



Yamasaki: I am changing everything

Honda sizes up 2600 launch

Concept nearing reality as manufacturer readies for supplier conference next month

Jon Hemmerdinger

Honda Aircraft is finalising the supply chain for its proposed HondaJet 2600 as the airframer seemingly moves closer to an official launch of the new aircraft.

Chief executive Hideto Yamasaki says the manufacturer will in June

hold a "supplier conference" at its site in Greensboro, North Carolina, where it "will be talking about the commercialisation" of the 2600, ahead of announcements at the NBAA show in October.

Yamasaki, speaking to *Flight Daily News* at the show, says the meeting is a step toward firming up details of the 2600's supplier base and production ahead of advancing

with a more aggressive marketing campaign for the business jet, which would straddle the light and midsize categories.

"We will have all the suppliers confirmed, sitting together," says Yamasaki. "Talking to the suppliers - that, to us, means that [the programme] is happening."

Yamasaki stresses that Honda Aircraft has not yet launched the

aircraft development but his stance is notably confident toward a product he says will build on the success of the current HA-420 light jet and carry the company into the future.

"[The 2600] was a concept," he says. "But now - before this announcement [at] NBAA - we see that confirming with the suppliers means this company is really serious."

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New to Jersey

Ortac AOC is celebrating two new arrivals at EBACE, with the addition of a pair of jets – a Cessna Citation CJ3+ and an Embraer Phenom 300E – to its managed fleet.

Named after a navigational waypoint that serves as the gateway to the Channel Islands, the Jersey-based operator and management company already flies another CJ3+ and two Phenom 300Es, plus a Dassault Falcon 2000.

Both the new aircraft, registered on neighbouring Guernsey, will be available for charter from July.

Ortac was set up seven years ago by Lee McConnell, a pilot, and his two fellow directors Tobi Mathews and Philip Stott, with the AOC in place since 2018.

McConnell worked as a baggage handler at Jersey airport in his teenage years before leaving for aviation roles on the UK mainland.

"When I came back to Jersey I wanted to give something back and create aviation jobs at home," he says.

Ortac now has around 80-100 clients based in the Channel Islands, British crown dependencies located off the northern coast of France.



McConnell: Generating aviation jobs for the Channel Island

Garmin lands more business

Jon Hemmerdinger

Garmin's Autoland system comes alive with the push of a button, flashing notifications in the cockpit as the system takes control, turning and descending the aircraft to landing.

The avionics supplier is showcasing that unique feature at its EBACE booth, after having landed a major recent coup in supplying its Garmin G5000 suite for Textron Aviation's in-development Citation Ascend.

That jet is the latest update to the Excel series – coming after the XLS Gen2, which has a Collins Aerospace Pro Line cockpit.

"That is an unbelievable makeover of the platform," Garmin director of airline and business aviation sales Creighton Scarpone says.

Textron Aviation aims for the Ascend to enter service in 2025. The Garmin package



Scarpone: Suite dreams

includes three high-resolution displays, weather detection and avoidance technology, dual flight management systems and auto-throttles.

Garmin is already busy with a programme offering

G5000 retrofits for the original Excel and the XLS which have Honeywell Primus 1000 flightdecks. The company has retrofitted some 110 of those jets and has orders to update another 120, says Scarpone.

Garmin's Autoland feature is installed on types including Cirrus Aircraft's SF50 Vision Jet, Daher's TBM 940 and Textron Aviation's in-development Denali turboprop-single.

ACJ330 first for Fokker

Maintenance, repair and overhaul specialist Fokker Services Group's (FSG's) new hangar in Hoogerheide, the Netherlands has welcomed its first green VIP twin-aisle aircraft.

FSG took delivery of the Airbus ACJ330 last year and has been preparing the aircraft for outfitting.

The airliner is owned by a long-established customer and owner of the first ACJ319 outfitted by FSG in 2005. Redelivery of the

ACJ330 is scheduled for 2024.

Roland van Dijk, FGS chief executive, says while the new 87m (285ft)-long, 86m-wide, and 27m-high hangar can accommodate 10 narrowbody and two wide-body airliners, the company only plans to offer a limited number of VIP completions.

"Our commitment is to quality first and foremost," van Dijk says. Many of FGS's contracts are "return business", he notes. "These



Van Dijk: Committed to quality

customers choose Fokker for our high standards of service, attention to detail and ability to deliver the project on time, if we take on too much work, our standards will fall."

Van Dijk expects the

pipeline for both green VIP completions and refurbishments to remain strong for the foreseeable future. The firm currently outfits three green aircraft a year and plans to ramp that up to four by 2028.

Continued from page 1

He says details to be disclosed at NBAA could relate to naming, pricing and marketing, but offers no more specifics.

Honda Aircraft first revealed the 2600 in 2021, teasing a concept that would take the company into a significantly larger size category.

It has described the 2600 as the "first-ever transcontinental light jet" and the "longest-range single-pilot business aircraft".

Honda Aircraft's provisional specifications tout an aircraft able to carry up to 11 people, including two pilots, cruise at 450kt (834km/h) and have sufficient range for transcontinental North

American flights. In comparison, the HA-420 is a six-passenger light jet with range of about 1,550nm.

Yamasaki says the new jet will build on the design and success of the HA-420, sharing a similar fuselage and structural layout, such as its distinctive over-wing engines, for example. "We are going to use the fundamental 420 as a base to make the derivatives," he says.

But when the 2600 might arrive is not clear. The question of which engine will power the new type remains unanswered, though Honda Aircraft has a long-standing partnership with GE Aerospace, jointly producing the 2,050lb (9.1kN)-thrust HF-120

engines that equip the HA-420.

The 2600 would seemingly compete with business jets like Embraer's Phenom 300E (carrying 10 passengers over routes of 2,010nm), the Cessna Citation CJ4 (10 passengers/2,165nm) and Citation Latitude (nine passengers/2,700nm).

Yamasaki became Honda Aircraft chief in 2022, taking over from long-time leader Michimasa Fujino, an engineer by training who helped the fledgling firm establish itself as a player in the ultra-light-jet niche. The company has faced production and financial issues but still managed to make the HA-420 a commercial success,

with some 230 of the type in service.

Yamasaki says he is shaking things up, bringing a business background to the firm.

"I am changing everything," says Japan-born Yamasaki, who joined Honda in 1985 and worked most of his career in the company's automotive business. "We have shifted a start-up company to a real commercial business structure."

He aims to right Honda Aircraft's finances – the division lost Y25.7 billion (\$185 million) in its recent fiscal year – and to better leverage the assets of the broader Honda company, specifically by collaborating more

closely with its automotive divisions.

"For the 2600 concept, we haven't changed that much from the exterior side but we are now changing a little bit more of the interior," he says.

Honda Aircraft's latest update of its HA-420 – the Elite II variant – is making its EBACE debut. The company rolled out the enhancement last year, giving the jet slightly more range and introducing modern cockpit features including auto-throttle and auto-land capabilities.

On Tuesday, Honda Aircraft revealed that the Elite II had been approved by the European regulator, building on US certification last year.

Working with the disruptors

Jon Hemmerdinger

Honeywell's air taxi team is at EBACE aiming to advance a sector that needs much development before reaching its promise of disrupting aviation. "Our goal is not just to sell products into the new OEMs – it's really to help co-create this market with our partners," says Taylor Alberstadt, senior sales and marketing director in Honeywell's unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and urban air mobility (UAM) division. Alberstadt makes the point that Honeywell already supplies a variety of systems found on many existing aircraft, positioning it to support the emerging

electric air taxi industry. The company's urban air mobility group, located in Phoenix, employs nearly 50 people and has relationships with air taxi developers including Archer Aviation, Lilium, Pipistrel and Vertical Aerospace. It supplies those firms with equipment including its Anthem avionics suite, fly-by-wire flight controls, actuators, thermal management systems and electric components, including motors, says Honeywell senior director of UAS and UAM engineering Jia Xu. "We have delivered and we're continuing to deliver hardware that's going to go on flyable aircraft, whether that be prototypes for some of our customers, or conforming aircraft," Alberstadt

says. "This is now where it all starts to come together." Honeywell has also partnered with Japanese automotive firm Denso, on electric motor development for aircraft. "There is a lot of overlap" between the aerospace and automotive industries, Alberstadt adds. At the same time, Honeywell has been collaborating with lawmakers and regulators, having held a forum for the purpose of facilitating discussions about air taxi certification, operation and required infrastructure. "We crave this form of interaction," says Xu. "This is one forum where [attendees] can sit down and understand... the gaps in [the] certification timeline that [are] going to stymie the industry."

Euro Jet lounges around

Euro Jet has returned to EBACE to promote its thriving VIP ground support services network and announced its intention to install private jet crew lounges at key airports within its network. Founded in 2008, Euro Jet offers bespoke ground support at around 200 airports across Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It has 17 lounges with recent additions in Rzeszow, Poland and Prague Vaclav Havel airport, Czech Republic. "We have our eye on other locations that will benefit from a dedicated lounge," says Gareth Danker, Euro Jet's director of sales. Euro Jet largely serves its VIP business jet customers from within

the commercial airport infrastructure. "There are a handful of FBOs and small general aviation terminals throughout the region which we use, but our customers are mainly served from the commercial airport terminals by our dedicated aviation professionals. It works well," he says. Euro Jet offers a range of services including organising permits, setting-up fuel, fulfilling crew logistical needs, and arranging hotels, transportation, VIP catering and onward travel. Euro Jet experienced its "busiest year ever" 2022, handling over 9,300 flights and expects 2023 "to be just as strong", says Danker. Customers include heads of state, corporations and high-net-worth individuals.



Danker: Busiest ever year in 2022



Falcon powers up with P&W

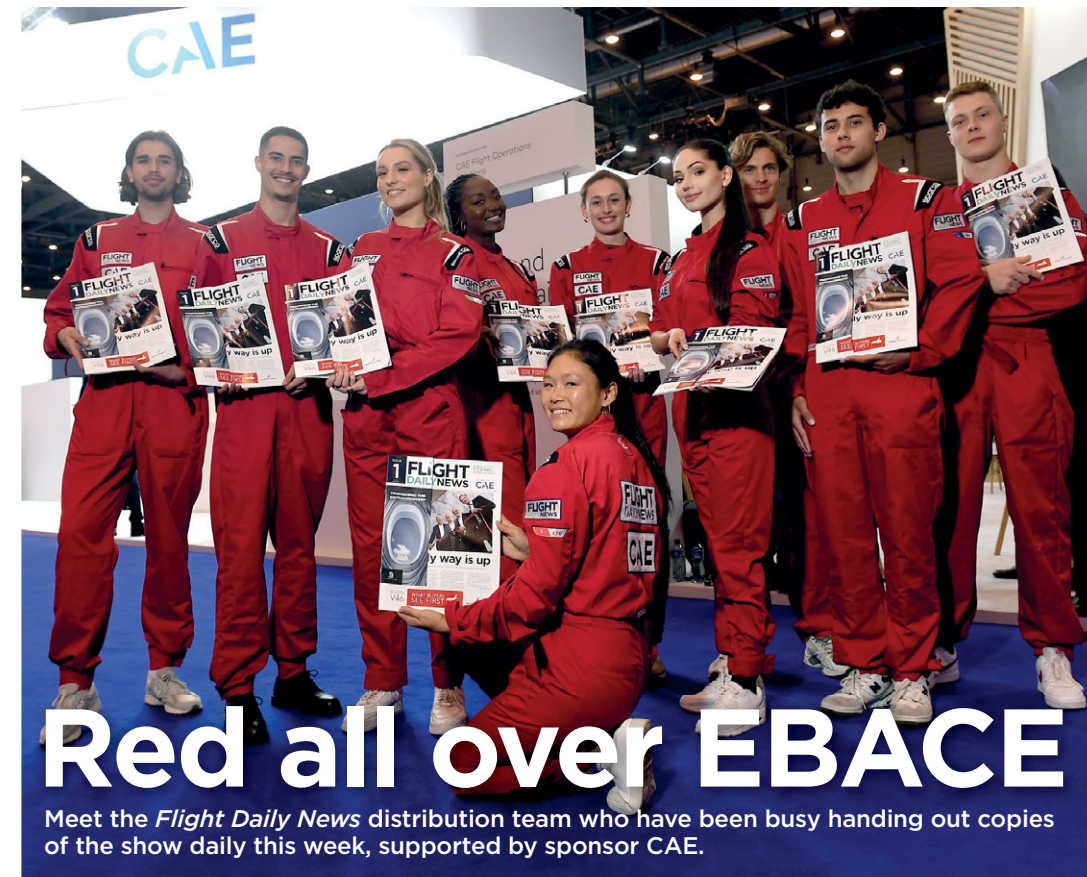
Pratt & Whitney Canada has signed the show a fleet management programme agreement with Abu Dhabi's Falcon Aviation Services. It covers the maintenance and support of three De Havilland Canada Dash 8-400s, powered by P&WC PW150s. The two firms have collaborated since 2014, and under this contract the Canadian company

will provide a range of services including planned shop visits, engine rental support, and engine condition trend monitoring analysis. Pictured are Irene Makris, vice-president aftermarket for P&WC, Ishmail Rhissa Zakary, managing director customer service EMEA, P&WC, and Captain Rama Oberoy, chief operating officer at Falcon.

Used market to rebound: Jetcraft

A post-pandemic slow-down in the used business jet market will be short lived as the industry rebounds in the coming years, according to the latest annual forecast from business aircraft sales and acquisition company Jetcraft. The value of pre-owned business jet sales transactions dipped 24% year on year in 2023 to \$12.4 billion, says the company's report. However, it predicts that values will jump 26% year on year in 2024 to \$15.6 billion. Jetcraft also anticipates that the number of such transactions will continue increasing at an average annual rate of 4.7% through 2027. "Existing corporate and

individual clients looking to upgrade their aircraft will drive sales volume over the next five years," says Jetcraft owner and board chair Jahid Fazal-Karim. "First-time business jet owners continue to play a role in market growth." Jetcraft also notes that demand from corporate buyers has recently been booming, with such deals accounting for 60% of transactions in 2022, "demonstrating the value corporations place on jet ownership". "The return of the corporate buyer proves what we've always known: the continued importance of face-to-face interactions in the relationship world of business," adds Fazal-Karim.



Red all over EBACE

Meet the *Flight Daily News* distribution team who have been busy handing out copies of the show daily this week, supported by sponsor CAE.

Saxon signs for Norwich SAF

The UK's Norwich airport is introducing sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) in a deal with Air BP signed at the show yesterday. Local charter operator SaxonAir is one of the first to commit to using the SAF. Pictured are SaxonAir's John Dewing, Martin Lane of Air BP, and Andrew Bell of Regional & City Airports.



ASL secures six Lilium Jets

Belgium-based ASL Group has firmed up an agreement for six Lilium Jets, converting a memorandum of understanding first disclosed at 2022's Farnborough air show. The deposit-backed agreement will see ASL Group take the Pioneer Edition model of the electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. ASL Group intends to manage and operate the aircraft for its customers as part of a network connecting hubs across Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, and western Germany. "Our company is constantly seeking new ways to operate responsibly and contribute to a healthy future, both socially and ecologically," says Philippe Bodson, owner and chief executive of ASL Group.

Flex factor

Rolls-Royce has launched CorporateCare Flex, a power-as-a-service solution specifically designed for owners and operators of older business jets equipped with the manufacturer's engines. Building on the existing CorporateCare programme, the new scheme is designed to maximise aircraft operating life. "CorporateCare Flex is specifically tailored for business aviation customers seeking economical management of mature aircraft, providing availability but also allowing them to lower the cost of ownership," the engine maker says. Andy Robinson, senior vice-president services – business aviation, adds: "At Rolls-Royce we have always been on the forefront of business aviation, listening to the needs of our global customers and providing them with optimised service solutions. "CorporateCare Flex extends our excellent service support to aircraft and engines entering the later stages of their life, enabling even more sustainable operations."



MacKenzie: At the cutting edge

Winning winglets

Winglet specialist Aviation Partners may not have a new product to show off at EBACE but that is not worrying sales director Robert MacKenzie. "We are just continuing to do what we do best: we make old airplanes fly faster, fly further and burn less fuel," he says. The Seattle firm's blended winglets are standard fit on Dassault Aviation Falcon 2000LX/LXS/S and Falcon 900LX models, but are also available to retrofit on earlier variants of those jets. Not only does the upgrade enhance aircraft

performance – cutting fuel burn, and therefore emissions, by 5-7% and increasing range – but residual values are also improved, adding up to \$1 million to the value of the jet. MacKenzie points to a pool of "hundreds, if not thousands, of older Falcon airplanes" that have yet to be upgraded, adding: "Why wouldn't you do it?" Aviation Partners' other mainstay business aviation product is its Scimitar Tip blended winglet for the Hawker 800A/XP, offering a 7-8% drag reduction on the midsize jet.

MySky does the math

Budget management system provider MySky is launching its latest feature at EBACE, called MySky Procure. In an industry first, MySky Procure gives users visibility over all contracted and uncontracted suppliers associated with a business aviation flight, including fuel, airport and handling services, says the company. This allows users to compare market rates and optimise financial processes. Through an artificial intelligence cost database, MySky Procure presents an overview of a customer's spend for each flight destination, allowing dispatch teams to

save time, avoid risks of hidden charges and benchmark costs with precision, says MySky. Jean Sebastien de Looz, MySky's head of Americas, describes the programme as "unprecedented". He says the business aircraft charter procurement process can be complex and often lack transparency, leaving operators and managers regularly exposed to needless overspending. "We want MySky customers to understand the lifecycle of every cost so they can make smart buying decisions," de Looz adds.



De Looz: Smart buying decisions

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Watch this space

Murdo Morrison

3D printing pioneer Materialise has returned to the show after its 2022 debut to exhibit samples of its additive-manufactured components for aviation

and other sectors, such as medical and eyewear. Taking pride of place is a lightweight, titanium case it is supplying to San Francisco boutique timepiece creator Barrelhand, for what it calls the "first watch designed to meet the needs of space exploration". Leuven, Belgium-based

Materialise is an established aerospace player, supplying 100 3D-printed parts on the Airbus A350, for instance, as well as on business aviation types. Philip Buchholz, innovation manager metal, is pictured with a pair of the innovative watch cases.



Sisters are doing it

Over three decades Elizabeth Clark (pictured) has seen an upsurge in the number of female pilots and other professionals in the industry and at shows such as EBACE. However, the executive director of Women in Corporate Aviation says there is "still work to be done" when it comes to gender imbalance in the sector. "I always say I'd love nothing better than to put ourselves out of business, but we're not there yet," she says of her campaigning and support organisation, which is celebrating its 30th birth-

day at the show. When she began attending EBACE 14 years ago, many of the women on the exhibition floor were agency hires. "Now you see many more pilots, senior executives, it's wonderful," she remarks. Clark, a soon-to-retire Bombardier Global and Challenger pilot with FedEx in Memphis and a 40-year cockpit veteran, says the organisers of EBACE and its sister show NBAA BACE in the USA have "supported us from the beginning" with complimentary stand space.

Interiors Italian-style

Delta Interior Design is bringing a bit of Italian *eleganza* to EBACE. The interior specialist, based near Como in northeast Italy, carries out "bespoke" refurbishment projects for aircraft owners, but also has the contract to create the interiors for new Piaggio Avanti Evo turbo-props, explains business

developer Federico Nafi (pictured). Its services include upholstery, carpeting and crafting furniture, and much of its work is at customers' sites, with a recent project carried out in Nigeria. The company, which has been in existence over 20 years, employs around 20 technicians.



Take a look at Lee

UK parts distributor Avocet Aviation and Wichita-based Lee Aerospace are teaming up at EBACE to show a selection of the latter's windshields for business and general aviation aircraft, including this product for the Hawker 800. Sou-

thend-headquartered Avocet, which has been trading for nearly 40 years, sells parts for Textron Aviation aircraft around the world, except in North America. "Beechcraft has long been our bread and butter," says sales director Andy Parks (right).

Lee is at EBACE for the first time and is represented by Ely Luna (left), director aftermarket sales & services. It makes original equipment windshields and windows for a range of Textron Aviation and Bombardier types, as well as some aerostructures.

Coetzer: Proud of business generated over past year



Titan tightens grip

Kate Sarsfield

With the addition of more sales executives, an expanding European customer portfolio, and growth outside Europe, the international division of US-headquartered Titan Aviation Fuels is returning to EBACE in a buoyant mood. Since opening the doors of its Geneva office last year, the refueller has secured

several European business aviation operators, attracted to what Titan calls "simple, real-time, digital quoting, pre-ordering, and purchasing from an extended global network of seventy approved suppliers". Titan's arrival in Geneva came on the heels of its acquisition early in 2022 of European fuel reseller Akryl. Daniel Coetzer, Akryl founder, and chief executive of Titan's international division, says the company is

"proud" of how much business it has generated in just over a year, and it "confirms Titan's strategy to bring its refuelling service to a market that a few key players have historically dominated". As one of the largest suppliers of aviation fuel in the USA supporting a network of over 550 FBOs, Titan is now seeking to extend its offering to operators into southern Asia and South America, with an office already open in Argentina.

Vista shows love for LuxStream

Collins Aerospace has revealed an in-flight data deal with Vista Global and highlighted its new satellite communication system using Iridium's Certus 700 platform.

Vista has already outfitted in excess of 75 of its Bombardier aircraft with Collins' LuxStream connectivity product, and now plans for more than 100 of its aircraft to have the system, Collins says.

LuxStream runs on "high-throughput" SES satellites, allowing "customers to conduct video conference calls, stream videos and send emails while in flight", and providing unlimited data, according to Collins.

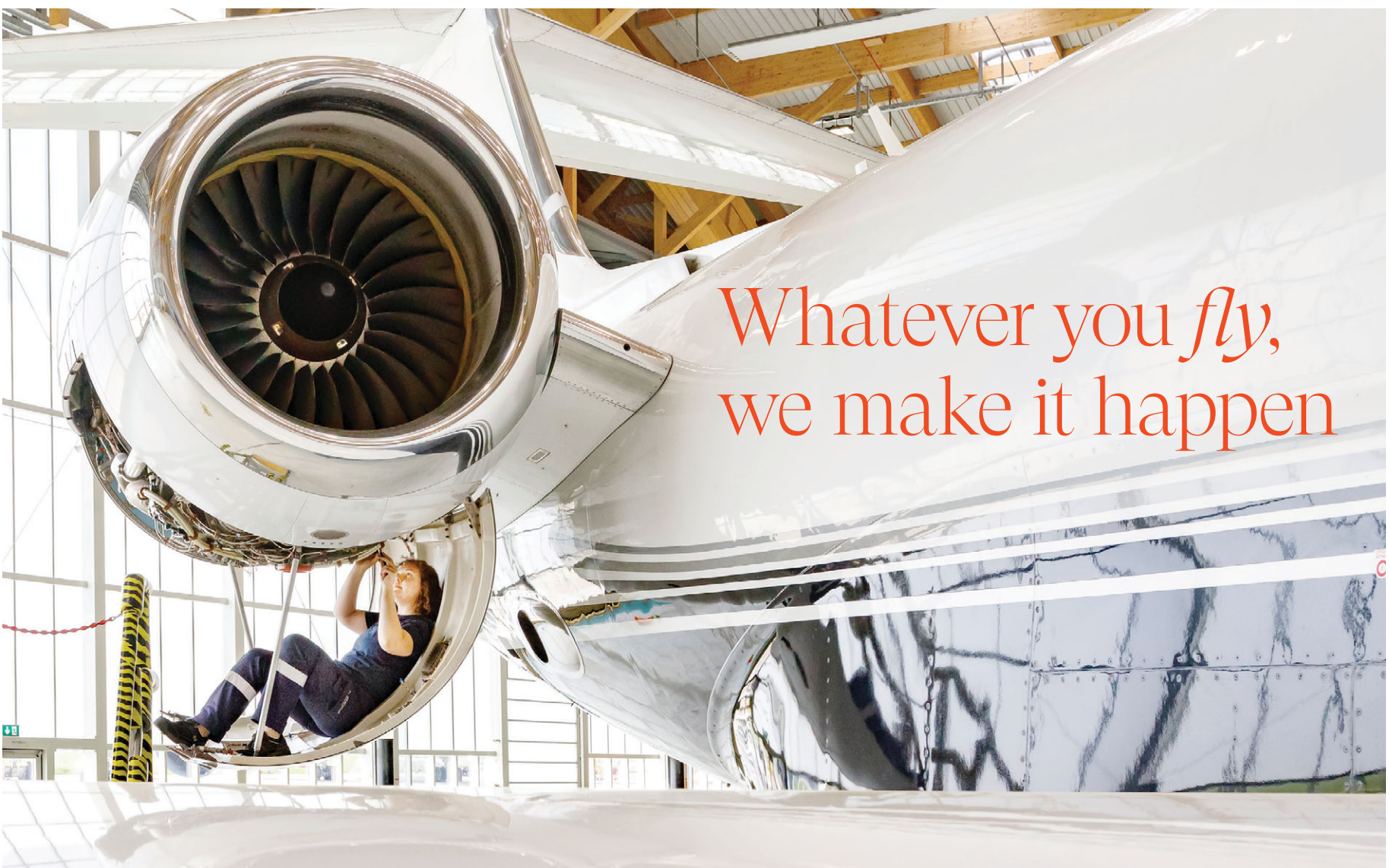
"A flat hourly rate for global wi-fi is a market first, but just the latest in a series of customer-centric innovations that has come from our years of collaboration," says Collins' connected aviation solutions president Jen Schopfer.

