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Isle of Man aviation conference 2015

"Finance, Tax, Regulation, Registration" was the tag line for this year's Isle of Man aviation conference, which took place on 25 June in the striking setting of the ballroom of the Villa Marina complex on the seafront in Douglas, the island's capital. Organised by ICM Aviation and supported by the Isle of Man Aircraft Registry (IOMAR), the event, now in its fifth year, attracted more than 150 delegates from all over Britain, Europe and further afield.

The conference was opened by the Isle of Man's Minister for Economic Development, Laurence Skelly, who said that aviation was "an increasingly important sector for the Isle of Man which has now firmly established itself as the leading one-stop shop for global aviation business with regard to the registration and management of private and corporate jets."

The conference presentations began with an overview of the IOMAR from Director of Civil Aviation, Simon Williams. He noted that the IOMAR is the world's fastest growing register and continues to expand, while maintaining levels of service to clients. The presentation also included discussion of Cape Town ratification along with the forthcoming EASA regulatory changes under Part-NCC. These changes were covered later in more depth during a panel discussion comprising both operators and regulators.

One of the highlights of the day was a panel session focusing on VAT and customs duties. It was made very clear that thorny issues such as temporary importation of aircraft to the European Union are open to different interpretations between member states and that this can cause problems and potential financial penalties if treated incorrectly.

Other presentations covered topics ranging from operator perspectives on innovation and consolidation through to industry lobby organisations, an overview of legal changes and the potential and challenges for corporate aviation operations in Africa.

RANA Director Brian T Richards, who has attended each of the conferences, said: "This event always manages to cover a wide range of topical issues – both related to the growing Isle of Man registry and wider corporate aviation market. It also provides an excellent networking opportunity both during the conference itself and on the margins."

Next year's event is scheduled for 23 June 2016.

Isle of Man hits 800

Simon Williams, the Isle of Man's recently appointed Director of Civil Aviation, had hoped to be able to announce the landmark registration of the island's 800th aircraft at the aviation conference on 25 June. Unfortunately, the tally fell short by just three aircraft. This was remedied just a few days later with the addition of a Global Express and EC-155 helicopter. Embraer Legacy 600 M-BIRD, formerly registered in the UAE, was the entry that finally hit the target.

Of the 800 aircraft registered in the Isle of Man since the register launched on 1 May 2007, 459 remain current. This figure includes, corporate jets, turboprops, helicopters, single engine aircraft for Manx residents and commercial aircraft between operational leases.

Paris Air Show 2015

Setting aside the bulk orders for commercial aircraft from the world's airlines, this year's biennial Paris Air Show – from 15 to 21 June – produced some significant developments for the corporate market. French manufacturer Dassault used the show at Le Bourget airport to reveal its new flagship Falcon 8X for the first time. The long-range fly-by-wire 8X is a larger upgraded version of the popular 7X with increased range, a longer cabin and heightened fuel efficiency. The 8X was unveiled on 17 December 2014.

Boeing Business Jets confirmed that it has launched the BBJ Max 9 with an order placed by an undisclosed customer. The Max 9 is the VVIP version of the fourth generation 737 Max 9, based upon the 737-900ER. The BBJ Max 8, a variant of the baseline 737-800ER was launched last year and has so far attracted four orders.

Saudi-based VVIP charter operator Alpha Star became the launch customer for the Airbus ACJ319neo. The new version features new powerplant, sharklets and an improved cabin. Delivery is planned for Q2 2019. The company currently operates a mixed Airbus fleet ranging from the ACJ318 to the ACJ340.

RANA SERVICE CENTRE:

Aloft and afloat

Over the next couple of months Sovereign's aviation division RegisterAnAircraft.com (RANA) is joining forces with the group's marine division, RegisterAYacht.com (RAY), for a marketing campaign designed to showcase the services that we can provide to clients and intermediaries. We'll be explaining what we can do through a series of articles on our websites, blogs and links on social media and other events. Central to this campaign will be a four-episode case study that will focus on the acquisition, registration, ownership, financing and insurance of a yacht and executive jet. Combined with the multi-jurisdictional corporate services capability of the wider Sovereign Group, we hope to demonstrate that we can offer a comprehensive and bespoke worldwide service.

