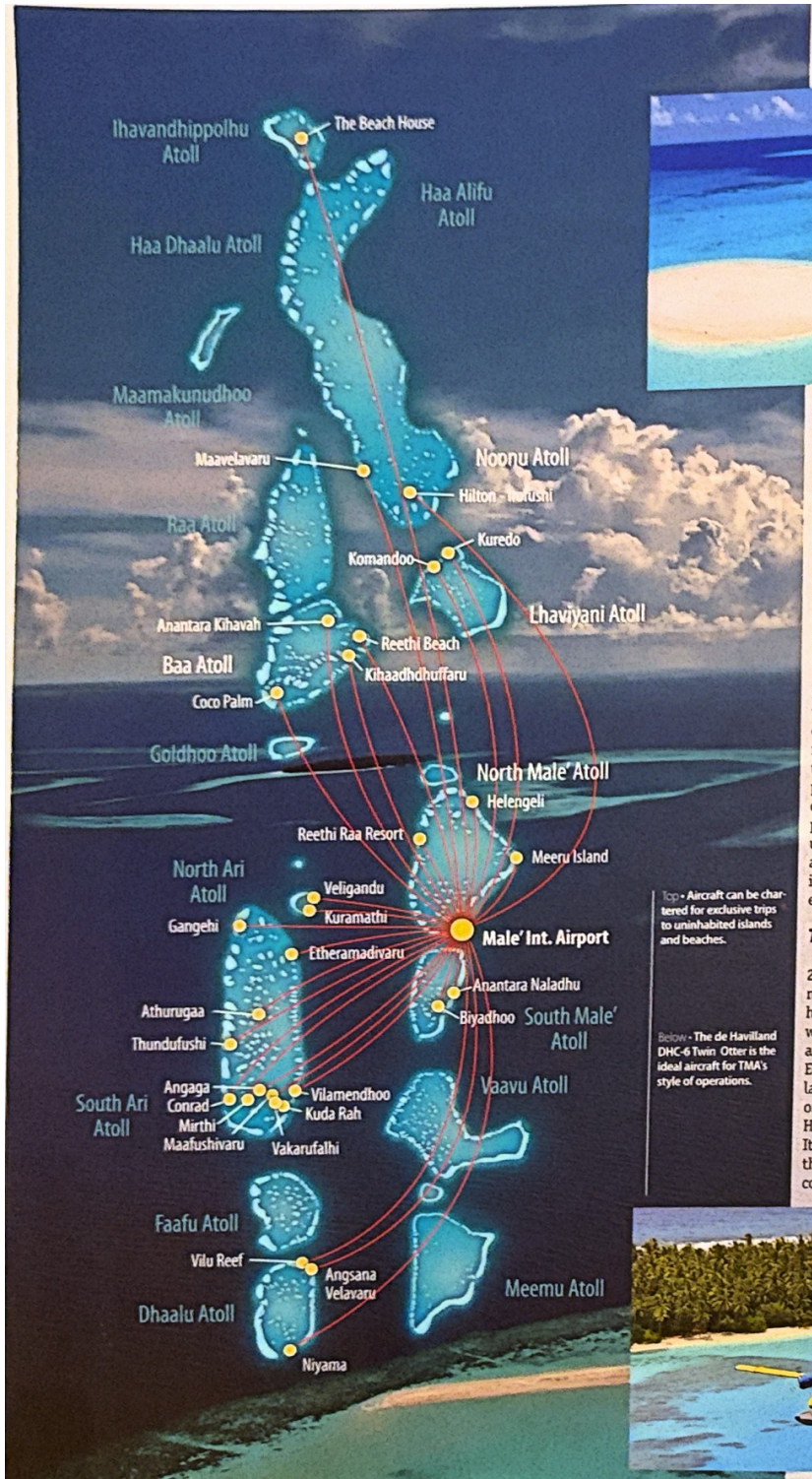




Top - Aircraft can be chartered for exclusive trips to uninhabited islands and beaches.

Below - The de Havilland DHC-6 Twin Otter is the ideal aircraft for TMA's style of operations.



November 2010 and then the dock area was extended. In 2012, we managed to board destination-bound flights for 55% of our arriving passengers within 30 minutes of arrival at our sea plane terminal – and 78% within 60 minutes.

"However, this is only half the job. We have to ensure that passengers on outbound international flights are picked up from their resorts and brought here in plenty of time to meet their outbound aircraft." TMA does not operate to a set timetable as the number of tourists arriving for individual resorts changes from day to day. "We get 48 hours' notice of passenger loads, so plan from there," Edward explained. "Add to that extra VIP passengers and islanders/managers wishing to go from one resort to another and it makes for interesting planning." TMA also offers a number of charters such as specific scenic photography sorties, day excursions to uninhabited islands or other resorts and executive charters, plus, of course, it provides an emergency medical evacuation service.

