



PRESS RELEASE – 19th April 2010

Gloucestershire Airport busier than Heathrow!



Despite the air travel chaos affecting most of Northern Europe, Gloucestershire Airport has continued to operate.

Although the scheduled services to the Isle of Man and Jersey and the business jets have been unable to fly during the airspace restrictions in place, piston-engined training and private aircraft are unaffected by the volcanic ash.

The County's airport is also home to the Natural Environmental Research Council's Dornier 228 research aircraft, which has been airborne throughout the last five days collecting data and analysing the ash cloud over UK airspace.

Head of Operations, Darren Lewington said: "Since last Thursday, we've handled just over 1000 flights, which is around 85% of our normal levels at this time of year. Light aircraft have piston engines, which are not affected by the volcanic ash, enabling some flying training and private flying to continue, particularly as the weather has been good."

"The NERC aircraft has had a very busy weekend, providing vital data for the Met. Office as this unprecedented crisis continues. The Civil Aviation Authority has also asked private pilots to report any encounters with the ash. We're monitoring the situation closely and will begin Manx2.com passenger flights as soon as we can."

"We also launched our second hot balloon flight on Sunday with fourteen passengers. After a gentle flight over Cooper's Hill, in almost perfect conditions, the balloon landed near Cranham at around 7.30pm – it's very unusual but, for once, we carried more passengers than Heathrow!"

For more information, please visit www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk