

Airborne

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

DECEMBER 2014

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MEBA 2014

The new exhibition centre at Al Maktoum International Airport in Jebel Ali, 37 kilometres south west of Dubai, played host for the first time to the biennial Middle East Business Aviation exhibition (MEBA) from 8-10 December.

Organised by F&E Aerospace on behalf of the Middle East Business Aviation Association (MEBAA), official figures confirmed that with 420 exhibitors, over 7,000 attendees and 36 aircraft in the static park, it had well exceeded the figures for 2012. The principal manufacturers all featured their designs in the static park – notably Gulfstream, which displayed its newly certified G650ER at a trade event for the first time. At the smaller end of the market, much attention was also focused on the Ukrainian-built Softex-Aero V-24-L four-seat light business aircraft, which is designed to compete with the Diamond DA40/42.



RANA Director Brian T Richards was struck by apparent changes in emphasis. "The new venue appears more compact and the show is certainly more logically laid out," he said. "However there seemed to be a paucity of 'jurisdictional' exhibitors, with the exception of the San Marino Aircraft Registry (and by association, Aruba). This was in marked contrast to the MEBA of two years ago when both the Isle of Man and Malta had a large presence. The show remains however a showcase for the industry and is a vital networking forum for companies such as Sovereign, which has a significant presence in the region."

The Middle East 's growing market

The Middle East and North African corporate aircraft fleet currently represents some 4% of the global total. According to data recently released by MEBAA, the current tally of 500 aircraft is set to grow to 1,375 by 2020. This is due in part to an expected average annual growth in GDP of 3.8% over the next 20 years, but it is also due to a predicted shift in demand. KlasJet, the Lithuania-based charter operator, reports that the role of the private jet as transport for royal families and heads of state has shifted towards corporate use with a far larger and wider customer base. The market remains subject to challenges however, any or all of which could put a brake on the estimated expansion. These include political instability, congested airspace and a lack of skilled air traffic controllers, flight crews and maintenance technicians.

Executive airlines within airlines

Notable among the corporate jets on static display at MEBA 2014 were: an ACJ319 operated by Emirates Executive; a Falcon 7X operated by Saudi Private Aviation; and a Global 5000 operated by Qatar Executive. These three aircraft represent an interesting phenomenon in the Middle East business aviation market – the VVIP charter "airline-within-airline". All are subsidiaries of major regional passenger airlines and offer a charter service that is designed to exploit the demand for luxury travel – and at a level far in excess of the first class service offered by the parent company.

The largest of these operators, Qatar Executive recently made headlines by ordering up to 20 aircraft including the new Gulfstream G500 and flagship G650ER. Qatar Airways Group CEO Akbar Al-Baker said: "Since its inception five years ago, Qatar Executive has risen to be a leader in air chartered services for individuals, families, businesses, corporations and governments alike, and continues to exponentially grow to provide guests a differential level of service and convenience."



RANA SERVICE CENTRE:

Tailored consultancy

RANA's specialist aviation consultancy service can draw upon a considerable breadth of knowledge across both corporate and commercial aviation markets, coupled with established links with regulators and operators across the globe. Sound and comprehensive information is a key requirement for making the right decisions in respect of owning, registering and operating an aircraft.

The wide spectrum of our expertise encompasses: technical and performance specifications of competing aircraft models; research and detailed reporting on the operational history of individual airframes and operators; the registration and ownership requirements of registries worldwide; and the most suitable and efficient corporate structures for holding aviation assets. In a nutshell, we can add real value to the decision-making process. Contact our team to find out what you need to know.



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Gulfstream G650 landmarks

In a significant milestone for the programme, Gulfstream delivered its one-hundredth G650 on 14 November. The first G650 entered service in December 2012, following FAA certification in September of that year. Since deliveries began, the type has amassed 33,500 flying hours and has recorded over 40 city-pair speed records.

Just after delivery of G650 number 100, the first G650ER entered service - well ahead of the expected date early next year. The G650ER can fly 13,890kms at Mach 0.85, which will allow it to connect Hong Kong and New York or Los Angeles and Melbourne non-stop. The G650ER was first announced at EBACE in May 2014 and received FAA certification in October. It is available as both a new aircraft and as a retrofit for existing units.



AIRCRAFT FACT FILE \\\

Gulfstream I



CATEGORY

Turboprop

MANUFACTURER

Grumman, USA

ENGINE

2xRolls-Royce Dart 529 turboprops

LENGTH

19.43 m

WINGSPAN

23.93 m

RANGE

4,088 km

MAX. SPEED

560 kmh

SEATING CAP.

Up to 24

NO. OF CREW

2

DESCRIPTION

Grumman began design work on a turbine-powered executive transport in 1956. The prototype Gulfstream I first flew in August 1958. The type received FAA certification in May 1959 with first deliveries following in June of that year. The aircraft was designed to fill a niche for a corporate transport that had a wide and high cabin and offered high speed cruise performance.

The aircraft was also equipped with an auxiliary power unit, permitting operations from often remote airstrips. The speed was provided by two Rolls-Royce Dart turboprops. The cabin is designed to take up to 24 passengers in a high-density arrangement or only eight in an executive layout, although ten to 12 was more usual.

Jersey Aircraft Register names technical service provider

The Jersey Aircraft Registry (JAR) has awarded the contract for technical service provision to UK-based aviation safety systems specialist, AVISA. The JAR plans to launch in early 2015 and this appointment is a significant step towards the start of operations. AVISA will be responsible for the provision of aircraft inspections, regulatory airworthiness surveys, as well as continuing technical and flight operations advice. Jersey's parliament approved legislation to establish the new aircraft registry after negotiations for a joint register with the neighbouring island of Guernsey founded in 2013. Aircraft registered at the JAR will use the prefix "ZJ".

Corporate aircraft news

Italian manufacturer **Piaggio** announced at MEBA on 9 December that it had gained EASA certification for the Avanti Evo. The new version of the popular Avanti twin turboprop offers extended range, reduced noise levels, both externally and within the cabin, as well as new main wing winglets, propellers and reworked front wingtips. The new Avanti is expected to receive FAA and Indian certification shortly. The first two aircraft are earmarked for Indian customers.

Swiss charter specialist Comlux has ordered two BBJ MAX 8s from US manufacturer **Boeing**. One aircraft will be delivered in 2019, with the second following a year later. It is expected that both aircraft will be operated under the company's Maltese AOC. The move marks a break away from the company's strong relationship with Airbus and its ACJ range.

French manufacturer **Dassault** rolled out its first Falcon 8X at a ceremony held in Bordeaux on 17 December.

The team at RegisterAnAircraft.com and The Sovereign Group would like to send all readers of 'Airborne' Season's Greetings and our best wishes for 2015