SES chief executive Steve Collar says his firm's satellite network "enables Vista's passengers to experience the same kind of high-speed connectivity services they enjoy on land".

Meanwhile, Collins says its new IRT NX Satellite Communication system for use with the Certus 700 platform "is among the first certified connected cabin hardware and service solutions that can be installed and operated globally on a variety of aircraft".

Bombardier is the launch customer for the system, which it will offer on new production business jets and as an aftermarket upgrade from the second half of the year.

"This new cabin connectivity solution provides a cost-effective level of connectivity that makes it an attractive option for all business jet operators," says Collins' executive director of programmes Clotilde Enel Rehel.



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Cassio 330 will carry five people

VoltAero powers to first flight

Dominic Perry

French hybrid-electric aircraft developer VoltAero is gearing up for the maiden sortie of its initial Cassio 330 prototype, which the company expects to take place later this year.

Jean Botti, chief executive of the Royan-headquartered start-up, says the first prototype is structurally complete and its hybrid-electric powertrain is also being assembled.

It comes as VoltAero has boosted its backlog with a pre-order for 15 of its hybrid-electric aircraft - a deal that could include all three models in the French devel-

oper's Cassio line-up.

Revealed at the show on Tuesday, the commitment from Swiss fractional ownership provider SKY2SHARE covers the five-seat Cassio 330, while "also incorporating the flexibility" for the operator to later take the six-seat Cassio 480 and 12-seat Cassio 600.

Including the latest agreement, VoltAero has now accumulated a total of 218 orders and commitments for its Cassio family.

Speaking to *Flight Daily News* yesterday, Botti said he anticipates a first flight "in the fall" during which the aircraft will be powered solely by its Kawasaki Motors-supplied 150kW (201hp) thermal engine.

Botti says the first prototype will be used to assess the Cassio 330's handling qualities and aerodynamic performance and will be later used for additional propulsion development activities.

A subsequent example, to follow in early 2024, will be the first to be fitted with the complete hybrid-electric powertrain and will lead the certification push.

VoltAero's hybrid-electric module combines the Kawasaki thermal engine, Safran Engines 100 electric motor and a gearbox from French transmission specialist Akira. Batteries are supplied by US firm Electric Power Systems.

Taxi, take-off, climb and

landing are performed solely using electric power, while the thermal engine serves as a range extender, recharging the batteries during cruise. It also provides a back-up in case of an electrical system failure.

Already used in the motorcycle industry, the Kawasaki power unit will deliver high levels of maturity at service entry, helping to de-risk the programme, argues Botti.

Bench tests of the complete powertrain will commence shortly, ensuring it is ready for installation in the second prototype.

Kawasaki Motors recently became an investor in VoltAero, contributing to its Series B funding round through which the company

is aiming to raise €32 million (\$34.5 million).

Botti says the Series B funding - which is around 70% complete - will be sufficient to see the Cassio 330 into series production; a follow-on investment round, to be launched in mid-2024, will then be required to support the ramp-up and the development of future models, he adds.

Certification of the five-seat Cassio 330 is targeted for end-2024. It will be followed, at 18-month intervals, by the Cassio 480, using the same fuselage and wing but equipped with a more powerful 480kW propulsion system, and then the larger, 600kW Cassio 600.

VoltAero has taken pre-orders covering the entire family of aircraft and will work this year to begin converting these into firm commitments, he says.

Production of the Cassio family will take place at a new facility in Rochefort in southwest France; construction of the site is to begin shortly.

The Cassio design incorporates a forward fixed canard and an aft-located wing with twin booms, supporting a high-set horizontal tail. The rear-mounted propulsion system powers a low-noise pusher propeller supplied by Duc Helices.

Propeller performance is currently being assessed using VoltAero's Cassio testbed, a modified Cessna 337 Skymaster. In addition, that aircraft has now been rebadged as the Cassio S - for sustainable - and is also testing a new synthetic sustainable aviation fuel.

In brief...

Holiday spirit

UK brokerage Hunt & Palmer says demand for its services is more "diverse" than at any time in its four decades of trading, with its first-quarter business up 30% compared with the same period in 2022. "Demand for private travel to popular holiday destinations will remain a mainstay well into the summer," says Sandy Boyer, sales manager for executive aviation. The firm's manager executive aviation, Julie Black, appeared on a panel yesterday that discussed the changing landscape of charter.

Revamped in Dubai

Jet Aviation's MRO facility at Dubai International airport has redelivered its first full business jet refurbishment. The project, on a Gulfstream 450, involved removing the entire interior before restoring each individual item and then refitting the cabin, says the Swiss company.



Shorts story

Delegates from the Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority - dressed in the island nation's traditional business attire - stopped by the CAE stand at the show. The authority keeps Bermuda's business aviation community safe and recently certificated CAE's Boeing Business Jet simulator at its Dubai facility.

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Italy's Riviera entices the Cote D'Azur jet set

Murdo Morrison

The perfect airport for ultra-wealthy aircraft owners flying regularly to the Cote D'Azur and Monaco is... an hour's drive away over the border in Italy.

That is the claim of the owners of Riviera airport in Villanova D'Albenga, in the northern region of Liguria, who are embarking on a €25 million (\$26 million) investment project to convince more of the area's high-net-worth community to base their jets there.

The private Riviera Airport company bought the concession to operate the former military airfield seven years ago, and has already made considerable improvements, including transforming an outdated passenger terminal into a VIP facility in partnership with Dubai-based aviation support provider Hadid.

The next stage is to extend the 1,500m (4,900ft) runway by 300m and construct a hangar capable of housing up to seven large-cabin jets. Longer-term plans include serviced apartments for private aircraft pilots who need to be on call but struggle to find suitable temporary accommodation in pricey Monaco or the French Riviera.

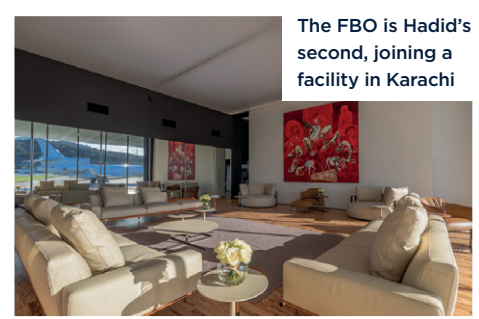
"We want to invest, build

Villanova D'Albenga airport owner bids to create business aviation hub in Liguria



Terminal will be complemented by runway extension and new hangar

The FBO is Hadid's second, joining a facility in Karachi



hangars and transform this place into a major hub for private aviation," says Clemens Toussaint, Riviera Airport shareholder and vice-president.

Monaco is home to 200 jet-owners and thousands of affluent individuals visit the tiny principality each year, so there is plenty of demand for business aviation services, he says.

