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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Willis Lease Finance Hires Dave Johnson as Senior VP of Sales and Marketing**

NOVATO, CA – May 4, 2011 – Willis Lease Finance Corporation (NASDAQ: WLFC), a leading lessor of commercial jet engines, today announced it has hired Dave Johnson to serve as Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

“Dave Johnson brings a wealth of aviation expertise to Willis Lease and a unique combination of experience as an aircraft leasing marketing executive, lawyer, commercial airline and military pilot over the past 26 years,” said Charles F. Willis, President and Chief Executive Officer. “We’re pleased to have Dave on board and excited to have him join our management team.”

Most recently Johnson was Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Counsel with International Lease Finance Corporation, an aircraft leasing company with more than \$43 billion in assets and a fleet of more than 900 aircraft. Johnson served in a variety of legal, sales and marketing positions at ILFC since 1998. Prior to joining ILFC, he was a commercial airline pilot with American Airlines for eleven years and served as a pilot and B-52 combat crew commander in the United States Air Force for six years, rising to the rank of captain.

Johnson received his law degree from UCLA, and has been a member of the California Bar since 1997. He holds an M.B.A. from Louisiana Tech University and a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from the United States Air Force Academy.

Johnson also serves on the Board of Directors of the Heritage Flight Museum in Bellingham, Washington, which is the aviation and space museum founded by USAF Major General and Apollo 8 Astronaut William A. Anders and family.

#### About Willis Lease Finance

Willis Lease Finance Corporation leases spare commercial aircraft engines and aircraft to commercial airlines, aircraft engine manufacturers, air cargo carriers and maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities worldwide. These leasing activities are integrated with the purchase and resale of used and refurbished commercial aircraft engines.

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