

Airborne

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

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EBACE 2015 -

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15TH ANNUAL
EBACE
19-21 MAY 2015 | GENEVA

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Heading supersonic

US manufacturer Aerion edged closer to the full launch of its supersonic business jet programme the AS2 by opening the order book at EBACE. The aircraft will be priced at \$120 million when it enters production and the first 50 customers will receive incentives and preferential pricing. The aircraft, which has a seating capacity of 12, is aiming to cruise at Mach 1.6 which will shave three and a half hours off a journey between Washington DC and Paris. The programme was first announced in 2014 and flight-testing is expected to start in 2019, with first deliveries in 2022. Aerion is in partnership with Airbus Group to support flight specifications and design of the new aircraft.

New Irish register confirmed

As we reported in last month's Airborne, the Republic of Ireland is allowing the use of registration prefix "EJ-" followed by four letters, with effect from 1 June 2015. After much speculation, the reason became clear with the launch of a new registry for private and corporate aviation at EBACE. The Shannon International Aviation Services Centre and the Irish Aviation Authority are jointly marketing the EJ Register as: "The new gold standard register for private and corporate jets worldwide".

The new register is being promoted as fully compliant with all current and impending EASA regulations. It will be open to aircraft with MTOW in excess of 5,700kg and will accommodate holders of Air Operator Certificate (AOC) so that it can be used for both private and commercial operations. As a signatory to the Cape Town Convention with a favourable legal and tax environment, Ireland is being touted as an attractive jurisdiction for both owners and lessors.

Roll-out for Dassault Falcon 5X

In a significant landmark for the French manufacturer, Dassault rolled out the prototype of the super mid-size twinjet Falcon 5X at its plant in Bordeaux on 2 June. The company claims to have "reinvented the private jet travel experience – It's a bigger, more comfortable experience. A healthier experience. A more productive experience." The new design offers the widest cabin cross-section of any purpose-built corporate jet with windows 30% larger than on previous Falcons. The aircraft features a new ultra-efficient wing and advanced digital flight control system. The Falcon 5X will offer a range of 9,630km (5,200nm) and is designed to compete directly with the Bombardier Global 5000 and Gulfstream G450. It is expected that the aircraft will make its first flight in Q3 this year.

RANA SERVICE CENTRE:

Insurance

Sovereign Insurance Services (SIS) is a fully licensed independent general insurance intermediary based in Gibraltar with direct links to specialist underwriters based in London and elsewhere. SIS can offer wide-ranging bespoke insurance cover for owners of fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. The team offers market insight and expertise, competitive pricing, together with efficient and professional claims handling. Specialist 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 turboprops, 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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Bombardier woes

During Bombardier's Q1 investor conference call on 7 May, the Canadian manufacturer announced that it plans to slow production of the Global 5000 and 6000 due to weaker demand for the aircraft. The manufacturer has been particularly hit by a fall in sales in Russia, Latin America and China – previously strong markets for the large cabin aircraft. A week later, the company announced that it was to cut 1,750 jobs – 1,480 in Montreal and Toronto and 280 in Belfast – as a direct result of the slowdown in production. On the eve of EBACE the company announced that David Coleal will replace Éric Martel as CEO of Bombardier Business Jets. Trevor Lambarth, vice president of sales, will also leave his post.

Deliveries decline

Data released by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) covering the first quarter of 2015 shows a substantial overall decline in deliveries year-on-year. A total of 441 aircraft (jet, turboprop and piston) were delivered in Q1 2015, compared to 520 in the same period last year – a decline of 15.2%. Overall billing fell from \$5.2 billion to \$4.5 billion. The figures for helicopters were also down by 18.3%.

Peter Bunce, GAMA's president and CEO, said: "The first-quarter numbers show that while our industry has been gaining traction over the past few years, we face some renewed headwinds in several regions of the world, including Asia, parts of Europe and Latin America." Manufacturers hope that the trend of these figures will improve over the course of the year as new models (both jet and turboprop) receive certification and commence customer deliveries.

Corporate Aircraft News

The prototype of the Pilatus PC-24 made its first flight on 11 May from the headquarters of its Swiss manufacturer at Buochs. The maiden flight of the aircraft, dubbed a "Super Versatile Jet," lasted 55 minutes. The twin-jet aircraft is designed to operate from short and unpaved runways and is equipped with a side cargo door. Certification and first deliveries are expected in 2017.

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer has confirmed that it will move all assembly of Phenom 100 and 300 to its facility in Melbourne, Florida, over the next year. Its Brazilian plant will continue to manufacture fuselage sections and wings for export to the US.

On 18 May, the day before EBACE opened in Geneva, Gulfstream celebrated the first flight of the G500. The initial sortie lasted just over two hours from the company's base at Savannah, Georgia. The fly-by-wire design is expected to receive FAA and EASA certification in 2017 with customer deliveries commencing in 2018.

Cessna announced at EBACE on 19 May that its CitationJet CJ3+ had received EASA certification. The design received FAA approval in September 2014. Deliveries to European customers are now due later this year. In other developments, the company confirmed that performance specifications for the Citation Latitude have improved as a result of the flight test programme. The aircraft's range has been increased again, reflecting a 35% improvement over initial estimates when the design was announced in 2011. FAA certification is said to be imminent.

Japan's Honda Aircraft Company's ground-breaking HondaJet opened a European sales tour with its debut in the static display at EBACE. The aircraft, which recently received provisional FAA type certification, is scheduled to visit Warsaw, Cambridge, Farnborough, Birmingham, Leeds, Monchengladbach, Hamburg and Munich.



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Boeing 747SP



CATEGORY

Heavy Jet

MANUFACTURER

Boeing, USA

ENGINE

2 x P&W JT9D-7R4W or RR RB211-524C2 turbofans

LENGTH

56.31 m

WINGSPAN

59.64 m

RANGE

12,320 km

MAX. SPEED

1,095 kmh

SEATING CAP.

Up to 375

NO. OF CREW

3

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

304,000 kg

DESCRIPTION

The 747SP ("Special Performance") was developed from the early standard 747-100/200 series to satisfy a desire from airlines (Pan American in particular) for a long-range, large capacity aircraft. The fuselage was shortened and the weight substantially reduced although it offered the same power as a full size 747. The variant first flew on 4 July 1975 and received its supplemental flight certificate from the FAA in February 1976.

While the aircraft saw limited but high profile commercial service, it also found favour with VVIP operators following conversion, the majority from the Middle East. The aircraft's extended range, and fuel efficiency made it particularly attractive for special missions and the 747SP was operated by the governments of Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. A small number remain in service.