


## AIRBORNE

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## Calls for action on illegal charter

The ongoing investigation into the crash in the English Channel that killed footballer Emiliano Sala and pilot David Ibbotson in January this year has focused minds of industry lobby groups, owners and operators into the penalties and risks involved in illegal or 'grey' charters. The case for stronger deterrents, education and improved enforcement of regulations was made very strongly at the recent Air Charter Expo conference held at Biggin Hill Airport.

Air Charter Association CEO Dave Edwards noted that there had been just 14 successful prosecutions for illegal charters from 2005 to 2016. Chair of the British Business & General Aviation Association (BBGA) Aoife O'Sullivan went further, saying: "Fines are pointless and they are not being enforced". She added that legislation had to be changed to reflect the nature of the problem. Panellists at the conference agreed that better education for operators and charterers was essential.

## Nigeria clamps down on illegal charters

The spotlight on illegal charters has spread further afield than Europe and the US. The Nigerian CAA has issued a warning to owners and operators of business jets involved in flights for hire and reward. The NCAA has reminded owners that only operators holding a valid Air Transport Licence can undertake commercial passenger charter flights and contraventions will result in the revocation of Air Operator Certificates (AOCs). Nigerian media has reported a recent upsurge in illegal activity. It also reported that the NCAA has established an investigative process to identify such flights and to tighten up charter flight regulation.

## Fifty years of Citations

The prototype Cessna Citation 500 made its first flight on 15 September 1969. Originally known as the FanJet 500, the design was unveiled at the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) in October 1968 and the aircraft entered service following certification in 1971. Fifty years on, the Wichita-based manufacturer has delivered more than 7,500 examples of a family that now comprises more than 20 models. Seven of these remain in production, seating between seven and 12 passengers. The latest addition, the Citation Longitude, received FAA certification last month. Citations have clocked up more than 35 million flight hours.

## 100s of bizjets to miss ADS-B deadline

At least 1,660 business jets will fail to comply with the ADS-B equipage deadline of 1 January 2020, according to the latest analysis and forecast produced by Nebraska-based MRO specialist Duncan Aviation. In terms of business turboprops, the company anticipates that 3,800 aircraft will require the upgrade at the end of the year. The report is based on the company's own customer data, industry sources and the FAA. The majority of aircraft that remain unequipped are first and second-generation jets and turboprops.

## European traffic continues to slide

European business traffic continues to fall YoY, according to the latest edition of the Business Aviation Monitor produced by specialist analyst WINGX Advance. September saw 80,113 business aviation departures in Europe, which represents a fall of 2% YoY. The figures were even worse overall for bizjet traffic, with flight numbers falling by 2.3%; large cabin flights fell by 1%, while light and midsize aircraft departures dropped by some 3%. In terms of specific markets, Germany and Spain both posted substantial falls of 6% YoY.

## Coming soon - a wave of new designs?

Intense media chatter and speculation always accompany the run-up to the annual NBAA Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE), which takes place in Las Vegas later this month. Influential business aviation market analyst Brian Foley of Brian Foley Associates has added to this year's mix by suggesting that major OEMs, including Gulfstream and Dassault, may be unveiling new designs at NBAA-BACE 2019. Foley posits that Gulfstream is developing another longer-range competitor to the Bombardier Global 7500, which has now eclipsed its own flagship G650ER. He argues that a longer-range version of the new generation G600 may be the route the manufacturer will take. He also notes that Dassault is looking for a new twin – possibly the Falcon 9X – to replace the older Falcon 900 and 2000.

## MIRA invests in Farnborough airport

The UK's dedicated business facility, Farnborough airport recorded just over 30,000 aircraft movements last year, offers 24,155m<sup>2</sup> (260,000ft<sup>2</sup>) climate controlled hangar space, a three storey FBO and a hotel and plays host to the biennial international airshow. Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets (MIRA) has bought the airport from its current owner TAG Aviation. TAG bought the lease in 1997 and has invested more than \$150 million in terminal, control tower, resurfaced runway and hangar facilities. MIRA has invested heavily in airports and FBOs in Europe, the Middle East and Africa and is also the owner of US FBO group Atlantic Aviation.

## AVIATION SERVICES HUB:

Aviation finance

Despite weak economic growth and uncertainty over Brexit, 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.

