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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Four firms bidding for Airport project**

FOUR major construction firms are bidding to carry out the essential maintenance and improvements at Guernsey Airport.

Work on the project, which was approved by the States in 2009 with a budget of £81million, is expected to begin in 2011 and will take around two years to complete. It involves the reconstruction of the runway and other hard surfaces, and the replacement or refurbishment of the drainage system, airfield lighting and other key operational systems.

The current airfield boundary will also be extended to the west to provide longer grass runway end safety areas (RESAs). These are designed to protect passengers and aircraft in the event of an ‘overshoot’ or ‘undershoot’.

Public Services Minister Deputy Bernard Flouquet said the Department was pleased with the number of tenders received.

The firms vying for the contract are Lagan Construction, BAM Nuttall, VolkerFitzpatrick, and Trant. They all have specific experience of airfield construction projects.

‘We carried out a selection process in 2009 which enabled us to shortlist companies with the best credentials and experience to carry out this work. Of the five companies who we invited to tender, all but one has continued to be involved right through to the tender stage,’ he said.

‘This is a very complex construction project, and it is therefore essential that we appoint a contractor with the relevant expertise. At the same time having such a good response to the invitation to tender will help ensure the works are competitively priced.’

All the tenders will now be assessed during the two month evaluation phase, and scored according to previously agreed criteria. These include safety, quality of submission, price and previous experience.

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.../Page 2

Up to two firms will then be selected in December to go into a three-month 'value engineering' phase. This will be an opportunity for Public Services to investigate with them potential cost and time savings through the scheduling of the work and detailed planning of how it will be carried out.

The vast majority of work will be undertaken while the airport remains operational. The reconstruction of the runway will be done in stages overnight, and the apron areas and other key systems will be worked on during the day.

However, a few elements have been identified that might require the runway to be closed for up to two days at a time. Deputy Flouquet said this was still considered to be a last resort, and the successful contractor will be asked to identify ways to reduce these or avoid them altogether, and any additional cost this might incur.

A number of the firms have already held meetings in the island with potential subcontractors. Deputy Flouquet said the use of local skills would be one of the criteria in assessing the tenders.

ENDS

**Notes to editors:-**

- Guernsey Airport opened in 1939, and today provides a gateway to the island for nearly one million business and leisure travellers each year.
- In 2009, the States approved a major programme of essential maintenance and improvements, aimed at equipping the current airport to serve the island for the next 30 years.
- The existing runway was last resurfaced in 1974, and would normally be expected to last between 15 and 30 years. Other areas of the airport are of similar age - in some cases older - and also in need of replacement. These include the concrete apron areas where the aircraft park; the airfield ground lighting, which is now obsolete; and the entire drainage system. The taxiways leading from the aprons to the runway also require overlaying, levelling, and realignment.

For further information, contact:-

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