

# STRAIGHTLINE

## A V I A T I O N

### HYBRID AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS

#### *Introduction*

Straightline Aviation Ltd (SLA) is a UK based company established as a fleet operator of Hybrid Airships and executed a Letter of Intent for 12 aircraft with Hybrid Enterprises, Lockheed Martin's Hybrid sales agent, earlier in 2016, establishing them as prime movers in this new aviation class.

The Company is focused on shipping resources, materials and people to and from remote and previously inaccessible regions of the world including northern Canada and Alaska enabling economic development whilst minimizing environmental impact.

Straightline Aviation is made up of experienced aviation and fleet management executives who have run multiple aviation companies including Virgin Atlantic and leading airship operators The Lightship Group and Virgin Airship and Balloon Company.

#### *Leadership Team*

##### **Mike Kendrick, CEO:**

With over 40 years aviation experience, Mike has held a number of executive positions in the aviation industry, from operations to marketing and PR, and is one of the foremost respected lighter-than-air flight operations executives in the world. In 1988, he formed the Virgin Airship and Balloon Company (VABC) in partnership with Richard Branson, which became the world's largest aerial advertising agency, operating over seventy aircraft (including 17 airships), in more than thirty countries. The company employed in excess of 400 staff. With teams of aviation specialists operating in a highly technical and regulated business to the same criteria of a commercial airline company in over 30 countries globally.

Mike was Project Director of all of Sir Richard Branson's high profile world record attempts, responsible for all aspects of the projects including flight operations, safety, technical assessment and media management. He was the CEO of many Virgin group companies including VABC, Virgin Lightships, The Lightship Group, Blockbuster Virgin, Vintage Airlines, and Virgin Projects.

He has held a commercial pilot's license and has held several aviation world records.

##### **Mark Dorey: Chief Operating Officer**

Mark Dorey is an experienced Commercial Director having held senior positions at a wide spectrum of service industry companies including leading roles in aviation. Having graduated from the London School of Economics in 1985 he trained as a Chartered Accountant with Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), and worked as Group Financial Controller for KLP Group Plc, in charge of mergers and acquisitions. He also worked in a senior international finance role with PepsiCo prior to joining Virgin. Mark held a number of Directorships within Virgin's aerial advertising and marketing

services division, and was Chief Operating Officer of The Lightship Group, managing the largest fleet of commercial airships ever operated. During this time, Mark was responsible for business strategy and planning and negotiated a number of multi-million dollar service contracts with blue chip clients such as Goodyear, Sanyo and Blockbuster Entertainment. He also established businesses in Brazil and Singapore, and handled joint venture and partnership negotiations in the USA, South Africa, and Asia. Mark also held the position as Responsible Officer in respect of the Civil Aviation Authority for UK operations.

Mark also established Virgin balloon flights as the largest UK passenger balloon operator overseeing operations of over 20 aircraft flying in excess of 5,000 passengers per year. With Mike, he was also a Director on Richard Branson's Around The World Flights, and was instrumental in establishing the first private public partnership with the Defense Evaluation and Research Agency, part of the UK MOD, to fly airships for landmine detection.

#### **David Tait OBE: President, North America**

David Tait is an experienced corporate executive. He was recruited by Sir Freddie Laker to serve as the General Manager for Laker Airways and in 1979. Tait moved with the company to Miami, as Vice President, Marketing for the fast-growing carrier's low cost trans-Atlantic service, "SkyTrain".

Following the untimely demise of Laker Airways in 1982, David joined AM&M, a Miami-based aviation consulting firm, where he was asked to write the initial business plan for a start-up airline, which would eventually become Virgin Atlantic Airways. In 1984, Tait moved to New York City to become the fledgling airline's first US employee reporting directly to Chairman Richard Branson. Tait built and led the entire airlines North American operations as Executive Director and Executive Vice President North America from 1984–2002. In 2001, David's achievements were recognized when he was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of The British Empire) by Queen Elizabeth II for "services to British aviation in the United States".

David left Virgin Atlantic in 2002 and served as Chief Executive Officer for Avocet Aircraft and Spitfire Aviation Partners before returning to Canada to take the position of Senior Vice President, Customer Service, for Air Canada in Montreal. .

#### **Jim Dexter: Director of Flight Training and Operations**

Jim Dexter is a highly experienced lighter than air commercial operations executive having held senior positions with all the major airship operating companies over an aviation career spanning 30 years. A qualified pilot, he has been licensed by the FAA, CAA and LBA, and has a total of over 12,000 hours, including 500 as test pilot on several airship development programs.

Jim was recruited by The Virgin Group as Director of Operations at its US based subsidiary, and worked with The Lightship Group, and was instrumental in obtaining a FAA Part 135 Operating Certificate, the first and only ever issued to an airship operator in the United States. During this time he also obtained operating certificates in the UK, Italy, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

Jim has written several operations manuals for airships and was a member of the FAA Rule Making Committee from 2000-03. He has also set up training, audit and inspection programs for airship operations ensuring the highest levels of operational safety.

From 2011, Jim worked as Engineering Test Pilot for Northrop Grumman and was Co-pilot on the LEMV hybrid aircraft flight for the US Army, which was the predecessor to the LMH-1.

**Brian Kessler: Chairman**

Brian Kessler is a prolific inventor who applied for his first patent while in high school and has since designed and developed more than 2,600 products. He is also a successful venture investor and serial entrepreneur. Brian has a strong 30-year history in global manufacturing and worldwide logistics and transportation.

As Founder and President of Maui Toys, from 1988 to 2014 Brian sold and distributed more than 210 million units with a value of over \$1.5 billion. During this time he created, developed and manufactured worldwide-patented consumer goods, overseeing and managing 8 manufacturing facilities (3 domestic and 5 overseas). He was also responsible for a global supply chain serving over 60,000 retail outlets in 60 countries, managing a global sourcing and distribution model moving goods and freight worldwide.

Subsequently, Brian established SBL Venture Capital taking on the role as Chief Executive Officer and Senior Investment Partner, making investments focused on the transportation, consumer products as well as the health and well being markets.

Straightline Aviation website: <http://www.straightlineaviation.com/>