Yet, the only French airports serving the region

are Cannes and Nice, which often struggle to provide the personalised, discreet services the rich and famous require, and lack space for parking aircraft under cover.

As a result, many owners, he says, must store their aircraft hundreds of kilometres away in Germany or Switzerland.

While Monaco takes around an hour to reach by car from Riviera airport, it is only 20min by helicopter.

The airport also serves a growing yachting community on the Italian Riviera around resorts such as Sanremo, which is just over the border from France, says Toussaint.

Villanova D'Albenga, which marks its 100th birthday this year, had a stint as a commercial airport with a short-lived Alitalia regional jet service to Rome, but before the latest acquisition had been struggling.

Many in business aviation

will be familiar with the airport as home to Piaggio Aerospace, which opened a factory there in 2014. Piaggio has been in extraordinary administration for four years as a state-appointed official attempts to find a buyer for the manufacturer of the Avanti Evo turboprop.

Hadid moved into Riviera airport in 2018 and opened its refurbished FBO in April 2021, just as demand for private flights was picking up again after the Covid travel bans.

One of the features of the new terminal is a passenger lounge that resembles an art gallery with paintings and a library. It is Hadid's second FBO - it has another in Karachi, Pakistan.

Originally, Riviera airport had a more ambitious expansion plan "to create another Farnborough", but scaled it back during the pandemic, says Toussaint.

Ultimately, however, it has bigger ambitions. "We want to do these first investments over one or two years and take the airport's commercial performance to a different level, with the focus on base clients," he says.

"Eventually we would love to talk to the government about full ownership. At the moment, we have a 20-year concession, which is not nearly enough to recoup investments."

Tecnam sets out its STOL

Tecnam is promoting the latest version of its flagship P2012 Traveller piston-twin with "impressive" short-take-off and landing (STOL) capabilities.

The Italian general aviation manufacturer is targeting the nine-seat P2012 STOL at commercial operators and private owners who need to access short and often very remote airstrips that are not accessible to many aircraft.

"We have been looking to address this niche and underserved area for a while, and now our standard model has found market acceptance, it seems like the right time," says Francesco Sferra, Tecnam sales and business development manager for

special mission platforms.

Through a series of technical enhancements including a 2.6m (8.5ft) extension to the wing to take total wingspan to 16.6m and updated flight controls, the take-off distance for the P2012 STOL has reduced by 365m to 425m, and the landing distance by 383m to 360m.

The market for STOL operations is largely served by single-engined turboprops such as the Cessna Caravan and Daher Kodiak series, and the aging Britten-Norman BN2 Islander piston-twin.

"The single-engined types lack the versatility of piston-twins, but the P2012 is the only aircraft in this niche to have been developed since the 1960s," says Sferra.

Tecnam believes the potential replacement market addressed by the Continental GTSIO-520-S-powered P2012 STOL "runs into the thousands".

"This aircraft, fully loaded, will be able to access some of the shortest runways and unpaved strips in the world, not only served by charter and commercial operators but also by private owners," says Sferra. He cites as examples Helgoland, in Germany (480m), Corlier in southeast France (350m), and Westray (527m) and Papa Westray (530m) in Orkney, Scotland.

A 12-month preliminary flight-testing effort wrapped up in March and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency certification

Sferra: Single-engine types lack the versatility of piston-twins



campaign began in April. Tecnam expects to secure approval for the €2.45 million type at the end of the year.

Sferra says there is a lot of interest in the P2012 STOL from existing and start-up operators with a handful of customers ready to place an order after certification.

Tecnam does not expect its latest variant to cannibalise sales of the standard Lycoming TE0540-CIA-powered model, for which it has delivered over 60 examples to date.

Tecnam is also eyeing a float-equipped version of the P2012 STOL to broaden the market for the type.



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SCAN ME

Many companies in the industry came together to fly aid to victims in Turkey and Syria after the recent devastating earthquake



Air Charter Service has been organising relief flights since just after the earthquake

The business of bringing relief

Kerry Reals

The disaster may have disappeared from our TV screens but charter companies are still working around the clock to fly aid into Turkey and Syria on behalf of charities and governments, following the devastating earthquakes in early February that killed more than 50,000 people in the region and displaced hundreds of thousands more from their homes.

The sheer scale of the tragedy, and the fact that it affected war torn Syria – a country to which many carriers do not operate flights – has created challenges for the organisations tasked with finding and booking air freight capacity to deliver essential aid to the victims.

Those involved attribute the successes they have had to long-term relationships with carriers that are experienced at operating flights into conflict zones, and the coming together of all aspects of the aviation and logistics community to provide support.

"Literally the moment the media informed the world that the earthquakes had taken place, we

activated our emergency response team," recalls Neil Dursley, group chief commercial officer at global air charter specialist Chapman Freeborn.

"We immediately started to receive requests from humanitarian organisations as well as freight forwarders, and we then started to plan how and who we went to in terms of operators." He points to a "standard list" of airlines the company has worked with to respond to emergencies for close to two decades.

"The customers come to us with the points of origin, destination, the commodities and the volumes, which then determines which aircraft type we look for and which operators to approach," adds Dursley.

As of 7 March, Chapman Freeborn had secured capacity on 38 passenger and cargo aircraft to fly aid to the affected region. It has worked on behalf of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), multiple United Nations entities, a number of smaller non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and various European governments to deliver aid, ranging from emergency response teams to

medical supplies to tents.

The company has chartered aid flights from the USA, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Spain, Belgium, India, Saudi Arabia, Denmark, Singapore and the Philippines.

"For me, what's been really pleasing is that the entire community of aviation – freight-forwarding, logistics, charter brokers, ground-handling companies – they've all come together to really support the efforts in Turkey and Syria," says Dursley.

Arranging flights into Syria, however, has been "a challenge". The country remains mired in a civil war that has lasted for 12 years, and finding operators that are willing to fly to Damascus and Aleppo is not straightforward.

"Syria has been in conflict now for quite some time, and there are a lot of restrictions in terms of which operators are willing to operate into what is essentially a warzone," says Dursley.

"Shortly after the earthquake there was a rocket attack in Damascus which killed civilians. This poses another challenge and is obviously a huge risk to airlines that are operating, or were considering operating into Syria."

Nevertheless, Chapman Freeborn says its team has navigated embargoes and closed borders to ensure aid reaches those who need it most, and has also been involved in co-ordinating its onward passage. The company has helped deliver aid to Syria by working with carriers it has previously used in challenging regions of the world.

"We've found the operators that we've worked with for many decades in Iraq, Afghanistan and conflict areas of Africa," says Dursley. "They're very familiar with these kinds of situations, and they've done a phenomenal job."

Another charter specialist involved in organising aid flights to Turkey and Syria is Air Charter Service (ACS). Ben Dinsdale, director for government and humanitarian services at the UK-based company, also highlights the difficulties of flying aid into Syria.

"Since the start of the relief operation, we have been arranging flights into both Turkey and Syria. The operational requirements to get aircraft into these two countries are starkly different," says Dinsdale. Early on in the relief effort, ACS checked that there would be no objection procedures

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For any foreign aircraft bringing humanitarian aid cargo into Turkey. "This meant that there has been a relative abundance of aircraft capacity able to deliver to Turkey, and obtaining the permits for an aircraft to land has been no problem," says Dinsdale, adding that many flights used by ACS have landed in Adana, where the company has a team on the ground and "handling has been spot on". Syria, however, has been a different story.

"Flights into Syria were more limited due to fewer airlines and aircraft being able to fly there, war risk insurance being quite expensive so increasing the charter price, traffic rights being more complex to secure and, finally, sanctions," explains Dinsdale. "For every flight that we do into Syria, our compliance and legal department goes through a very involved compliance procedure to ensure that we can safely deliver humanitarian aid."

