

Get the local lowdown before you climb high

by Charles Alcock

"When in Rome, do as the Romans do," is a time-honored maxim for world travelers, but while it may be sound advice for tourists, it is probably of little comfort to the harassed corporate pilot. After all, how are you supposed to break it to your demanding, type A passengers as they arrive in Europe after a red-eye transatlantic flight that the locals don't work on yet another bank holiday and that the limo they were expecting hasn't shown up?

This is the sort of the vexatious scenario faced by globe-girdling business aircraft operators that will be aired in a seminar to be held here at the European Business Aviation Conference & Exhibition tomorrow from 10:30 a.m. to noon in Hall 1 Room E.

The Social and Cultural Nuances for International Business Aviation Professionals event is on the EBACE agenda for the first time this year and is intended as a working forum for operators and service providers from around the world to get to better understand each other's circumstances and needs.

"A lot of people simply don't realize how little they understand about other societies and cultures," reflected seminar organizer Rodie Brown, president of Summit Solutions, a Colorado-based business aviation recruitment and professional development group. As moderator, she will be encouraging a free and frank exchange of views on the sources of misunderstandings, in the hope of engendering better communications between customers and vendors and within the various tiers of suppliers.

Particular topics already on the session's agenda include delivery and flight-handling challenges, the gulf between customer and vendor expectations, and expectations for billing, communication and documentation.

Planned members of the panel are four industry representatives invited to stimulate discussions with the following series of short presentations: Embraer vice president Jim Cable on the "challenges of the cultural international market"; Raytheon Aircraft Services president John Willis on "social and cultural challenges when providing international service"; Yoshi Tateishi, vice president with Japan's Toyota Flight corporate operator on "the cultural perception of business aviation in Japan and its potential"; and Piaggio vice president Giuliano Currado on "international cultural training challenges on new aircraft."

But the main focus of the session will be devoted to discussion, questions and debate among the audience. The group is expected to comprise aviation business owners and executives, chief pilots, flight department managers and service industry owners and executives.

"This will be a very energizing session and there will be ample opportunity to ask specific questions," Brown told **EBACE Convention News**. NBAA vice president Bob Blouin has been instrumental in having the social and cultural nuances seminar included in the EBACE program this week. □