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Manufacturers feeling the pain with Q2 deliveries

Aircraft manufacturers are hurting as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic; a number have reduced manpower, furloughed staff and suspended production for lengthy periods. There have also been significant logistical issues of delivering aircraft across borders during the pandemic as countries closed borders and imposed draconian travel restrictions. The expectation is that MROs will deliver 30% fewer business jets and turboprops this year – down from 809 in 2019. It is clear that huge challenges remain and that any forecasts for this year and beyond are subject to change.

Bombardier delivered a total of 20 aircraft in Q2 of 2020 compared to 35 in the same period last year. The 2020 breakdown – nine Globals (including five 7500s), nine Challengers and two Learjets. In Q2 2019, it handed over 16 Globals, 17 Challengers and two Lears.

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer handed over 13 executive jets in Q2 – two Phenom 100s, seven Phenom 300s, one Legacy 650, one Praetor 500 and two Praetor 600s. This compares starkly with the 25 units that it delivered in Q2 2019 – 19 Phenoms and six large jets.

Despite production having now resumed after suspension, Textron Aviation deliveries fell by 50% in Q2 – 23 Citations compared to 46 in Q2 2019. Turboprop King Air deliveries also fell from 16 units to just 11. Despite these figures, Scott Donnelly, Textron Chairman and CEO expects results for the remaining half of the year to improve as business traffic returns to almost 'normal' levels. He reported renewed client interest particularly in small jets and twin turboprops.

Dassault Aviation expected to deliver 40 Falcons in 2020. The total is now estimated to be in the region of 30. In the first half of this year the manufacturer delivered 16 aircraft – down from 17 in the same period last year.

Arguably bucking the trend in Q2, Gulfstream Aerospace delivered 32 aircraft – six G280s and 26 large cabin aircraft, a slight increase on the eight G280s and 23 large aircraft delivered in Q2 2019. For the half year however it handed over 55 aircraft compared to 65. It now expects to deliver between 125 and 130 aircraft this year compared to its original forecast of 150 – a reduction directly attributed to the effects of the pandemic.

Bizav groups warn of online charter fraud

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen a clear increase in demand for private charter flights, which give passengers assured travel during difficult times. One side effect of this has been a notable increase in online fraud. Both the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) and the Air Charter Association (ACA) have warned both new and experienced customers to be careful when searching for flights. EBAA COO Robert Balthus said: "Our advice for operators, brokers, and end-users is to be vigilant ... Verify bank details before making payment transfers and, above all, listen to your instincts and check with an independent source such as EBAA or the ACA. If it feels wrong, it invariably is." ACA CEO Dave Edwards added that "Alongside this rise in private jet charter, there has been an increase in fraudsters to steal money from unsuspecting travelers and criminals trying to enter the chain. They are paying significant amounts of money to get high Google Ad search engine ratings and funnel unsuspecting customers to these fake websites."

European bizav traffic levels rise with summer demand

According to the latest data produced by specialist analyst WingX Advance, European business aviation traffic at the end of July was down by just 11% compared to the same period last month. July and August usually see increased demand, particularly within the charter sector, and this demand has returned as earlier travel restrictions have begun to ease. Some European countries including Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Croatia have seen traffic above 2019 levels. But others, notably Spain, which have suffered a recurrence of cases and the re-imposition of quarantine restrictions, have seen traffic fall again.

Aerion to deliver carbon neutral supersonic travel

Aerion Supersonic, the developer of the AS2 supersonic business jet, claims that the aircraft will be the world's first fully carbon neutral Mach 1+ commercial aircraft. The company has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian clean energy company Carbon Engineering (CE) to develop solutions for carbon neutral supersonic air travel. CE has confirmed that it is exploring the use of its synthetic fuel, made from carbon dioxide (CO₂) captured from the atmosphere, to power Aerion's AS2 flagship, which is expected to make its first flight in 2025.

AVIATION SERVICES HUB: Aircraft finance

Despite the pandemic crisis that has overtaken the global economy, the new and used corporate aircraft market continues to function and buyers continue to seek finance for these transactions, with growing demand in some sectors, business models and geographical areas. RANA has built up relationships with a number of banks, finance houses, leasing companies and groups of individual investors that have demonstrated an appetite for investment in the corporate aviation sector.

Lenders will of course look at a number of different factors and each has its own criteria for acceptance, in addition to loan-to-value ratios and the length of term of any potential deal. These criteria may include: the maximum age of the aircraft; whether it is new or pre-owned; the book value of the aircraft; the jurisdiction of the aircraft's registration; or the type and nationality of the client. Any such financing is of course viewed on a strictly case-by-case basis with tailored terms and conditions.