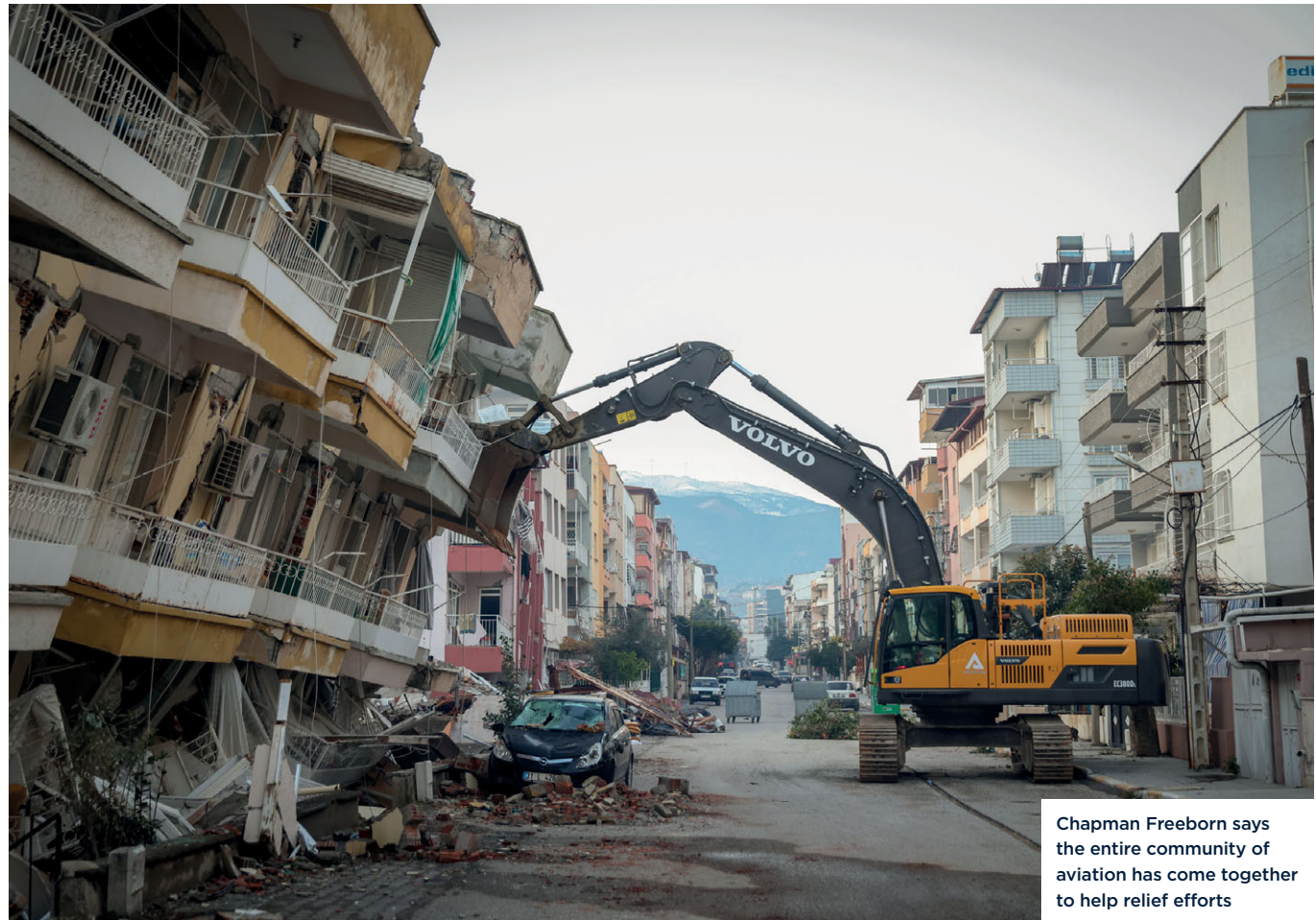
He notes that bombings have taken place in Damascus and Aleppo over the course of the relief operation. While this caused some airlines to "pause for a bit" while the insurance companies "re-evaluated" things, "up to now this has not really stopped any operations".

Many of the flights arranged by ACS originated in the Middle East, where there are "vast amounts of relief cargo stores", particularly in the Dubai airport free zone, says Dinsdale. Flights have also been chartered from northern Europe, the USA, China, India and Pakistan.

As of mid-March, ACS had arranged about 40 relief flights into the earthquake-affected region - most of which landed in Turkey.

"A third of flights have gone into Syria, and you would've said, probably, that there is as much of a requirement in Syria as there is in Turkey," says Dinsdale, although he adds that part of the reason for less aid being flown into Syria could be because there are already established overland routes into the country which have been used by humanitarian groups to deliver aid to victims of the civil war.

Another challenge faced by air charter companies sending aid



Chapman Freeborn says the entire community of aviation has come together to help relief efforts

to the region is "ever-dwindling" capacity on cargo aircraft, in what has become a "volatile market", according to Chapman Freeborn. Sanctions placed on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine just over a year ago meant that a significant volume of capacity on Russian air freight carriers became unavailable almost overnight.

"The conflict in Ukraine had an enormous impact on cargo capacity because of the grounding of the fleets of AirBridge Cargo, for example, and the Volga Dnepr Antonov 124s, which took a lot of capacity out of the skies," says Dursley.

Global market conditions such as lengthy Covid-19 lockdowns in China and a drop in demand for e-commerce amid the cost of living crisis have also made it more difficult to secure cargo capacity on

aircraft, he adds.

Despite this challenging environment, Chapman Freeborn has secured capacity on a range of aircraft types, including Boeing 747-400 freighters, 777Fs, Airbus A300Fs, A330Fs and A320 passenger aircraft, to bring humanitarian aid into Turkey and Syria.

"We found, I would say, a good balance of third-party operators that we've got long-standing relationships with, as well as new operators," says Dursley, noting that the company worked for the first time with Indian start-up Pradhaan Air Express to deliver aid on an A320 freighter from Delhi to Adana in Turkey. Pradhaan Air Express began operations in 2022 after sub-leasing converted A320 passenger-to-freighter aircraft from United Arab Emirates-based leasing

and aerospace services firm Vaayu Group.

Air Charter Service's Dinsdale also points to the removal of Russian capacity, but says this has not specifically affected its earthquake relief efforts.

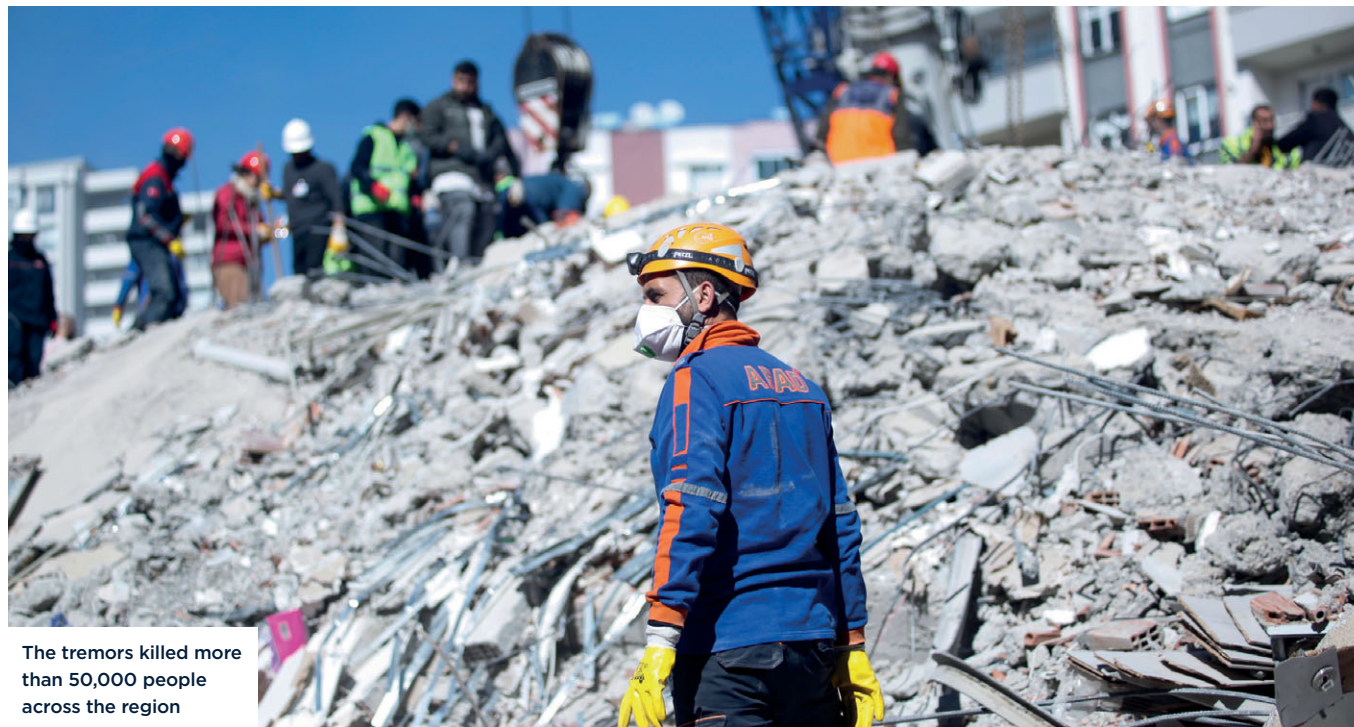
"There has been a challenge overall caused by the fact that the Russian carriers are not available on the market for companies like ours because of the sanctions. However, I would say that we've been okay for capacity for this operation," he says. "Everyone wants to do their bit and a lot of the airlines are very keen to do flights - certainly into Turkey, which has been relatively straightforward as far as getting aircraft in."

