



## AIRBORNE

December 2017

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## Garmin hits one million

Specialist avionics manufacturer Garmin has taken just 28 years to deliver one million certified avionics products. The milestone delivery of a GTX 3000 DO-260B transponder enabling ADS-B Out transmissions took place at the end of November.

Garmin was founded in Kansas by Gary Burrell and Min Kao – hence the ‘Gar-Min’ name – in 1989. The firm currently provides avionics suites and integrated cockpit solutions for over 70 aircraft models from different sectors. As the one-millionth example suggests, the company is also heavily involved in providing upgrade solutions that allow owners to comply with the FAA ADS-B Out deadline set for 1 January 2020.

The company’s website sums up its scope of operations: “With the most comprehensive line-up of avionics upgrades in the industry, Garmin offers solutions for most any budget and mission. Our avionics solutions help provide industry-leading capabilities, increase situational awareness and enhance decision-making like never before.”

## Zetta Jet ceases operations

On 30 November, high profile charter operator Zetta Jet ceased operations and surrendered its air operator certificate to the FAA. The company, based in Burbank, California, had filed for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 11 in September. The cessation of operations came after a US court refused to grant the company’s request for new financing following objections from a number of creditors. Zetta Jet was originally founded in Singapore and had been one of the fastest growing operators in the Asia Pacific region. It operated a rapidly growing fleet of Bombardier Challengers and Global Express aircraft.

## Dubai Airshow 2017

The biennial Dubai Airshow is known as a high profile platform for commercial and military manufacturers to announce major new orders from airlines and air arms. This year was no exception for the airlines with plenty to excite both Airbus and Boeing. The 2017 show was held in a purpose-built exhibition area at Dubai World Central airport (DWC) from 12-16 November and attracted just short of 80,000 trade visitors and 1,200 exhibitors. Business aviation is a big part of the show with a substantial representation in the halls and static park. All the major manufacturers were present but the highlight for many was the inclusion of the Dubai-based ‘Dream Jet’, which made its show debut on the static display. Owned by Chinese business aircraft operator Deer Jet, the ‘Dream Jet’ is the world’s only Boeing BBJ 787 that is available for charter. Seating up to 40 passengers, the VVIP widebody is described by its local charter agent as “unlike anything else available on the planet”.

## Surf Air goes aerial to City

Surf Air Europe, the ‘all-you-can-fly’ membership service that launched in Europe in June this year, moved its base from London Luton to London City Airport from the beginning of this month. The US firm, which is translating a business model that has been operating successfully in California, charges an initial sign-up fee plus a monthly charge of £1,750 for unlimited travel on a small number of routes. The company uses an Embraer Phenom 300, operated on its behalf by UK operator FlairJet, on its daily weekday service from London to Zurich. It is understood that this flight will continue to operate from Luton until crews have received the training and licences for the steep approach required for London City. Surf Air has also announced plans to operate PC-12 turboprop singles from Zurich.

## Africa’s corporate jet fleet to grow

The African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) hosted the first African Business Aviation Conference (AfBAC) in Johannesburg from 29 November to 1 December. In conjunction with the event, Global Jet Capital (GJC) produced detailed analysis and forecasts for the African business aviation sector. GJC estimates that the continent’s fleet will grow from 408 aircraft today to 520 by 2025. Driving this growth will be delivery of some 160 new build aircraft valued at just under \$4 billion. AfBAC, which opened under the theme ‘Supporting Business Aviation Evolution in Africa’, attracted over 50 exhibitors and featured some 30 conference speakers.

## Luxury in the sky with diamonds

One of the more unusual exhibitors at this year’s Dubai Airshow was Luxembourg-based Jean Boule Luxury. The company was showcasing the world’s first corporate jet, a Bombardier Global Express, to sport its patent pending Sun King Diamond Coating, which transforms ethically sourced, natural diamonds into a high quality coating. It produces what the company describes as “amazing multichromatic reflections” and has previously only been used on super cars. The aviation grade coating has been developed in conjunction with Dutch manufacturer AkzoNobel and has been subject to stringent testing to ensure it meets required performance specifications whilst maintaining its brilliant appearance.

## AVIATION SERVICES HUB:

### Aircraft registration

There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ aircraft registry. A number of new registries have been launched over the last few years, while a number of other jurisdictions have widened their acceptance criteria to attract high value business and improve the services they offer to international clients. More will surely follow. Every registry seeks 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. In addition, corporate ownership can some offer potential tax advantages, increased asset protection and limited liability.

