

## **Comments by Donal Moriarty, chief corporate affairs officer, Aer Lingus**

Uachtaráin na hÉireann, Mayor of Fingal County, Chief of Staff General Clancy, Minister O'Brien, members of the EIRE 6 Restoration Group, ladies and gentlemen,

*Fearainn fáilte ach go háirithe don Uachtarán agus a bhean chéile. Is onóir mór dúinn go léir anseo bheith in do gcomhluadar inniu ar an occúid stairiúil seo.*

As we have heard from Dr. Michael Kennedy, the EIRE 6 sign is crucial to aviation, coastal and wartime history. As early as the Second World War, Aer Lingus was flying across the war zone of the Irish Sea to cities such as Manchester, providing a lifeline for Ireland to the world.

At that time, we operated a Douglas DC-3 aircraft, a fixed-wing propeller-driven airliner, which had a lasting effect on the airline industry and World War 2. For that reason, it is considered one of the most significant transport aircraft ever made.

Today we no longer operate the Douglas DC-3 and don't just fly across the Irish Sea, but connect Ireland to North America by crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Times have certainly changed!

For Aer Lingus today, EIRE 6 is a recognisable landmark on our flight path, one of the first glimpses our crew and passengers will get upon descent into Dublin Airport. It is thus an iconic beacon that will welcome millions of Aer Lingus passengers to Ireland, whether visiting or returning home.

As sponsor of the Howth EIRE 6 Restoration project, we look forward to launching a community education programme in the form of a virtual tour explaining the history of the Howth EIRE 6 Sign at home and around the world.

Finally, on behalf of Aer Lingus, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the Howth EIRE 6 Restoration group and thank you for giving Aer Lingus the opportunity to be part of this historical occasion and for bringing such an important historical landmark back to life.

*Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir!*