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The Dubai Airshow at 30

Celebrating its thirtieth birthday, this year's Dubai Airshow – held from 17-21 November at the Aviation Exhibition Centre at Al Maktoum International Airport (DWC) – hosted 1,288 exhibitors and 161 aircraft in the static. The inaugural edition in 1989 featured 200 exhibitors and 25 aircraft on display.

Perhaps more importantly, the 2019 show saw the announcement of orders worth US\$54.5 billion by the close of business. According to the organisers, the show has now racked up total orders of US\$694.5 billion since 1999.

Like its rivals in Farnborough and Paris, the Dubai Airshow is primarily focused on the airlines, commercial OEMs and military customers. But given the regional importance of the corporate aircraft sector, most major manufacturers display the results of their continued investment in new models.

The static display featured, among others, the Gulfstream G500, G600, G650ER, Bombardier Global 6000, Pilatus PC-24, HondaJet Citation Latitude and Cirrus SF50. In addition to displaying examples of the Falcon 900 and 8X, Dassault Aviation showcased a full-size mock-up of the new Falcon 6X twin, emphasising the importance of the Falcon family in the Middle East.

Special missions for bizjets in Dubai

OEMs and other suppliers used this year's Dubai Airshow to unveil or promote development of bizjet and turboprop aircraft for varied special missions. Saab's GlobalEye multisensory "swing role surveillance system" is based on a Bombardier Global 6000 with significant structural and aerodynamic alterations. The launch customer for the system is the UAE Air Force. Two smaller Bombardier Challenger 650s have also been purchased by the UAE Air Force and will be converted from VIP use to serve in the intelligence/surveillance/reconnaissance (ISR) role. US manufacturer Textron Aviation also used the event to unveil special mission capabilities for both the Beechcraft King Air 350 and Cessna Citation Longitude. The former now has an option of an extended nose, providing 0.34m³ (12ft³) of extra space, while the latter has been ordered by the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau to fulfil a flight inspection and flight calibration role.

Bombardier moves Global production

Canadian manufacturer Bombardier confirmed that it is to shift final assembly of its Global family of bizjets to a new facility at Toronto Pearson airport, describing it as "a strategic move for Bombardier and a strong commitment to Ontario's aerospace industry". The aircraft are currently assembled at the company's plant at Downsview in Mississauga, which is some 19 km from Pearson. The new Global Manufacturing Centre will open in early 2023 and will cover 92,903m² (1 million sq ft) on a plot measuring 165,921m² (41 acres). Once fully operational, it is estimated that the facility will be able to produce up to 100 Global 5500, 6500 and 7500 each year.

VistaJet to take first Global 7500

High profile programme specialist VistaJet confirmed, on the sidelines of the Dubai Airshow, that it expects to introduce the first of six Bombardier Global 7500 by the end of this month. The aircraft form part of an original commitment for 30 of the then Global 7000, which was placed by the operator's parent company Vista Global in 2012. The company notes on its website: "VistaJet introduces the first fleet of Bombardier Global 7500 aircraft, unlocking the world with the largest and longest range business jet. The Global 7500 offers four true living spaces, including a full size kitchen and a permanent bedroom."

Asian bizjet fleet set to contract

The Asia-Pacific regional bizjet fleet will shrink by up to 2% this year according to the latest forecast by Asian Sky Group MD Jeffrey Lowe. Writing in Asian Sky Quarterly, he attributes the reduction in part to a fall in business confidence and growing pessimism about the region's economies. The greatest net deductions in fleets are likely to come in China, Hong Kong and Macau because optimism in Greater China, Lowe says, has "fallen off a cliff – from a high of 88% in first-quarter 2018 to a measly, dark and gloomy 32% in third-quarter 2019." A number of aircraft are also currently grounded due to legal proceedings following owners' financial difficulties, he added.

Q3 deliveries - a mixed bag

Deliveries of bizjets the first nine months of 2019 increased by some 15.4% over the same period in 2018 – from 447 to 516 – according to data released by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA). Similarly, piston aircraft deliveries rose by 12.3%, from 781 to 877. However, it is not all good news. Deliveries of turboprops fell by 11.6% over the same period, from 395 at the end of Q3 2018 to 349 this year. GAMA CEO Pete Bunce said: "Despite these mixed results, our manufacturers continue their investments in advanced factory machinery, design software, and associated processes that keep product development cycles robust and in turn bring advances in fuel efficiency, capability, and safety to the global fleet."

AVIATION SERVICES HUB:

Aviation consultancy

Accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive information is a key requirement for making the right decisions in respect of sourcing, owning, registering and operating an aircraft. RANA's specialist aviation consultancy service can draw upon a considerable breadth of knowledge across both the corporate and commercial aviation markets, which is coupled to our established links with authorities, manufacturers, service providers and operators worldwide.