## JetClass offers new model

JetClass, a new Austrian start-up, claims that it is “reinventing the business class experience by enabling passengers to book seats on private jets for ticket prices competing with business class fares, without any membership fees.” The company’s innovative model is based on analysing business class traffic and fares on short-haul routes. Where sufficient demand is identified, it charters small corporate jets and sells seats on that route using commercial GDS (Global Distribution Systems), online booking engines, travel agents and direct via its own website. JetClass was founded by the business Vladislav Zenov and Wagas Ali, the same team that founded Charterscanner, the private jet booking platform for B2C. If successful in Europe, the firm is looking to expand operations further afield to routes with high demand for business class seats such as Jeddah – Dubai.

## VistaJet posts Q3 record

Specialist programme and charter operator VistaJet, headquartered in Malta, continues to set records with its ‘pay for hours flown’ fare structure. Revenues for Q3 2017 were up by some 38%, due largely to a 32% growth in membership programme hours. Growth in the US market was particularly strong with an increase of 22% in new US programme members. So far this year, the company has also recorded massive growth in new members from the Middle East. In total, the number of new customers has grown by 50%. In addition, the company has been approved to offer a ‘full flying service’ in Saudi Arabia, a country that hosts some 39% of its clients in the Middle East region.

## Corporate aircraft news

Swiss manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft secured joint FAA and EASA certification for its innovative PC-24 twinjet on 8 December. Designed to combine light-jet speed, climb and altitude capability with twin-turboprop capacity, short-field / rough-field capability, the PC-24 is the firm’s first venture into jet aircraft design. The first prototype performed its maiden flight in May 2015 and the first production delivery is scheduled to US fractional specialist operator PlaneSense before the end of this month. CorporateJetInvestor’s Alasdair Whyte described the PC-24 as “one of the most exciting aircraft we have seen for a long while”. There are few who would disagree.

Russia’s United Aircraft Corporation used the Dubai Airshow to announce a new long-range version of its Sukhoi Business Jet (SBJ). A VIP variant of the Sukhoi Superjet 100-95 regional jet launched in 2011, there are currently nine SBJs in service with governments and specialist operators in Russia, Thailand and Kazakhstan. The SBJ will now be available with additional fuel tanks providing a standard range of up to 6,000km – an increase of some 1,580km over the current version. In VIP configuration, the SBJ can accommodate up to 18 passengers.

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer has confirmed that it is further reducing the maximum cabin altitude for both its Legacy 450 and 500 mid-cabin business jets to a “best-in-class 5,800ft”. The change is designed to improve comfort for passengers during flight and reduce fatigue by increasing the cabin pressurization differential. The current maximum cabin altitude of the two jets is 6,000 ft. when flying at 45,000 ft. This change will be available in new aircraft from the end of Q1 2018 and as a retrofit on in-service airframes.

On 6 December Bombardier confirmed two major delivery landmarks within its Challenger family of twinjets. Firstly it announced that it had delivered 200 Challenger 350 aircraft since the first aircraft was handed over in June 2014. It further confirmed that it had delivered the 50th Challenger 650 since it had entered service two years ago. Peter Likoray, Bombardier Business Aircraft’s SVP of Sales and Marketing, said: “Achieving these significant delivery milestones is a testament to the unrivalled capabilities of our newest Challengers. No competitor comes close to the comfort and connectivity of the Challenger’s cabin, nor to their class-leading economics and dependable performance in operation.”

**The team at Sovereign’s aviation division and the worldwide Sovereign Group would like to send seasonal greetings to all readers of Airborne, as well as our best wishes for 2018.**



## AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \ \

### Vulcanair P68C



#### CATEGORY

Turboprop

#### MANUFACTURER

Vulcanair, Italy

#### ENGINE

2 x Lycoming IO-360-A1B6 turboprops

#### LENGTH

9.55 m

#### WINGSPAN

12.00 m

#### RANGE

2,112 km

#### MAX. SPEED

322 kmh

#### SEATING CAPACITY

6

#### NO. OF CREW

1

#### MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

1,990 kg

#### DESCRIPTION

Vulcanair was founded in 1996 after purchasing all the assets, type designs, trademarks and rights of the iconic Italian manufacturer Partenavia. The P68 had originally made its first flight in May 1970 and production was begun two years later. The P68B, featuring a lengthened fuselage, appeared in 1974. The P68C, which offered weather radar in a longer nose section, was launched in 1979. This latter version also provided greater fuel capacity, new wheel fairings and a reworked cabin. It remains in production today as the P68C.

The P68C offers a very distinctive design and features twin props. It was developed as a multi-role aircraft requiring low maintenance. In addition to light passenger/corporate passenger transport, the aircraft has also been used to great success in survey roles. The P68 Observer, a joint Italian and German development, features a glass nose providing high levels of visibility for survey and tracking work and has become particularly popular with law enforcement agencies worldwide.