

Falcon 10X - a large cabin competitor

French manufacturer Dassault Aviation has taken on both the Bombardier Global 7500 and the Gulfstream G700 with the launch of its own large cabin, long-range flagship. By far the largest of the Falcon family of bizjets, the t-tail 10X is expected to receive certification in 2025. The 10X will boast the largest cross-section of any purpose-built business jet – at 2.77m – compared to the 2.49m of the G700 and the 2.44m of the G7500. The cabin has been designed to give passengers the feel of a ‘high-end penthouse’ and will offer a cabin height of 2.03m – 0.15m greater than its rivals. Powered by two Rolls-Royce Pearl 10X turbofans, the 10X will offer a range of 13,890km (7,500nm), similar to its competitors, and will show a top speed of 1,133kph (Mach 0.925).

Q1 deliveries reflect positivity and optimism

The Q1 numbers for four of the major bizjet OEMs are in and there is a lot of positive news.

Embraer Executive Jets – The Brazilian manufacturer delivered a total of 12 business jets in Q1, up from the 9 it recorded in Q1 2020. Nine Phenom 300s were handed over (up from five last year), along with one Phenom 100, two Praetor 600 and one smaller Praetor 500. These numbers reflect the strength in demand for light jets in the wake of the worst doldrums of the Covid pandemic market last year.

Gulfstream Aerospace – The Savannah-based manufacturer reported a very strong Q1, driven largely by large cabin aircraft. In the first three months of this year the company delivered a total of 28 aircraft, an increase of five units. This figure comprised 25 large cabin models – G500, G600 and G650, along with three mid-size G280 – a tally unchanged from a year ago. In a further positive turn, the company recorded \$2.457 billion in orders during Q1 – its best performance since 2019, which marked the launch of the new flagship G700.

Textron Aviation – A total of 28 Citation jets were delivered in Q1, up from 23 in the first quarter of 2020. This tally includes five examples of the CitationJet CJ4 Gen2, the first substantial upgrade to the model since 2010. The manufacturer also reported a jump in orders which has resulted in a current order backlog of some \$2.1 billion.

Bombardier – Adding a challenging note to the air of positivity, the Canadian manufacturer delivered 26 aircraft in Q1 – the same figure as Q1 2020. This total is in line with its forecast to hand over between 110 and 120 aircraft this year. It delivered 114 in 2020. Revenues for Q1 rose by 18% – its first full quarter as a ‘pure play’ business aviation organization.

EBAA launches new ‘Ambassador’ programme

The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) has launched an innovative ‘peer-networking’ platform of so-called ‘Ambassadors’. Alongside the launch of an online platform, the programme allows industry leaders to join closed workshops and forums to address the greatest challenges and opportunities for Business aviation. To date 15 leading OEMs, trip planners, operators, and service and maintenance firms have signed up to the programme, including Air BP, VistaJet, Bombardier, Duncan Aviation, Dassault and NetJets Europe.

Europe’s ‘stuttering’ bizav traffic recovery

While US business aviation traffic has returned to a level that is just 8% down on the first four months of 2019, the situation in Europe is more challenging. According to the latest data produced by specialist analyst WingX advance, European traffic levels are recovering more slowly – up 10% on same period in 2020, but still 20% below 2019 trends – and are subject to wide geographical variance. France is the busiest market this year, up 13%, with domestic traffic up by 40%; but overall, flights from France are still 22% behind 2019. The UK is the third busiest market this year, but one of the few European countries still behind 2020 trends, 31% fewer flights than last year, although only 19% down for domestic routes. Russia and Turkey have the largest growth in traffic this year, more than 60% increase versus last year, mostly domestic traffic.

Embraer assists vaccine transport

As the worldwide vaccination programme gathers pace, Brazilian manufacturer Embraer has issued comprehensive guidance to owners and operators of the 1,400 Embraer bizjets in service around the world. The guidance assists operators to best optimise Embraer aircraft for the transportation of supplies of vaccine. The manufacturer has carried out tests to assess operational requirements and technical specifications required to transport Covid vaccines at low temperatures using dry ice.

AVIATION SERVICES HUB:

Corporate ownership

Leveraging the Sovereign Group’s wealth of experience in the provision of corporate services, RANA offers ownership solutions that are tailored specifically to aviation assets. We can recommend appropriate jurisdictions and corporate structures to provide asset protection, including tax and succession planning, as well as advising on the requirements and restrictions of particular registries.

The carefully planned use of a company structure – or special purpose vehicle (SPV) – can provide a number of distinct advantages to the owner of private aircraft or other types of aviation asset. Access to corporate limited liability and enhanced levels of confidentiality are the most obvious, but a company structure can also provide significant potential benefits in respect of estate planning, as well as simplifying any future sale of the asset, resulting in savings of time and cost. Sovereign will establish structures in jurisdictions worldwide that are best suited to the owner’s place of residence or domicile and the aircraft’s registration and intended usage.