The spectrum of our expertise encompasses: technical and performance specifications of competing aircraft models – from small pistons and turboprops through the whole range of corporate jets to commercial airliners; research and detailed reporting on the operational history of individual airframes and operators both private and commercial; the registration and ownership requirements of registries worldwide; and the most suitable and efficient corporate structures for holding aviation assets. In a nutshell, we can add real value to the decision-making process.

Preowned aircraft sales plunge

Business jet sales fell by 16.9% in the first nine months of 2019 compared to the same period last year, according to market analysis released by aviation intelligence specialist JETNET. By the end of September there had been 1,725 sales transactions, compared to 2,077 at the same point in 2018. The period also saw significant falls in sales of turboprop business aircraft (down 12.2%) and piston aircraft (down 19.9%). The analysis concluded that the numbers continue to suggest a "sellers' market"; the percentage of the bizjet fleet for sale remains under 10% – comprising 2,187 aircraft or 9.8% of the total.

Extinction Rebellion target bizjets

Extinction Rebellion, the environmental direct action group, has turned its sights onto corporate aviation. Around 100 activists blocked entry to the private aviation terminal (C3) at Geneva Airport for about two hours on 16 November. A post on the group's Facebook page read: "We have blocked the private jet terminal to defend the principle of climate and social justice. This means of transport is completely absurd." The group, which uses "non-violent civil disobedience in an attempt to halt mass extinction" due to climate change, has undertaken prolonged targeted action in many cities around the world. Spokesman Micaël Metry sought to justify the Geneva Airport protest by saying: "We want to denounce this completely absurd means of transport since a private jet emits 20 times more CO2 per passenger than a conventional airplane."

Jersey aircraft register to relaunch

Jersey's Assistant Economic Development Minister Steve Pallett announced a relaunch of the Jersey Aircraft Register (JAR) in a statement to the island's parliament on 25 November. The JAR was set up in 2014 after negotiations for a joint register with the Channel Island of Guernsey fell through. Since then, the JAR has registered just one aircraft and one helicopter, with only the former remaining current. Senator Pallett announced that a contract would be signed by the end of the year with a commercial third party to run the registry on the government's behalf.

Corporate aircraft news

In a significant landmark for the manufacturer's current flagship, Gulfstream Aerospace delivered the 400th example of the G650 family aircraft to an undisclosed customer on 5 December. The design was first unveiled in March 2008, with FAA certification following on 7 September 2012 and customer deliveries commencing that December. The extended range G650ER was then announced in May 2014 and deliveries of this version began six months later.

As we reported last month, the new-generation Gulfstream G500 received EASA certification in mid-October. As a result, the manufacturer handed over the first example to a European customer on 25 November. The initial aircraft was delivered to an undisclosed charter operator.

Swiss manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft marked a major milestone when it delivered the 1,700th example of the PC-12 turboprop single. The aircraft will join the 40-strong fleet of Luxembourg-based operator JetFly. Since entering service in 1994, the worldwide PC-12 fleet has amassed some seven million flying hours.

MRO specialist Lufthansa Technik announced at the Dubai Air Show that it is due to commence work in April on the conversion of the first of three ACJ350 aircraft ordered by the German government. The order was the first for the VVIP version of the A350-900 commercial airliner when it was announced in May this year.

Italian manufacturer Piaggio Aerospace began a restructuring process in December 2018. Following a year where it received commitments and orders worth some US\$919 million, the company has now received approval from the Italian government to seek new owners. The government statement makes it clear that it is seeking a buyer for the business in its entirety, including the manufacturer's engineering unit, Piaggio Aviation.

The team at Sovereign's aviation division and the worldwide Sovereign Group would like to send seasonal greetings to all readers of Airborne, as well as our best wishes for 2020



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Cessna Citation V Ultra



CATEGORY

Mid-size jet

MANUFACTURER

Cessna, USA

ENGINE

2 x P&WC JT15D5D turbofans

LENGTH

14.91 m

WINGSPAN

15.90 m

RANGE

3,630 km

MAX. SPEED

796 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY

8

NO. OF CREW

2

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

7,543 kg

DESCRIPTION

The Cessna Citation V Ultra was first announced in September 1993 and received FAA certification some nine months later. It was an upgraded version of the original Citation V (Citation 560), which had been granted FAA certification in December 1988 having been unveiled at the NBAA convention just over a year earlier. The Citation V was itself a slightly larger version of the Citation II/SP.

The Citation V Ultra offered more powerful engines (JT15D5D over JT15D5A) and improved avionics (Honeywell Primus 1000 EFIS). According to broker Jet Advisors: "Cessna's aim of producing simple, economical business jets is met in the Citation Ultra. Few private jets in its class can compare in terms of cabin dimensions, speed and takeoff distance." It is the aircraft's short takeoff distance that has ensured its continued popularity – the aircraft can take off at full MTOW in just 975m (3,200 feet). A total of 279 Citation V Ultra were delivered by the time production ceased in 1999.