The volume of calls for the transportation of aid to the region has slowed down since the disaster initially struck, but the scale of destruction wrought by the powerful earthquakes means help will be required for the foreseeable future.

"Lots of people are living rough in tents and on the streets because their houses are destroyed, and people will need support for a long time to come," says Dursley. "We're here to support them for as long as they need the support."

Air Partner Group, which has arranged for hundreds of tonnes of relief material including tents and blankets to be sent to the region from India and the UAE on A330 and 747 freighters, also stands ready to continue assisting.

"As the international community continues to come together to help survivors, Air Partner's global network of charter services, logistics experts and 24/7 support team will remain on hand to support those in need," says Pierre Van Der Stichele, vice-president of the company's global cargo division. "We hope our work will help provide some relief to survivors of the earthquake at this time of unimaginable grief." ▶



The tremors killed more than 50,000 people across the region

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“It’s wonderful that organizations like the Corporate Angel Network are able to help connect those most in need of flights to those who are flying.”

-Henry Maier, President and CEO, FedEx Ground

Due to take flight in 2024, Dassault Aviation’s flagship Falcon 10X will combine home comforts with ultra-long-range performance and flight-control technology derived from the Rafale fighter



Twinjet will have range of 7,500nm, top speed of M0.925 and a roomier cabin than its competitors

Luxury aloft

Dominic Perry
Cutaway **Tim Hall**

In developing the Falcon 10X, Dassault Aviation had one overarching consideration: what could it bring to the very top of the business jet sector that was unique and desirable?

“We asked what a newcomer would bring to the market,” says Carlos Brana, executive vice-president, civil aircraft at the French airframer.

Range and speed were two prime attributes – in this case 7,500nm (13,900km) and Mach 0.925 – but, says Brana, Dassault then thought “and what else?”

“When we looked at the range of the airplane and the duration of the maximum flight – more than 15

hours – ‘what else’ clearly needed to be more interior space.”

Home comforts

Brana argues that passengers aboard such a flight are not sitting passively for the full duration – they move around the cabin, interacting with each other and their surroundings. Dassault wanted to make the experience as close as possible to enjoying the comfort of one’s home.

In addition, with such long trips, it was vital also to consider the pilots, “so that they could feel rested even after a more than 15-hour flight”.

As a result, the cabin, at 2.77m (9.1ft) wide and 2.03m high, is considerably roomier than those of the Falcon 10X’s ultra-long-range rivals, the Bombardier Global 7500/8000, and Gulfstream G700/G800.

It is also larger than the cabin on Dassault’s own Falcon 6X, which at 2.58m wide and 1.98m high is billed by the airframer as an “extra-wide-body” jet.

A roomy fuselage is clearly a benefit to passengers, but only in concert with the other elements delivering comfort. Brana cites low-altitude cabin pressure (3,000ft at a 41,000ft cruising altitude); a uniform diffusion of natural light thanks to 38 cabin windows; ultra-low noise levels owing to next-generation vibration isolators and other tricks of the noise reduction trade; and a smooth ride thanks to a digital flight control system (DFCS) that removes the bumps.

In combination, these are a persuasive mix of attributes for customers, he argues. Additionally, “The interior possibilities truly

differentiate the aircraft. One can have not just a bed, but a full, queen-size bed. Not just a small shower, but a spacious, 6ft 2in shower with an electro-chromatic window and a generous 30-minute supply of hot water. Not just a dining table, but one you can seat yourself at without the indignity of wriggling in and out of the seats. Instead, occupants can separate the seats and easily step in and out.”

Interior designers have great flexibility to create longer lounge spaces or shorter ones – for a cosy entertainment centre, for example. This adaptability goes with the philosophy of creating a homelike environment with personalised spaces, Brana says.

In practice, what that means rather than having four cabin



Like the passenger cabin, the cockpit has been designed with comfort in mind



zones of equal length, they can be customised – say, for a larger state room to suit the owner’s requirements.

Command centre

There are only two places in life where an executive might spend 15h consecutively – their home and their office, Brana notes, adding: “Our aim is a homelike environment that also functions as an airborne command centre for the CEO, where he or she can work in comfort with a core team and communicate over high-speed internet from anywhere in the world.”

The 10X’s cabin can also include one or more optional Falcon Privacy Suites, a recent innovation from Dassault Aviation’s engineering and interior design teams. Separated from the cabin aisle by an adjustable mid-height partition, the seat is

electrically operated and reclines to a full-flat position to create a comfortable 2.03m-long bed. When not fully reclined, the extra seat serves as an ottoman for a second occupant.

Privacy, Brana suggests, is another important ingredient for a restful experience, adding that, even on a large business jet, true privacy is at a premium, especially for sleeping.

“The Falcon Privacy Suite answers a need that has not been addressed previously in business aviation,” he says. “It’s a delightful personal space and a great place to retreat to work on one’s own or rest.”

The art and science of proper rest also extends to the flightdeck. “We put more space in the flightdeck, with the idea that in the future we will be able to certify a rest position

where a pilot could recline one of the seats to have a sort of lie-flat bed. One pilot could be flying and the other resting.”

Brana says this feature will not be available at service entry, but that Dassault is working on developing the systems that would enable at least a rest interval for one pilot.

In the here and now, the Falcon 10X’s flightdeck still brims with new technology and innovations. It has the latest generation of DFCS derived from the Rafale fighter and first introduced on Falcon business jets with the 7X in 2005.

The system’s fly-by-wire smart sidesticks feature flightpath stability, removing the need to manually trim the aircraft. A single throttle lever – which Dassault calls the Smart Throttle – controls both engines, with the reverse thrust and airbrake controls also integrated into

“[The 10X] is all-new and embodies our best thinking on what makes for an exceptional passenger experience”