## VistaJet Globals to debut new satcomm system

VistaJet's fleet of 36 Globals will be the first aircraft to be equipped with the LuxStream high-speed satellite communications system developed by Collins Aerospace. Vista Global, VistaJet's parent is the launch customer for the new system which will provide global coverage and allow passengers to use multiple devices while onboard streaming. The system will provide download speeds of up to 25mbps over the USA and up to 15mbps elsewhere. The system will use the Ku-band satellites operated by SES. LeAnn Ridgeway, VP Information Management Services for Collins noted that "In-flight connectivity is often cited by operators as the most important experience to provide on board, especially for long-range flights. By working with SES to bring LuxStream to the business aviation segment, we're meeting that need by providing speeds and services that are unparalleled in the industry."

## EBAA signs 'Future of Sky' declaration

On 11 September, the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) signed, along with other stakeholders, a declaration on the 'Future of European Sky'. Drafted during a high level Digital European Sky conference in Brussels, the declaration seeks to intensify efforts to fully implement the Single European Sky (SES) initiative. The SES initiative is designed to improve the efficiency of European airspace against a backdrop of traffic growth and conflicting regulatory challenges.

## Russian charter rules raise concerns

The Russian government has introduced restrictions on foreign corporate jet operators looking to operate flights in Russian airspace. Under the new rules, a foreign operator of a charter or for-reward flight must notify eight local operators of their plans. The overseas operator can only apply for a landing permit if none of the local operators is able to fulfil the flight or they fail to respond within eight days. A complicating factor is the delineation between aircraft with 20 seats or less. It is understood that 'cartel approval' will only be required if there is a domestic leg to the flight.

## Corporate aircraft news

The Embraer midsize twin Praetor 500 received regulatory approval from the FAA and EASA on 30 September, having first received certification from Brazil's ANAC on 13 August. The Praetor 500 is an upgraded version of the popular Legacy 450, offering greater fuel capacity, new winglets and performance enhancements. The aircraft was unveiled, along with the larger Praetor 600, at the NBAA-BACE in 2018.

On 21 September, Textron Aviation's Citation Longitude finally received certification from the FAA. First announced at NBAA-BACE 2015, the aircraft was expected to receive regulatory approval two years later. The delay was caused largely by problems related to the aircraft's fuel tank. Following certification, the manufacturer announced on 2 October that the first deliveries had taken place to undisclosed customers. The largest customer for the aircraft is fractional specialist NetJets, which currently holds orders for up to 175 examples.

Textron Aviation CEO Ron Draper said: "The newly certified Citation Longitude brings unrivalled technology to the business travel market, for both the passenger and the pilot, offering our customers the most efficient and productive super-midsize jet now in operation."

Just three days later, Transport Canada certified both the large cabin Bombardier Global 5500 and 6500. Both models are enhanced versions of the Global 5000 and 6000 respectively. Both aircraft were unveiled at EBACE 2018 and offer a new flight deck, a redefined wing. They are powered by the new Rolls-Royce Pearl 15 turboprops, which received Transport Canada at the same time. EASA and FAA approval for both Globals is expected soon. The first Global 6500 entered service on 1 October and is being leased by its owner back to the manufacturer for use as a demonstrator. Deliveries of the smaller Global 5500 are expected to begin next year.

On 6 October, Bombardier's large cabin flagship Global 7500 set a distance record by covering the 15,233km (8,225nm) distance between Sydney and Detroit, assisted by a 20-knot tailwind. The official book range for the aircraft is 14,260km (7,700nm).



## AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

### Mitsubishi MU-2



#### CATEGORY

Turboprop

#### MANUFACTURER

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Japan

#### ENGINE

2 x AiResearch TPE331-6-251M turboprops

#### LENGTH

12.01 m

#### WINGSPAN

11.94 m

#### RANGE

2,334 km

#### MAX. SPEED

547 kmh

#### SEATING CAPACITY

12

#### NO. OF CREW

1

#### MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

5,250 kg

#### DESCRIPTION

Production of the twin turboprop MU-2 ceased in 1987. By then, a total of 704 units had been built. According to AOPA, the MU-2 "was a cutting-edge airplane that, performance-wise, blew the doors off the competition. At the time, the Beech King Air 90 couldn't come close to the speedy Japanese newcomer. And the MU-2 was every bit as good a short/rough-field airplane as the King Air." The MU-2 made its first flight on 14 September 1963, although design work had commenced in 1956.

The initial prototypes were powered by Turbomeca Astazou turboprops. All subsequent production aircraft bore the base MU-2B designation and were powered by Garrett (now AiResearch) TPE331 engines. The MU-2B was developed through a total of 16 different variants, most of which reflected the needs of a diverse group of operators, both military and civilian. Over the years the MU-2 has acquired a reputation as a difficult aircraft to fly following a number of high profile accidents.