



## Private operator ACR takes over the towers at five additional Swedish airports and grows rapidly

The deregulation of air traffic services (ATS) at Swedish airports has taken off well and since year-end the private Swedish company ACR Aviation Capacity Resources is operating the control towers at nine of the country's 36 airports. ACR more than doubled their business when the company 1 January took over the towers at the airports in Kalmar, Jönköping, Norrköping, Karlstad and Skellefteå.

The background to the takeover is that ACR won the joint procurement for the five airports last year. Since 2010 when the new Swedish Civil Aviation Act came into force the airport owners have the opportunity to procure the local air traffic services. Earlier the state-owned operator LFV had a monopoly on this business.

"The takeover is the largest we have done so far and the implementation has been successful. We have the air traffic controllers in the five control towers and our good preparations to thank. We more than doubled our business and grew to about 65 employees over night and it has only been positive reactions to it", says Wilhelm Wohlfahrt, CEO at ACR.

ACR already operates the air traffic services at the airports in Västerås, Växjö and Örebro, since 1 March 2011 and at Trollhättan airport since 1 January 2012. ACR leads both civil and military flights and meet the same safety requirements as other certified providers in Europe.

The deregulation has meant cost savings by up to 30 % for the airports that procured the services from ACR. This also applies to those airports that have carried through a procurement but who have chosen not to change supplier.

"The savings that competitive bidding means may be crucial for smaller and medium sized airports survival. This is extremely important as regional Swedish airports are a significant feature of Swedish enterprise and plays a central role for all people who live outside the metropolitan areas", says Wilhelm Wohlfahrt.

For the five new airports the change of operator means cost savings of around 36 million SEK over the six years agreement compared to prior to competition. It gives them an opportunity to develop the airports without having to ask municipal or government owners for support. While strengthening its competitiveness air traffic services will be cheaper for the airlines.

"The change to the new operator has gone very well and we are very satisfied. Besides better economy we think it is good to have a new supplier who can look at opportunities for improvement and coordination with other activities with new eyes", says Robert Lindberg, General Manager at Skellefteå Airport.

Totally the market for air traffic services in Sweden is estimated to amount to more than 900 million SEK. This means an overall cost efficiency potential of 250 to 300 million SEK annually.

Deregulation of air traffic services is moving ahead in Europe and today the market is competitive in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Spain and the UK, with more countries moving in the same direction including Norway. ACR is the first private company that provides air traffic services in Europe and the aim is eventually set on international expansion.

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*ACR Aviation Capacity Resources is the first private company in Europe that provides air traffic services. ACR operates local air traffic control at nine Swedish airports. The mission for ACR is to operate air traffic services with the highest security and related businesses in a cost effective and streamlined manner. The company was founded in spring 2004 by former SAS CEO Jan Carlzon as partner and chairman and is today run by an experienced management team and renowned board. Among others, both Jan Carlzon and former transport minister Ulrica Messing are members of the board under the chairman Sebastian Ehmrooth.*

Learn more at <http://www.acr-sweden.se/>