

# Tubbesing heads up new GSA

AIRLINES seem to have a keen interest in finding GSAs to expand their market reach. New York-based start-up Airline Network Services has lined up a string of carriers since its inception, and at least one more deal is imminent, revealed ANS chief executive officer, Jens Tubbesing.

Having signed up UK-based



bmi, the GSA subsequently announced deals with Brazilian carrier TAM and US budget airline Jet Blue, followed by further agreements to represent Hainan Airlines and Solar Cargo, an all-cargo airline that operates a DC-10-30 freighter service between Miami and Venezuela.

Launch carrier bmi no longer flies across the Atlantic, having suspended its US flights, so ANS is performing off-line representation for the airline throughout the US, feeding cargo into its network through third-party carriers flying to London. Much of this traffic is headed to bmi destinations throughout the Middle East, said Tubbesing.

For TAM, which serves Miami and Orlando in the US,

**TUBBESING: Says he is amazed at the interest shown by carriers in his new GSA organisation**

ANS sells off-line in 15 US states. Likewise, Solar Cargo has its own sales arrangements in Miami and uses ANS in other US gateways. Besides its base near New York's JFK airport, the GSA has branches in Chicago, Dallas/Ft Worth, Atlanta, Los Angeles and Seattle. SEA is an on-line station for Hainan Airlines, which runs four weekly A330 flights between Seattle and Beijing.

Jet Blue is another on-line deal, where ANS sells for the carrier in metropolitan New York, which encompasses the airline's premier hub. The agreement is not about Jet Blue moving towards farming out its cargo operation but about supplementing its existing activities in a push to broaden the business, according to Tubbesing.

"It was a perfect fit. They wanted to do something new, so they were looking for ideas, not just for someone selling for them," he said.

He expressed amazement at

the level of interest from airlines in GSA representation, claiming that ANS has been approached by several carriers. In part he attributed this to his outfit's set-up, which he described as focused on high performance levels and technology-driven. The latter translates into on-line capabilities for a host of functions, from requests for quotes to AWB printing and electronic booking.

"Our clients don't have to go for on-line functionality, but we can provide it if they want," he said.

As far as the network is concerned, Tubbesing intends to add one or two more branches in the US before long. In the long term, he is looking to expand into Canada and Latin America.

Tubbesing is tight-lipped about his backers, but claimed that ANS is well-funded and that its investors are in it for the long haul.