



Crews managed by Hybrid Transit load a 16-foot wide stabilizer bar for an Airbus A320 aircraft aboard the world's second largest cargo airplane, a Russian Antonov 124.

CEDAR RAPIDS

Hybrid Transit advancing aviation department

Large shipping projects gaining attention

By Tim Kenyon

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Word of mouth is the oldest form of marketing but it remains one of the fastest.

That's particularly the case for Hybrid Transit's aviation freight-moving division.

The Cedar Rapids company's notoriety for moving large items quickly is increasing, said Brian Helgens, vice president of aviation. Specifically, it's Hybrid Transit's logistical management of big aircraft parts, Mr. Helgens said.

"The aviation industry is really a small industry. Once you have your foot in the door there is a real opportunity there to show your services to be part of the solution for folks," he said. They have millions invested in aircraft projects and the last thing a project manager wants to do is work through the transportation issues."

Support to transport a parted-out 747 from New Mexico to Arizona is the next big aircraft part transport project slated, he said.

That project is prompted by the company's success in February when it managed transport of a nearly 16-foot wide stabilizer bar from New Mexico to upstate New York and on to Istanbul, Turkey. The stabilizer bar was for a damaged A-320 Airbus plane, which was unable to move until repaired.

"It allowed us to use a hybrid of modes of transportation crated, tagged and permitted properly to go from New Mexico on a semi-truck trailer to New York and then on a chartered Russian Antonov 124 cargo plane, the second-largest cargo plane in the world," General Manager Eric Heskje said.

Project details and regulations were lengthy, Mr. Heskje said.

We found out that you can't take an oversize load into Chicago in rush hour, for example," he said. "There were lots of bits and pieces involved for it to be a success as it takes about a week to get there and each state it went through has different permits and requirements."

The coordination showed the staff's depth of experience and project capability, he said.

"Everything went off without a hitch," he added.

Mr. Helgens joined the company after 18 years in the military and civilian aviation areas. He gradually moved over from Hybrid Transit daily general operations to lead the aviation division, which launched in November 2008.

The division started with just one person, Brian Miller, who has 20 years of air freight forwarding experience.

In March, the division added Scott Barry, who worked at DHL Express as an airport station manager for 17 years in Cedar Rapids.

Mr. Heskje said more large projects including a pending deal to manage transport of a Viper jet from upstate Washington to Saudi Arabia for a royal family member.

He added recent projects have included an airplane engine from New Zealand to the United States, an airplane parted out of the United Kingdom to the United States and other large projects on the same routes.

Hybrid Transit started in October 2005 providing truckload, expedited and intermodal logistic service. Its 120 percent growth earned recognition in May as the No. 7 ranked business in the *Corridor Business Journal's* Fastest Growing Companies awards. It earned the No. 2 spot among the 2008 Fastest Growing Companies. CBJ.