in Europe to be the hub of two competing alliances.

The oldest airline of Mexico, Mexicana Airlines maintains a route network covering 50 destinations in nine countries. Some 7 million passengers flew on Mexicana in 1999. The airline operates a fleet of 54 aircraft and has 6,300 employees.

"Star Alliance has achieved an impressive growth since it was established in May of 1997 by five airlines coming together with the vision of providing their customers with global reach and seamless travel. Including the two new members the Star Alliance network today offers easy access to over 815 destinations in more than 130 countries and has an experience advantage of more than two years over other airline groupings," said Mario Rehulka, President of Austrian Airlines.

The Star Alliance CEOs also indicated that "the airline network for Earth" is close to reaching its completion in terms of number of members. "We have largely fulfilled our promise of providing unsurpassed global access with a few exceptions. We are confident of finding partners that will allow us to expand our network to areas of the globe where we do not have a presence today," they said.

Star Alliance groups together several of the world's leading airlines. The members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, All Nippon Airways, Austrian Airlines Group (Austrian Airlines, Lauda Air and Tyrolean Airways), Ansett Australia, British Midland, Lufthansa German Airlines, Mexicana Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines SAS, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways International, United Airlines and VARIG Brazilian Airlines

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