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Al-Maktoum International Airport opens to passenger traffic

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ONE STOP: Dubai World Central Al Maktoum International Airport may use 'one stop' processing to get travellers in and out of the airport quickly. (Getty Images)

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Dubai Airports has opened Al-Maktoum International Airport to passenger traffic, eight months after launching cargo operations, the company said on Thursday.

The airport is now open to receive helicopter and passenger aircraft with no more than 60 people on board, Dubai Airports said in an emailed statement.

"[The airport] is an increasingly appealing option for general aviation companies in the region particularly as air traffic volumes increase at Dubai International," said CEO Paul Griffiths.

Al Futtaim Services Co will be the airport's launch operator. The Dubai-based firm in December signed a joint venture deal with European business jet operator DC Aviation to provide services from the airport.

Dubai Airports has forecast that the emirate's second airport will operate up to 40 movements per day by the end of 2011.

The International Air Transport Association has forecast that passenger traffic into the UAE will hit 82.3m by 2015, driven by a 9.4 percent Middle East-wide rise in air travellers.

The Middle East is expected to be the fastest growing region globally, with the UAE, Kuwait and Jordan ranking among the 10 quickest growing countries for international passenger traffic.