The fleet

In January 2013, TMA had a fleet of 23 Twin Otters including three of the new Viking Series 400s. Two others also have a redesigned ten-seat VIP interior, which has been produced by aircraft float and interior manufacturer Wipaire, with Edward heavily involved in the revised layout. They are used by the owners of one of the holiday destinations – Beach House Resorts – for their VIP customers. It is an 80-minute flight to resorts in the north of the Maldives, so a more comfortable interior was required. The »

TRANS MALDIVIAN

Type	Reg	c/n	Notes
Historic Fleet			
Mil Mi-8S	LZ-CAB	10308	1995-1999
	LZ-CAC	10309	1995-w/o 1996
	LZ-CAK	10316	1995-w/o 1999
	LZ-CAM	10318	1994-1999
	LZ-CAP	10320	1993-w/o 1994
	(All leased from Heli Air)		
S-61N	8Q-BUZ	61-473	1989-??
	8Q-HUM	61-713	1991-93
	8Q-WIZ	61-490	1989-??
Ce 208 1	8Q-HIC	0272	1997-??
	8Q-HID	0025	1998-??
	8Q-HIE	0228	1998-??
	8Q-HIF	0289	1998-2000, damaged
DHC-3 Turbo Otter	8Q-TMZ	214	Trialled only
DHC-6-100	8Q-HIA	082	1997-became 8Q-TMA in 2000, damaged 2004, scrapped
DHC-6-200	8Q-HIB	226	1997-1999, sold
DHC-6-300	8Q-HIG	530	1998-became 8Q-TMD in 2000
	8Q-HIH	798	1999-became 8Q-TME in 2000
	8Q-HII	657	1999 became 8Q-TMF in 2000
	8Q-HIJ	597	2000-became 8Q-TMG in 2000
	8Q-HIK	233	1999-wfu Maastricht sold 2000
	8Q-TMC	434	damaged 2004, sold to Viking
	8Q-TMD	530	ex-8Q-HIG, sold 2011
	8Q-TMT	454	sold 2012
ATR 42-320	8Q-ATM	194	2007-Jul 2010
	8Q-ATN	096	2008-Jul 2010
Modern Fleet			
DHC-6-300	8Q-TAB	582	
	8Q-TAC	580	
	8Q-TMB	587	
	8Q-TME	798	ex-8Q-HIH
	8Q-TMF	657	ex-8Q-HII
	8Q-TMG	597	ex-8Q-HIJ
	8Q-TMH	668	
	8Q-TMI	754	
	8Q-TMJ	781	
	8Q-TMK	751	
	8Q-TML	640	
	8Q-TMN	700	
	8Q-TMO	234	
	8Q-TMP	652	
	8Q-TMQ	753	
	8Q-TMR	270	
	8Q-TMS	663	
	8Q-TMU	467	
	8Q-TMV	625	
	8Q-TMW	768	
DHC-6-400	8Q-TMX	848	
	8Q-TMY	849	
	8Q-TMZ	850	

"TRANSITS ARE NORMALLY MADE AT AROUND 2,000FT GIVING PASSENGERS A GREAT VIEW OF THE VARIOUS ISLANDS AND REEFS."

Scanned with SwiftScan





Above and right • TMA's engineers upgraded and standardised the Twin Otter's cockpit layout.

aircraft are painted in a light white colour, while one of the new Series 400s also has 'Conrad – Maldives Rangali Island – The luxury of being yourself' titles and wears an overall blue colour scheme.

"The flying time from here [Malé] to resorts varies between 25 and 40 minutes, depending on proximity, and passengers can use this opportunity to take in the breathtaking aerial view of the multitude of coral islands, coral reefs and shallows of the Maldivian archipelago," continued Edward. "We currently have 85 pilots of which 75% are Maldivian. The numbers are bolstered in our peak season – the northern hemisphere winter – with expats from the US, Canada and Australia who come over on six-month contracts. In the summer, many of them fly waterbombers on fire-fighting missions."

Edward believes flying will increase in the next few years as new resorts open. At present, each aircraft averages around 100 hours per month. The old Royal Air Force staging post and airfield on Gan Island in the south is being developed into a full international hub – initially with charter flights – and a number of Twin Otters from the new combined carrier could be based there to serve new southern destinations.

"On our busy days we can carry around 1,500 passengers, but at our busiest we have exceeded 2,300 in one day," said

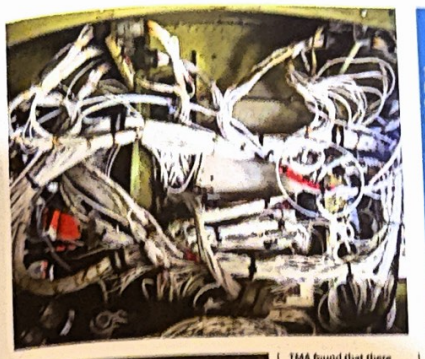
"ON OUR BUSY DAYS WE CARRY AROUND 1,500 PASSENGERS, BUT AT OUR BUSIEST WE HAVE EXCEEDED 2,300,"
Managing Director Edward Aldord



Right • Flying in the Maldives is literally by the poles of the feet (Airliner World)

Below • TMA has a mix of the classic de Havilland Canada DHC-6-300 Twin Otters and the newer Viking Series 400s.







