



Airborne

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

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UK operators announce merger

UK-based business aviation service provider Hangar 8 has merged with UK rival Gama Aviation in a reverse takeover. The newly formed combined operation, which will be called Gama Aviation PLC, will be one of the top five operators in the world with a market capitalisation of £120 million. The deal was announced in early December during MEBA in Dubai.

The company will offer a comprehensive management and operation service across the full range of corporate aircraft. The new entity will have 144 aircraft under management at 44 locations across 15 countries with, based on 2013 figures, revenues in excess of £250 million.

Gama Aviation PLC will be headed by Gama's current CEO Marwan Khalek, who said: "Over the last 30 years, Gama Aviation has grown steadily to become one of the major business aviation service providers in the world. However, through this merger we will be creating a true global leader and one that is uniquely positioned for accelerated future growth."

Sukhoi promotes VIP SuperJet

Russian manufacturer Sukhoi has reached a major milestone in its plans to launch a 19-seat VIP version of its SSJ100 airliner. In November 2014, Russia's Interstate Aviation Committee granted a Major Change Approval to the baseline airliner to enable certification of an enhanced comfort interior for VIP operation. The new cabin is to be divided into a number of different sections, offering increased flexibility and easy configuration for meetings and relaxation. The cabin has been designed in consultation with the VIP version's initial customer – the Russian government – and was recently demonstrated during a ministerial visit to India and the Middle East. Although it currently has a more limited range, the new variant will be marketed as a competitively priced alternative to the ACJ319, the BBJ and Embraer Lineage 1000. Sukhoi aims to sell between five and ten aircraft a year.

Biggin Hill introduces Heli Shuttle

The owners of London Biggin Hill Airport (BHAL) have announced the launch of a dedicated helicopter shuttle between the airport and the London Heliport in Battersea. BHAL, the only facility in the Greater London area dedicated to business aviation, has promoted the new venture as offering a substantial time saving over ground transfers into the city. The new service will be operated by Castle Air using a fleet of Agusta A109 helicopters with an estimated journey time of just six minutes. The Heli Shuttle will also provide service to the Vanguard heliport close to Canary Wharf upon request. The new route is aimed at business, corporate and private aviation customers, for a fixed fare of £2,300 (+VAT).

The Channel Islands Aircraft Register - one year on

The Channel Islands Aircraft Register (CIAR) celebrated its first anniversary on 9 December. Marketed as "2-REG" in reference to its international registration prefix, the Guernsey-based registry has developed a strong brand and, as we reported in October 2014, has enjoyed considerable success in the registration of commercial airliners between operational leases.

In the first year of operation, according to the latest register dated 1 January, the CIAR has registered a total of 34 aircraft, of which 24 remain current. Included in the overall total were 14 dormant airliners and two corporate jets – a Gulfstream IV and a Legacy 600.

The widely publicised aim when the registry launched was to focus initially on local owners of small aircraft before targeting corporate aircraft by marketing Guernsey as a jurisdiction of choice to owners. Given the overwhelming dominance of the Isle of Man registry in respect of corporate jets, the figures suggest that the registration of corporate aircraft under 2-REG has been challenging.

The CIAR will face competition from the neighbouring island of Jersey which is set to launch its own register aimed at owners of private and corporate aircraft. The Jersey Aircraft Register is set to open for business in the early part of 2015.

RANA SERVICE CENTRE: Aviation insurance

The range of aviation insurance products provided by our colleagues at Sovereign Insurance Services (SIS) has been extended to include bespoke coverage for owners of private aircraft and helicopters. The strength of the Sovereign brand combined with the expertise and experience of the team at SIS has enabled it to build relationships with leading insurers throughout the world. As a result SIS can offer wide-ranging insurance cover, competitive pricing, together with efficient and professional claims handling.

Aviation insurance covers the full range from public liability through to hull insurance for new or used airframes. The SIS team can quote on all types of aviation asset – from corporate jets and turbo-props, general aviation aircraft and helicopters to FBOs, flying schools or commercial passenger or freight operators. SIS also specialises in areas such as kidnap and ransom insurance, which may also be of interest to aircraft owners and operators.

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Large cabin aircraft set to dominate the market

Honeywell Aerospace, the US-based aircraft engine and technology supplier, is forecasting that a total of 9,450 aircraft will be delivered between 2015 and 2024, of which 60% will be large cabin aircraft reflecting 85% of additional retail value. According to Honeywell's annual "Global Business Aviation Outlook" this category will account for some 75% of all corporate aircraft expenditure in the short term.

These figures reflect a strong trend in the years since the financial crash of 2008 – sales and development investment by OEMs has remained resilient in the large cabin and long range section of the market. Brian Sill, Honeywell's president of business and general aviation, said: "The strong desire for larger-cabin aircraft with greater range and advanced avionics is seen again in this year's survey."

Dubai World Central's executive terminal

Heavily promoted to visitors to MEBA 2014, the owners of Dubai World Central airport (DWC) recently broke ground on a new dedicated Executive Terminal. The 6,000m² facility will offer customs and immigration services and will be shared by a number of dedicated operators including Jet Aviation, Jetex Flight Support and XJet. It is scheduled to open for business in time for the Dubai Airshow in December 2015. COO of Dubai Aviation City Corporation, Rashed bu Qara'a, said in a statement: "DWC is partnering with industry leaders to build a complete ecosystem for a world-class aerotropolis, and the executive terminal is a step in the right direction."

Corporate Aircraft News

French manufacturer **Dassault** rolled out the first Falcon 8X on 17 December in a ceremony at Bordeaux-Mérignac Airport in Southwestern France. The company's new ultra long-range flagship will offer the largest cabin of any Falcon and will be offered in over 30 interior configurations. The aircraft is expected to make its first flight in the first quarter of this year.

In a ceremony at its Cologne headquarters on 16 December, European regulator EASA granted certification to Brazil's **Embraer** Legacy 500. "EASA's certification is a very important achievement for the Legacy 500, which is introducing advanced technologies and superior comfort in the midsize class," said Marco Túlio Pellegrini, president and CEO of Embraer Executive Jets. "The approval of this revolutionary aircraft is a testament to our commitment to deliver true innovation to the market." The aircraft received FAA certification in October 2014 and first delivery to a US customer is scheduled for later this month.

In a major milestone for the "personal jet" project, Minnesota-based **Cirrus Aircraft** announced that the third and final conforming prototype of its single engine SF50 Vision completed its first flight on 20 December.



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Cessna Citation 550 Bravo



CATEGORY

Mid-Size Jet

MANUFACTURER

Cessna, USA

ENGINE

2xP&WC PW503A turbofans

LENGTH

14.39 m

WINGSPAN

15.90 m

RANGE

3,520 km

MAX. SPEED

743 kmh

SEATING CAP.

Up to 10

NO. OF CREW

2

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

6,715 kg

DESCRIPTION

Cessna had built a total of 337 550 Bravo aircraft by the time production ceased in 2006. The 550 Bravo was first announced in 1994 as the manufacturer looked to include new technological enhancements to the baseline Citation II and Citation S/II, which had been in production since 1984. The Citation II had been developed from the original Citation I, which first flew in January 1977, and provided a larger cabin. The Citation 550 Bravo used the basic airframe of the Citation II but was powered by new PW503A turbofans. The aircraft featured new landing gear and a new avionics suite – the Honeywell Primus 1000 glass cockpit. The 550 Bravo flew for the first time in April 1995 with certification finally being granted in August 1996.