



February 2017

FOLLOW US!

 @RegisterAnAcft

 @Register_An_Aircraft

Cessna Citation production shift

Textron Aviation attracted both positive and negative headlines with the release of its full 2016 results. The Wichita-based manufacturer of the Cessna Citation family delivered 178 corporate jets last year, an increase of 12 over 2015. But while 42 of these were for the latest mid-size Citation Latitudes, delivery of other models slumped. Scott Donnelly, chairman, CEO and president of Textron Aviation parent Textron Inc. warned analysts that while it expects to boost its Citation Latitude output by nearly 30% in 2017, it is also planning production rate cuts on a similar scale throughout the rest of its Citation jet line. Noting the demand is “not there” for aircraft at higher prices, Donnelly said, “it just reached a price point where it doesn’t make sense for us to build the aircraft.” In more positive news, the company expects to receive certification for the Longitude, the largest Citation model yet, by the end of this year and to commence deliveries shortly after.

Gulfstream optimistic for 2017

Gulfstream Aerospace announced the end of production for both the mid-size G150 and large cabin G450 during the latter half of 2016. In the full year it delivered a total of 115 jets (88 large cabin and 27 mid-size aircraft) – a fall of some 39 units over 2015. The Savannah-based firm made clear that it expects 2017 performance to reflect an improvement with an estimated total of 125 (95 large cabin and 30 mid-size). The increase in large cabin totals is likely to include several G500s in the latter part of the year following scheduled certification for the new model. The company will receive a further boost with certification of the new ultralong-range G600 due in 2018 - the aircraft made its first flight in December 2016.

PlaneSense to debut the PC-24

Swiss manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft said the much-anticipated certification and initial customer delivery of the Pilatus PC-24 twin-engine business jet is expected by the end of Q4 this year. For an aircraft whose key target market is current operators of the ubiquitous PC-12 single turboprop, it is only fitting that the delivery of the first PC-24 will be to PlaneSense. The US fractional specialist, which currently boasts a fleet of 35 PC-12s, has six PC-24s on order. The company’s first jet-powered aircraft, the PC-24 will offer greater range and speed than the PC-12, while retaining the type’s overall ruggedness and ability to make use of very short runways.

WINGX reports strong start to 2017

Independent business aviation specialist WINGX Advance, which analyses flight activity across each country in Europe, reported a total of 798,000 business aviation flights in 2016, down by 0.3% compared to 2015. But discounting the recent decline in Prop activity, especially in Germany, the market has recovered, especially in business jet AOC activity. The data for January also makes for happier reading with a 4.4% YOY increase, boosted by strong growth in Western and Southern Europe. Spain and Austria were up more than 10% YOY, while flights from France were up 6%. A number of cities also recorded substantial traffic growth – Paris was up by 11%, London by 8.5% and Munich by an impressive 17.8%.

US-registered aircraft accidents fall

The number of accidents and fatalities involving US-registered business jets declined last year. According to preliminary statistics, there were 12 accidents last year compared with 20 in 2015. Sadly both years saw two fatal accidents, but eight lives were lost last year compared with 13 in 2015. Accidents involving US-registered turboprops last year were also down – with 31 accidents in 2016 compared to 37 in the previous year – although the number of fatalities was unchanged. There were 28 fatalities in nine turboprop accidents last year, and the same number lost their lives in 10 accidents in 2015.

World Economic Forum 2017

The world’s “movers and shakers” were once again out in force in the Swiss alpine resort of Davos-Klosters for the annual general meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in January – and, as usual, they kept the FBOs extremely busy. Zurich, the closest airport to Davos, allocates some 60 stands for aircraft carrying WEF delegates, while other local facilities at Altenrhein, Friedrichshafen, Dübendorf and Munich played host to aircraft both for parking and for those operating point-to-point.

RANA Director Brian T Richards joined the throng of photographers in Zurich to monitor traffic bringing some 2,500 guests including world leaders, CEOs and heads of numerous organisations. Outgoing US Vice President Joe Biden was undertaking one of his last official engagements ahead of the Trump administration, while President of the People’s Republic of China Xi Jinping combined his first visit to the WEF with a Swiss state visit. To the well-informed observer, Zurich’s WEF traffic seemed to be down – a result, perhaps, of a clash with the US presidential inauguration.



RANA SERVICE CENTRE: Aircraft registration

There is no “one-size-fits-all” aircraft registry. A number of new registries have been launched over the last few years and a number of other jurisdictions have widened the acceptance criteria to attract high value business – more will surely follow. Each is aiming to attract owners and operators of corporate aircraft with what they consider to be a unique selling point. In such a niche market what may be an appropriate registration jurisdiction for one client may not work for another.

The reasons for registering an aircraft away from the owner’s home base jurisdiction can be many and various. To attract this comparatively small but lucrative market, registries must be able to offer outstanding service, ease of process, cost-efficiency, flexibility in terms of aircraft acceptance and crew standards, as well as providing confidentiality and political neutrality. This is not to mention potential tax savings and asset protection and the limitation of liability through corporate ownership.