Jersey Aircraft Registry relaunch - the detail

After last month's news of the relaunch of the Jersey Aircraft Registry (JAR) in partnership with TrustFlight (Jersey) Ltd., JAR General Manager Sebastian Lawson has provided Airborne with more detail on the registry's use of TrustFlight's blockchain technology, which enables the instant validation of certificates and documents using storybook verification.

"Following Jersey's relaunch of its aircraft registry there are multiple aircraft in the pipeline for registration in the coming months," said Lawson. "Due to its new software, which facilitates easy aircraft registration services across the industry, the JAR is entering an exciting new phase that is enabling Jersey to compete successfully in the aircraft registry market. Only weeks from the registry being first re-launched JAR has already surpassed its previous registrations, clearly showing the power of the technology."

"Keen to ensure the best experience for users, the TrustFlight team is already working on an expanded set of tools to help all aircraft owners and management teams to transition and register aircraft with ease. This functionality will become available in the coming months and into the autumn. With a similar set of requirements to most offshore registries, but a dramatic difference in technology, the JAR now offers a drastically improved experience coupled with the innovation that has been craved by so many in the industry for so long. Membership options are also provided by the JAR, offering owners a suite of packages with benefits you won't find in other jurisdictions," he added.

For more information about the Jersey Aircraft Registry please visit www.jar.je.

RegisterAnAircraft team would be happy to make a personal introduction to Sebastian at the JAR. Email info@RegisterAnAircraft.com.

Corporate aircraft news

In a significant landmark, Bombardier has delivered the 350th example of its super-midsize Challenger 350 twin. The Challenger 350 first flew on 2 March 2013 and received FAA certification just over a year later. The aircraft is an upgraded version of the popular Challenger 300 featuring increased range (to 5926km), more powerful engines, a redesigned interior and larger cabin windows.

Gulfstream Aerospace has now opened its new service centre at Farnborough Airport in the UK. The facility extends to some 20,903m² and can accommodate up to 13 flagship G650 or G700s simultaneously. Gulfstream Farnborough will offer maintenance, repair and overhaul services, as well as interior refurbishments and after-market modifications.

Dassault Aviation has confirmed that it expects its new Falcon 6X to make its first flight early in 2021. Three aircraft are currently taking shape at the French manufacturer's plant at Bordeaux-Mérignac; the first has been powered up and is undertaking ground testing. The aircraft's new PW812D engine is also undergoing a rigorous testing programme. The 6X is scheduled to receive certification and enter service in 2022.

Textron Aviation has unveiled a new upgrade to its established King Air 350 and 350ER twin turboprop aircraft. The King Air 360/360ER will feature new auto throttles, a digital pressurisation system and a completely new cabin aimed at enhancing passenger comfort. Both the auto throttle and pressurisation changes are aimed at reducing pilot workload. In the nine-seat passenger cabin, the aircraft feature new seats, improved cabinetry and a choice of five new interior colour schemes.

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer Executive Jets has confirmed that it is to consolidate its suite of products to focus on just the Phenom 100 and 300 and Praetor 500 and 600 aircraft. The Legacy 450 and 500 – precursors to the respective Praetor models – will be phased out, along with the larger Legacy 650 and Lineage 1000. According to a company spokeswoman: "This does not change our ongoing commitment to our customers for services and support."



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Britten-Norman Trislander



CATEGORY

Piston commuter airliner

MANUFACTURER

Britten-Norman, UK

ENGINE

3 x Lycoming O-540-E4C5 pistons

LENGTH

15.01 m

WINGSPAN

16.15 m

RANGE

1,600 km

MAX. SPEED

290 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY

16

NO. OF CREW

1

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

4,536 kg

DESCRIPTION

11 September 2020 will mark 50 years since the first flight of the Britten-Norman Trislander (BN2-A Mk 111 Trislander). The Trislander was born out of a need for a larger aircraft to serve the UK Channel Island routes of Aurigny Air Services, which already had a sizeable fleet of 10-seat BN2 Islanders in service. The increased 16-seat capacity of the Trislander fitted the needs of the airline's growing passenger demand.

The Trislander differed from the Islander by featuring a fuselage stretch of 2.28m, a strengthened fixed tricycle landing gear and a third engine on the fuselage centre line atop the fin. The Trislander has exceptional low speed handling characteristics, extended endurance, increased payload, low noise signature and economical operating costs. It was a true short takeoff and landing (STOL) aircraft, capable of using rough unprepared landing strips and taking off from a 450-metre long landing strip. A total of 72 aircraft were built, with Aurigny operating the largest fleet of 16 examples.