

Gateway lands cargo handler

by **Art Thomason** - Aug. 6, 2010 05:11 PM
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The Valley's Mesa-based reliever airport has landed an ally in its quest to recruit and accommodate additional airlines and cargo carriers.

A company that provides comprehensive aviation services, including heavy-cargo handling at more than 100 airports throughout North America, Europe and Hong Kong would begin operations at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport under a contract to be approved Monday at a special meeting of the governing board.

Worldwide Flight Services, based in Irving, Texas, would take over one of the airport's largest industrial buildings and an aircraft paint shop.

Airport officials see the deal as a link to developing the former Air Force base into an import/export operation that would eventually employ all facets of the airport's transportation network, including air, direct-rail access and a still-developing freeway system for trucking.

Other benefits are in store under WFS' three-year lease agreement that is scheduled to be approved.

"In addition to serving its North America equipment needs, this facility will cause a wide variety of cargo-handling equipment to be stored on-airport, equipment that WFS has agreed to allow us to use to satisfy the airport's initial commercial-cargo aircraft-handling needs," John Barry, a Gateway official, said in a memo.

The company will lease airport facilities at a monthly rate of \$18,246. The lease commences Sept. 1.

For nearly a year, WFS has provided a range of ground services for Allegiant's Gateway operations.

Cargo-handling equipment is critical to efforts to lure business from Arizona companies to use Gateway instead of California's big airports to reach global markets, Barry said, adding that Arizona businesses could save time and money by flying products to international markets from Gateway.

Read more: <http://www.azcentral.com/business/articles/2010/08/06/20100806mesa-airport-carriers.html#ixzz0wtwRxcJA>