TMA found that there was a lot of redundancy in the wiring looms – especially after new radios and a traffic alert and collision avoidance system [TCAS] were fitted.

Edward. "If an inbound flight is delayed, the tourists here remain at their resorts and we have to lay on extra flights for them as well as those scheduled for that day. However, we only fly by day so we are limited to operating from around 6am to 6pm. It is not a good idea [from a safety point of view] to operate a floatplane at night.

"We aim to employ pilots with a minimum of a Commercial Pilot's Licence (CPL), with at least 1,000 flying hours and preferably with floatplane experience, although a wheels-to-float conversion course is around six hours. Our pilots are flying an average of around 800 hours per year."

Engineering

TMA's hangar area is on the west side of the airport and aircraft are pulled out of the sea on a trailer and towed across the airfield for servicing. "It saves space in the hangar," said Ahmed 'Shad' Shahid, the Engineering and Maintenance

Below • The interior has a nine plus two seating arrangement with all passengers having a good view of the local scenery. (Airliner World)



Maldivian Air Taxi (MV/MAT)

The other seaplane operator on the islands is Maldivian Air Taxi (MAT) with a fleet of 21 Twin Otters. It was formed in 1993 by Danish investors and started operations in the same year with a Cessna 208 Caravan. This was soon replaced by initially three Twin Otters, and the fleet has continued to grow since. Two Bell 212 helicopters were also used in the 1990s. Until 2009, aircraft and some of the crews were leased from Kenn Borek Air in Canada – with an associated maintenance contract – but the Twin Otters have now been bought by MAT. Prior to February 2013, the airline was wholly owned by its chairman Lars Erik Nielsen and employed more than 400 staff operating around 70 movements per day, carrying approximately 400,000 passengers annually.



Historic Fleet

Ce A185	8Q-MAT		circa 2000	
Ce 208	8Q-MAT		1993-1995, written off	
Bell 212	8Q-MAX	30820	1995-	
	8Q-MAY	30887	1995-Dec 1999, written off	
DHC-6-100	8Q-CSL	064	1994-2009	
	8Q-IAW	060	1994-1997 became 8Q-TKB then 8Q-MAC, sold 2010	
	8Q-QBU	099	1995-2009	
	8Q-QHC	021	1995-2009	
DHC-6-200	8Q-EMT	234	1994-1997 became 8Q-MAG, sold 1999	
	8Q-NTA	346	1996 became 8Q-MAT	
DHC-6-300	8Q-LEN	273	1993-1994	
	8Q-IOK	273	1996-1997 became 8Q-MAD	
	8Q-KBE	693	1996-1998 became 8Q-MAA, sold 2010	
	8Q-KBM	279	1995-1997 became 8Q-MAI	
	8Q-KBV	287	1996-1997 became 8Q-MAB, sold 2011	
	8Q-MAE	464	1997-2006	
	8Q-MAK	276	1999-2009	
	8Q-MAL	321	1999-2010	
	8Q-MAM	339	1999-2010	
	8Q-MAQ	611	2001-2011	
DHC-6-300	8Q-MAR	382	2004-2009	
	8Q-MAS	445	2005-2008, damaged	
	8Q-MAU	617	2006-2007	
	8Q-MAV	732	2006-2009	

Current fleet

DHC-6-100	8Q-OTO	044	VIP interior
DHC-6-200	8Q-MAT	346	
	8Q-MAD	323	
	8Q-MAF	449	
	8Q-MAO	324	
	8Q-MAI	279	
	8Q-MAJ	832	
	8Q-MAN	493	
	8Q-MAO	259	
	8Q-MAP	251	
	8Q-MAW	523	
DHC-6-300	8Q-MAR	732	
	8Q-MAZ	734	
	8Q-MBA	891	
	8Q-MBE	609	
	8Q-MBC	256	
	8Q-MBD	283	
	8Q-MBF	581	
	8Q-MBF	325	
	8Q-MBG	268	
	8Q-MBH	585	

Manager. "An aircraft on floats, on a paved surface, is a lot higher than on wheels." Shad has around 112 people working for him on the engineering side and 60 on the technical side – of which 20 are licensed engineers. They are split between normal aircraft operations at the TMA terminal and hangar inspections. "We give the aircraft a thorough service about every 125 hours," said Shad. "We also put them through a C or D Check every three years – the normal length is five, but we find that operating on salt water day to day, it is well worth the increased frequency to check for corrosion." His engineering department operates from 5am – to get the aircraft ready for a 6am take-off – until around 9.30pm, after the day's flying has finished. "We have built a new workshop for rewiring work," he added. "We found that there was a lot of redundancy in the wiring looms – especially after we fitted new radios and a Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System [TCAS] – and as a result we have managed to lighten the aircraft considerably. Virtually the whole fleet has been rewired in the last two years." Each aircraft takes about ten days for the rewiring and continuity »

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