Corporate registers - the 2021 snapshot

This month, we publish our annual review of aircraft under registry in a number of jurisdictions that are popular for the hosting of corporate jets and airliners. The data has been compiled by RANA from both official and unofficial sources.

As can be seen, the San Marino Aircraft Registry (SMAR) has continued to sustain outstanding growth based on the effective promotion of its customer services, competitive costing and wide acceptance of international technical and crew standards. It has attracted a whole raft of aircraft of all sizes and this year has also pushed the envelope of acceptable registration formats, allowing the national prefix 'T7-' to be followed by numbers (e.g. T7-999, a G650) and a number of letters in excess of the standard three (e.g. T7-HHHH, an ACJ318). This has allowed even greater personalisation for those owners so inclined.

The Isle of Man's figures have remained constant and, as in 2020, 2-REG based in the Channel Island of Guernsey has continued to attract more bizjets and corporate airliners while also maintaining its importance as a jurisdiction in which to register dormant commercial airliners between leases. Despite its high-profile launch into a now well-established marketplace, the neighbouring island of Jersey has failed to register any new jets.

Malta has also continued its growth as an EU member operator jurisdiction with a total of 29 current AOCs established to operate bizjets. Operators continue to be attracted by the island's tax incentives and ease of process. During the last year several new AOCs have been established – the most recent for UK operator Air Charter Scotland, which now operates a CitationJet 2 and Challenger 350 to ease operations in a post-Brexit Europe.

The table shows the figures as at February 2020/February 2021 (or latest available).

Registry	Corporate Jets	Corporate Airliners
Aruba (P4)	29/36	27/25
Bermuda (VP/VQ-B)	77/61	39/35
Cayman (VP-C)	134/133	43/44
Guernsey (2)	35/49	6/8
Ireland (EI/EJ)	12/13	3/2
Isle of Man (M)	234/230	29/26
Jersey (ZJ)	1/1	0/0
Malta (9H)	143/170	32/41
San Marino (T7)	139/176	24/27

Corporate aircraft news

On 30 April, the second Dassault Falcon 6X made its first flight – the prototype having made the type's maiden flight on 10 March. A third prototype, which will feature a fully finished interior, is expected to join the test programme in the autumn. The 6X is expected to receive certification next year.

Over at Gulfstream Aerospace, the sixth (and final) test aircraft of its new flagship G700 made its first flight from the manufacturer's plant at Savannah, Georgia, on 28 April. This aircraft is the first to feature a full production interior and reached an altitude of 14,630m (48,000 feet) during its three-hour, 30-minute flight.

In early May, Swiss manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft delivered the 1,800th example of its PC-12 turbine single. The aircraft, a PC-12NGX, was handed over to an agricultural producer based in Arizona. The manufacturer has reported that a total of 82 PC-12s were delivered last year, making it the most popular turbine single.

Colorado-based US manufacturer Bye Aerospace has unveiled plans for a fully electric aircraft that is aimed at competing directly with the single turboprop Daher 910 and the Beech King Air 260 twin. Powered by electric motors from Safran's ENGINeUS range, the twin eFlyer 800 will be able to carry seven passengers and two crew, and will have a range of approximately 926km (500nm). Bye Aerospace expects certification by 2027.



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Lockheed L-1011 TriStar 500



CATEGORY

Heavy jet

MANUFACTURER

Lockheed Corporation USA

ENGINE

3 x Rolls-Royce RB211-524B turbofans

LENGTH

50.05 m

WINGSPAN

50.09m

RANGE

9,899 km

MAX. SPEED

956 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY

330 in airline service

NO. OF CREW

3

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

231,332 kg

DESCRIPTION

The Lockheed L-1011 TriStar was the third wide-body airliner to enter commercial service, following the Boeing 747 and McDonnell Douglas DC-10. The prototype trijet made its first flight on 16 November 1970 and the original version – the L-1011-1 – entered service with US carrier Eastern Airlines in 1972. The commencement of airline service came at the end of a tortuous programme development that was much delayed by long-running design and financial problems at Rolls-Royce, the sole manufacturer of the TriStar's RB211 engines.

The long-range version of the L-1011, the TriStar 500, was the final variant to enter service, making its first flight on 27 April 1979 and commencing operations with British Airways just over a year later. The 500 featured a notably shortened fuselage (by some 4.3m), more powerful engines, a higher MTOW and increased wingspan. A small number of 500s eventually saw service with governments and corporations as VVIP transports.