NATS SECURES CONTRACTS FOR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SERVICES IN SCOTLAND

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NATS has secured **contracts** with helicopter operators in Aberdeen and Scatsta Airports in order to provide **air traffic control** (ATC) services in the East Shetland Basin, an area of oil and gas exploration north east of the Shetland Islands.

In a unique arrangement, NATS has signed the contracts with four helicopter operators directly – Bristow Group, CHC Helicopter Services, NHV and Bond Offshore Helicopters – providing air traffic control for those who travel to and from the oil and gas platforms in this part of the Northern North Sea. The contract builds on the long-standing offshore services that NATS provides in other areas of the North Sea.

NATS will provide the service remotely from Aberdeen Airport, the world's busiest heliport. The contract is for five years and will run to 2020.

The contract also includes the necessary funding to implement a Wide Area Multi-Lateration (WAM) project to future-proof offshore surveillance coverage.

John Millar, NATS General Manager Aberdeen Airport, said: "I believe this may be the only ATC contract of its kind, as we've engaged with the helicopter companies directly, rather than with an

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airport or national agency. The oil and gas industry in Aberdeen, and in this particular case the Shetland Islands also, is vital, supporting approximately 100,000 jobs in Aberdeen alone with numerous indirect benefits across the UK. We’re therefore delighted to be able to support the industry’s development by providing a safe, efficient and specialised air traffic control service.”

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