

MEDIA STATEMENT



April 2nd 2015

FOCA APPROVES THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN DARWIN AIRLINE AND ETIHAD AIRWAYS

Today, the Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA) closed its investigation into the Etihad Airways' investment and gave the final approval of the partnership between the Swiss regional carrier Darwin Airline and Etihad Airways, the national carrier of the United Arab Emirates.

In the first months of 2014, Darwin Airline announced an equity partnership, through which Etihad Airways would acquire a 33,3 percent stake in Darwin Airline, and Darwin Airline would be rebranded as Etihad Regional, adopting a new brand image and livery for its fleet.

As the responsible authority in the matter and as due diligence, FOCA started an investigation to ensure that the partnership between Darwin Airline and Etihad Airways was in accordance with European regulation related to "Ownership and Control" matters.

"After our latest meeting held in February, we were confident that we could reach a positive outcome with FOCA approving our deal with Etihad Airways" commented Maurizio Merlo, CEO of Darwin Airline.

"We presented our new business plan with all related financial projections, and FOCA confirmed that these plans would comply with the European regulations. Since announcing our partnership with Etihad Airways, we focused all our efforts on cost reduction and on a new business strategy. We worked very closely with both Etihad Airways and FOCA to address the authority's concerns about the viability of our company and to reassure the authorities

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that European regulations are respected in all our transaction with Etihad Airways. This partnership will provide us the financial stability for the long-term growth of our company, dispelling any market uncertainty”, added Mr. Merlo.

- Ends -

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