

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

September 21, 2022



Charter Flight Inquiries – Bob Sikes Airport

Okaloosa County, Fla. – We have received and continue to receive numerous inquiries about the aircraft which stopped at Bob Sikes Airport (CEW) on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, bound for Martha's Vineyard from Texas. The information we have access to is limited, but we can confirm that the two aircraft used CEW for fuel stops.

We understand there is interest in this subject resulting in many public inquiries and assumptions. In an effort to provide accurate and transparent information, we have compiled the following Q&As to assist with accurate and efficient flow of public information, should charters continue fuel stops at CEW. Here is what we know:

Q: Can the County prohibit these fuel stops at CEW?

A: No. The County has no authority to dictate what charter operations land or takeoff from CEW.

Q: Can you provide public updates of flight information on arrivals and departures at CEW?

A: No. Eglin Air Force Base (EAFB) controls the airspace in and around CEW. EAFB is charged with ownership of such airspace from the FAA. Therefore, the County has no flight information on arrivals and departures of these, or any other, general aviation flights.

Q: Who is the Charter Operator and how are they Affiliated with CEW?

A: The County has no relationship with Ultimate Air Shuttle/Ultimate Jet Charters. Vertol has a business relationship with Ultimate Air Shuttle/Ultimate Jet Charters. Vertol has long been a tenant of the County at both Destin Executive and CEW. The Vertol leases predate these charter operations and the County is not aware of any connection between the charter operations and Vertol's leases with the County.

Q: Who has passenger manifest records or flight plans of these charter operations?

A: These records are not provided to the County. Further, the County is not permitted to inquire about the identity of passengers on these flights. The charter operator, Ultimate Air Shuttle/Ultimate Jet Charters, possess and maintains these records.

Q: Who is Emerald Coast Aviation?

A: Emerald Coast Aviation is the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) at CEW. Operations they manage for the general aviation public include fuel and lavatory services, as was the case on the September 14 fuel stops.

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