The case study can be found here - <http://www.SovereignGroup.com/aloft-and-afloat/>

Feel free to get in touch with the teams directly – For marine, contact Gabriel González ggonzalez@SovereignGroup.com

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European flight activity improves

The latest data from Hamburg-based intelligence specialists WINGX Advance provides evidence of what it describes as an “encouraging recovery” in flight activity in Europe. A total of 73,436 jet, turboprop and piston departures in May represents a YOY increase at 0.7% compared with May last year, while 80,954 flight departures in June showed an increase of 1.8% over June 2014. Overall, the figures for the first six months of 2015 remain 1.1% behind 2014 but the gap appears to be narrowing significantly, down from a 1.9% deficit for the period to the end of May.

June’s figures in particular were helped by significant increases in flights from Germany and France – where the total number of flights accounted for 37% of the overall tally – along with the UK, Italy, Switzerland and Benelux. On the negative side, activity around the Mediterranean, including Spain, Turkey and North Africa declined. In particular, the figures continue to be pegged back by the decline in flights from Russia – down 15% in June. Overall flights for 2015 from the CIS countries are down by some 30% over 2014.

VistaJet reaches 50

Austrian charter specialist VistaJet accepted delivery of its 50th aircraft – a Global 6000 – at the end of June. VistaJet operates the world’s largest privately owned fleet of Bombardier corporate aircraft and placed a substantial order for up to 142 Globals of various marques in 2012, which was followed by a purchase of up to 40 Challenger 350s a year later. A large and expanding portion of the current fleet is registered in Malta with the company’s Maltese subsidiary. VistaJet Malta operates nine Challenger 350, ten Challenger 604, three Global 5000 and 14 Global 6000.



Corporate aircraft news

Cessna’s Citation Latitude received FAA certification on 5 June. The US manufacturer has confirmed that deliveries of the mid-size jet will commence in Q3 of this year. The Latitude first flew in February 2014 and FAA approval followed the aircraft’s debut at EBACE in Geneva at the end of May. The aircraft can seat up to nine passengers in the widest fuselage of any Citation model, which is coupled with a ceiling height of 1.83m. The Citation Longitude, the Latitude’s super mid-size sister ship, is expected to receive certification in 2017.

Fokker Services, the Dutch specialist in the conversion of commercial airliners for corporate use, has reached agreement with Chinese manufacturer Comac to convert examples of its ARJ21-700 twinjet regional airliner. The ARJ21B, as the corporate version will be known, will be able to accommodate up to 20 passengers. The commercial airliner received Chinese type certification at the end of December 2014. The bulk of conversion work will be carried out in the Netherlands, with final outfitting and customer delivery undertaken at the Comac plant in Shanghai.

Airbus Helicopters new H160 medium twin helicopter flew for the first time on 13 June from the manufacturer’s plant in Bordeaux. The company expects to begin deliveries in 2018. The aircraft will be powered by two Turbomeca Arranos. In another significant announcement at the Paris Air Show, the pan-European manufacturer launched a programme to replace its popular Super Puma. The heavy twin X6 will feature a five-bladed main rotor and composite elements in the fuselage and other structures. The aircraft will feature full fly-by-wire technology and the manufacturer will now proceed with a two-year concept phase. Assuming concept and development phases proceed as planned, first flight is estimated for the early 2020s.



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \ \

Dassault Falcon 50



CATEGORY

Mid-Size Jet

MANUFACTURER

Dassault Aviation, France

ENGINE

3 x Garrett TFE731-3-1C turboprops

LENGTH

18.52 m

WINGSPAN

18.86 m

RANGE

6,480 km

MAX. SPEED

915 kmh

SEATING CAPACITY

9

NO. OF CREW

2

MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT (MTOW)

17,600 kg

DESCRIPTION

Although the Falcon 50 shares a similar capacity and the same fuselage cross-section of the earlier generation twinjet Falcon 20, the aircraft was in fact a new and innovative design for its time. The aircraft featured three Garrett turboprops in a move away from the General Electric CF700s of its predecessor, along with a totally redesigned wing and control surfaces. The Falcon 50 was launched to fulfil the need for a long-range aircraft whilst retaining the capacity of the Falcon 20.

The Falcon 50 first flew in November 1976 and received French certification at the end of February 1979, with the FAA following just over a week later. An upgraded version, the Falcon 50EX, first flew in 1996 and featured new engines providing greater range, together with a new flight deck and avionics suite. Production ceased in late 2007 with the final example being delivered in early 2008. A total of 352 Falcon 50/50EX were produced.