

The monthly newsletter of RegisterAnAircraft.com – the Aviation Division of The Sovereign Group

NBAA 2012 flies despite distractions

The 65th Annual Meeting & Convention of the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) was held in Orlando from 30 October to 1 November. Attendance figures, at 25,250 were slightly down on 2011, although exhibitors and number of aircraft displayed remained at the same level. The show, one of the largest trade shows in the US, took place against the background of a struggling economy, a closely fought presidential election and the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Sandy. Corporate Jet Investor's Alasdair Whyte described the mood as "realistic but distracted."

As usual, manufacturers used the event to make some significant project announcements. Cessna unveiled an upgraded version of the Citation 680 Sovereign. The aircraft features a new Garmin cockpit, new Pratt & Whitney engines and winglets. Dassault also launched a new version of the Falcon 2000. The 2000LXS is designed to replace the 2000LX and is expected to achieve certification in 2014. The aircraft marries the short-field capability of the new 2000S with the range and payload offered by the 2000LX.

Corporate aviation in US election

"Why wouldn't we eliminate tax breaks for corporate jets? My attitude is if you got a corporate jet, you can probably afford to pay full freight, not get a special break for it." President Obama's words during the first televised election debate on 3 October provoked the wrath of industry heavyweights. His comments referred to specific options for depreciation on corporate jets but were widely viewed as a general attack on business aviation.

The day after the debate, CEO of the NBAA Ed Bolen wrote an open letter to the President complaining at a lack of understanding of the importance of the industry to the US economy. The letter concluded with the plea: "Please consider promoting, rather than disparaging, business aviation –



it's a great American industry." As this article is being written, Americans are going to the polls to elect a new president. The likely impact of any new administration remains to be seen.

MEBA 2012

The fifth biennial Middle East Business Aviation exhibition (MEBA) will be held next month in Dubai. Running from 11 to 13 December, the event hopes to better the impressive figures from the last show in 2010 when 338 exhibitors displayed to 6,200 visitors. MEBA 2012 is also moving to a venue. From this year MEBA will shift to the new Al Maktoum International Airport in the Dubai World Central Development at Jebel Ali. As with previous shows the event will also feature a substantial static aircraft display. RANA's Brian T Richards along with colleagues from Sovereign's Dubai office will be attending the show. Email info@RegisterAnAircraft.com to arrange a meeting with our team.

RANA SERVICE CENTRE:

Aircraft Registration

In the last few months we have reported on the launch of several new offshore registries around the world. Each of these jurisdictions is looking for a unique selling point to appeal to niche markets. The message for the customer is loud and clear. The choice of registry has never been wider but making the right decision has never been more difficult. RANA's specialist team will ask two basic questions – how will the aircraft be used and where will it be based – which will provide a crucial starting point for further discussion. Other critical considerations when making this vital decision are: costs; potential use for charter; acceptability of aircraft and crew licences; tax planning; and ease of process.



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Hawker Beechcraft Update

During the NBAA in Orlando, Hawker Beechcraft marked an important milestone as it delivered the 7,000th King Air. This was one of few positive headlines for the troubled manufacturer. The much publicised deal to sell the company to China's Superior Aviation collapsed. As a result Hawker Beechcraft has announced plans to restructure and emerge from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in early 2013 with a very different business model. It is anticipated that the renamed Beechcraft Corporation will shift away from the manufacture of corporate jets and that this arm of the business may be sold or closed down. The new entity will focus on its successful turboprop, piston and training lines although it may retain production of the Beechjet. In a worrying move for existing clients the company also announced that as a part of its restructuring it would seek permission to cancel warranties on Premier and Hawker 4000 aircraft.

NetJets Europe Developments

October saw two very different announcements from the European arm of fractional ownership specialist NetJets. The operator confirmed that it is expecting to take delivery of its initial Bombardier Global 6000 next month, with the aircraft entering service in February 2013. The first NetJets Global 6000, ordered in March 2011 was on display at the NBAA in Orlando last month. The aircraft, with a cabin for up to 14 passengers, boasts a range of 11,444km.

On a far less positive note, NetJets Europe has also confirmed that it is seeking to reduce further its pilot numbers as a result of weak demand for the company's fractional share and jet card programmes. It is understood that the company is seeking further voluntary redundancies from among its flight crew following a previous offer three years ago.

Corporate Aircraft News

In a major announcement at the NBAA convention, **Honda** confirmed that it has commenced production of the HondaJet at its plant in Greensboro, NC. The very light jet is expected to achieve certification next year with initial customer deliveries expected shortly thereafter. The aircraft will seat up to six passengers and can operate with either one or two crew.

In other news from Orlando, **Embraer** displayed a complete cabin and cockpit mockup of the Legacy 450. The new aircraft is scheduled to enter service in 2015. Away from the show the Brazilian manufacturer also confirmed that the first Legacy 500 will begin flight testing by the end of December. The slightly larger sister to the 450 is expected to see initial deliveries in 2014.

Gulfstream displayed its full range of aircraft at the NBAA including the G650.

AIRCRAFT FACT FILE:

Eurocopter EC155B1



CATEGORY:

Helicopter

MANUFACTURER:

Eurocopter, France

ENGINES:

2x Turbomeca Arriel 2C2 turbo shaft

LENGTH:

14.30 m

WINGSPAN:

n/a

RANGE:

875 km

MAX. SPEED:

265 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY:

Up to 13, typically 8

NO. OF CREW:

1 or 2

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW):

4,920 kg

DESCRIPTION:

The EC155 was developed from the very successful AS365 Dauphin. Work started on the design in 1996 and the project was officially announced at the Paris Air Show a year later. The aircraft received German and French certification at the end of 1998 and deliveries started shortly thereafter. An enhanced version, with more powerful engines and an increased MTOW, the EC155B1 entered service in late 2002. The latest marque has been optimised for 'hot and high' operations and is mainly built from various composite materials.

The helicopter has been designed with a large cabin and ample luggage space to support medium-range service. It features an all glass cockpit along with an integrated digital flight control system. The VIP/corporate version can sit eight passengers in a comfortable layout.