Embraer's 2016 performance

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer delivered a total of 117 corporate jets in 2016 – 44 Lineage and Legacy (450, 500 and 650 series) models and 73 Phenom (100 and 300 series). This compares to 120 aircraft in 2015 (38 Lineage/Legacies and 82 Phenoms). The delivery figures for 2016 were in line with predictions for between 35 and 45 large models and between 70 and 80 Phenoms. Taken together with the manufacturer's commercial aircraft deliveries, these figures represent the highest delivery totals since 2010. The company's combined backlog for both classes of aircraft stood at \$19.6 billion at the end of 2016.

New role for Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi

In a significant coup for the Middle East and North African Business Aviation Association (MEBAA), its high profile founding chairman, Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi, has taken over as Vice Chair of the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) following his election in December 2016. The appointment, which lasts for three years, was described by MEBAA in a statement as: "a key milestone for Alnaqbi and a testament to the incredible success MEBAA has achieved in the 10 years since its founding". MEBAA, which represents 250 companies and organisations throughout the Middle East and North African region, joined IBAC in 2006.

VLJ forecasts cause ONE Aviation to re-evaluate

ONE Aviation, formed through the merger of Eclipse Aviation and Kestrel Aircraft in 2015, announced that it is to layoff an undisclosed number of staff at its facility in Albuquerque, NM, which produces the Eclipse 550 VLJ (Very Light Jet). It is understood that the layoffs are partly in response to a low volume of orders and deliveries for the aircraft, along with downbeat market forecasts for the VLJ sector from a range of industry analysts and financial institutions. ONE Aviation is therefore realigning its model to introduce efficiencies. The company delivered just 12 Eclipse 550 aircraft to the end of Q3 2016 and is also responsible for training and maintenance for the 300 Eclipse 500 and 550 in service worldwide.

On a more positive note, the company continues development work on the Eclipse "Project Canada", which was formally announced in July 2016. This new version of the Eclipse will offer a Garmin G3000 flight deck, significant performance enhancements – including shorter take-off – new powerplant and enhanced range of 1,400nm (2,593km).

Corporate aircraft news

French manufacturer Daher enjoyed a successful 2016, delivering a total of 54 TBM 900 and 930 single turboprops. The TBM 930, incorporating the Garmin G3000 touchscreen flight deck, was introduced in April 2016 and made up over two-thirds of total aircraft delivered. A "2017" version of the 930 is available featuring a redesigned cabin interior and Garmin GTX 345 ADS-B all-in-one transponder. The company further announced that the TBM 900 will, subject to certification, be provided with the new generation Garmin G1000NXi improved avionics suite/integrated flight deck.

Gulfstream Aerospace has claimed three more city-pair speed records. The super mid-size G280 recently covered the 4,180km from Carlsbad, California, to Kalaoa, Hawaii, in 4hrs 47mins. This adds to the 57 speed records already held by the marque. The manufacturer's flagship G650ER notched up a further two records in one trip, flying first from Columbus, Ohio, to Shanghai, and returning from Taipei direct to Scottsdale, Arizona – sectors of 12,501km and 11,377km respectively. The outbound sector took some 14hrs 35mins with the return clocking 10hrs 57mins. The G650ER boasts a maximum speed of Mach 0.925 (982kmh).

In a major symbolic and political milestone, Brazilian manufacturer Embraer has finally entered the Argentine corporate jet market with the delivery of two Phenom 100 light jets to clients in its Latin American neighbour. The aircraft will be offered for charter and join the 350 Phenoms in service worldwide.

Japanese-owned Quest Aircraft enjoyed a record-breaking year in 2016, delivering a total of 36 Kodiak 100 turboprop singles. This included the 200th example of the workhorse, which is designed for operation in testing environments and built in Sandpoint, Idaho.



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Rockwell Turbo Commander 690B



CATEGORY

Turboprop

MANUFACTURER

Rockwell International, USA

ENGINE

2x Honeywell TPE-331-5-251/252 turboprops

LENGTH

13.52 m

WINGSPAN

14.19 m

RANGE

2,717 km

MAX. SPEED

527 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY

8

NO. OF CREW

1-2

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

4,683 kg

DESCRIPTION

The Turbo Commander 690B first flew in 1976 and a total of 217 examples had been produced by the time production ceased in 1985. The idea for a light corporate twin was originally floated in the mid-1940s by a product engineer at the Douglas Aircraft Company. This resulted in the production by Aero Design and Engineering Company (later Rockwell North America and International) of the Aero Commander 500, 520, 560 and 580, which entered service in the 1950s.

The distinctive high-wing Turbo Commander 690 first appeared in 1965 as a pressurised version of its piston powered predecessors. The 690B offered increased MTOW, two Honeywell powerplant options and cabin modifications, including the addition of a lavatory and improved soundproofing. The Turbo Commander offered a greater speed over competing models, including the Beech King Air and large piston-powered twins from Cessna or Piper.