Carlos Brana Executive vice-president, civil aircraft, Dassault Aviation



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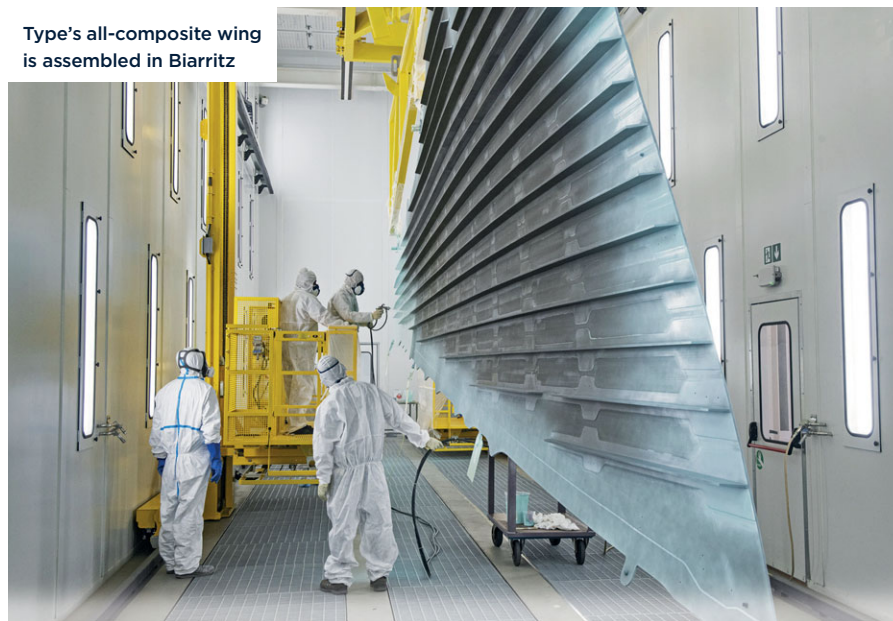
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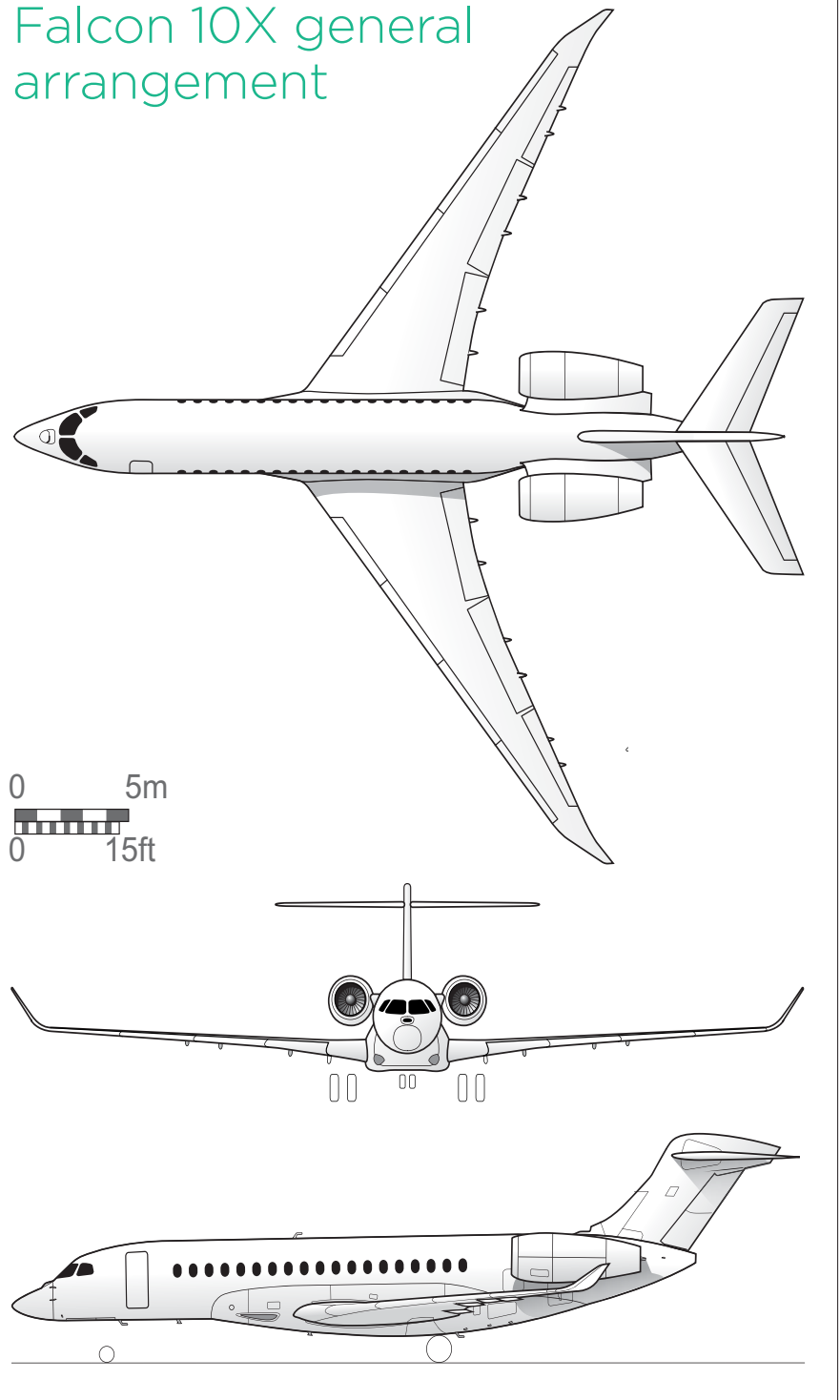
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Type's all-composite wing is assembled in Biarritz

Falcon 10X general arrangement



Tim Bicheno-Brown/FlightGlobal

the lever. This too is technology derived from the twin-engined Rafale and intended to aid pilots in high-workload phases of flight.

The Smart Throttle is linked to the DFCS, which can control the engines - for instance, increasing thrust as necessary as the sidestick is pulled back.

Linking the Smart Throttle to the digital flight controls permits Dassault to introduce an upset recovery function (activated by a single button on the main panel) which will return the jet to straight and level flight. That system, another carry-over from the Rafale, has already been evaluated on the company's Falcon 7X testbed.

Advanced autothrottle and autopilot modes have been added, such as 'soft go-around', emergency descent, reduced take-off thrust, and noise abatement climb.

A simplified digital checklist is incorporated, while enhancements have been made to the head-up display (HUD)-based FalconEye combined vision system, enabling its use as primary instrumentation. Optional dual HUDs will probably lead to approval in the future to land in near zero-zero conditions.

The overhead panel is also slimmed down, with many switches now transferred to touchscreen displays.

The Falcon 10X marks the first use of a Rolls-Royce engine on a Falcon. The Pearl 10X engine is

the latest and largest in the Pearl series, delivering more than 18,000lb (80kN) of thrust. New materials and internal aerodynamics make it one of the most efficient engines in business aviation. It also features new self-diagnostics for reduced maintenance.

The Pearl 10X has already logged more than 1,000h of testing, including runs on 100% sustainable aviation fuel.

Pearl progress

In total, R-R will use eight engines for the Pearl 10X test programme: four for ground-based evaluations and another four for flight testing. Those flight tests are set to be conducted in 2023 using the manufacturer's Boeing 747-200 flying testbed (N787RR) in Tucson, Arizona.

Flight testing should take about six to nine months, as the Pearl 10X benefits from its similarity to the Pearl 700, says Philipp Zeller, head of the Pearl 10X programme. The powerplants share a common architecture and dimensions, including a 132cm (52in)-diameter fan.

However, there are some internal differences, including the application of 3D-printed tiles in the Pearl 10X's combustion chamber, allowing it to better manage the increased temperatures driven by higher-thrust operations.

Long accustomed to building large and strong composite structures for the Rafale, Dassault elected to build its first all-composite wing for the 10X (the fuselage is aluminium). The carbonfibre wing provides ultra-precise aerodynamics and weight reductions, Brana says.

At 33.6m, the wingspan is almost 8m more than on the Falcon 6X. The new wing has a sweep angle that delivers efficiency at the jet's higher cruise speeds of M0.85 and above. It also features retractable high-lift devices, ensuring short-field and steep approach performance.

The first 10X wing, built in a new assembly hall at the airframer's site in Biarritz, southwest France, is now undergoing fatigue and static testing.

Final assembly

Manufacturing of long-lead items for the Falcon 10X is already under way throughout Dassault's network of factories and those of its suppliers. Final assembly will take place during 2023 at the airframer's site in Merignac, near Bordeaux, ahead of a first flight tentatively scheduled in 2024.

A company demonstrator aircraft

will be the first production serial unit and should enter service in 2025, before the start of customer deliveries the following year. Brana, as per company policy, declines to reveal the backlog for the jet, but says "interest is high", with potential customers "seduced by what we are proposing".

"We promoted the airplane as a penthouse in the sky and when you visit the cabin mock-up you really see that," he says.

While its competitors have slightly longer range, at up to 8,000nm, Dassault believes the 10X's combination of range and speed are ideal for the global travel requirements of its customers.

"Range beyond 7,500nm is quite rarely required. Dassault's idea is to provide the most attractive package, including accessibility to smaller airports, fuel efficiency, advanced safety technology and, above all, comfort - where the 10X has no rivals," Brana says.

"It is all-new, embodying the most advanced technology and our best thinking on what makes for an exceptional passenger experience. We are certain many customers will agree." ■

Dassault Aviation Falcon 10X specifications

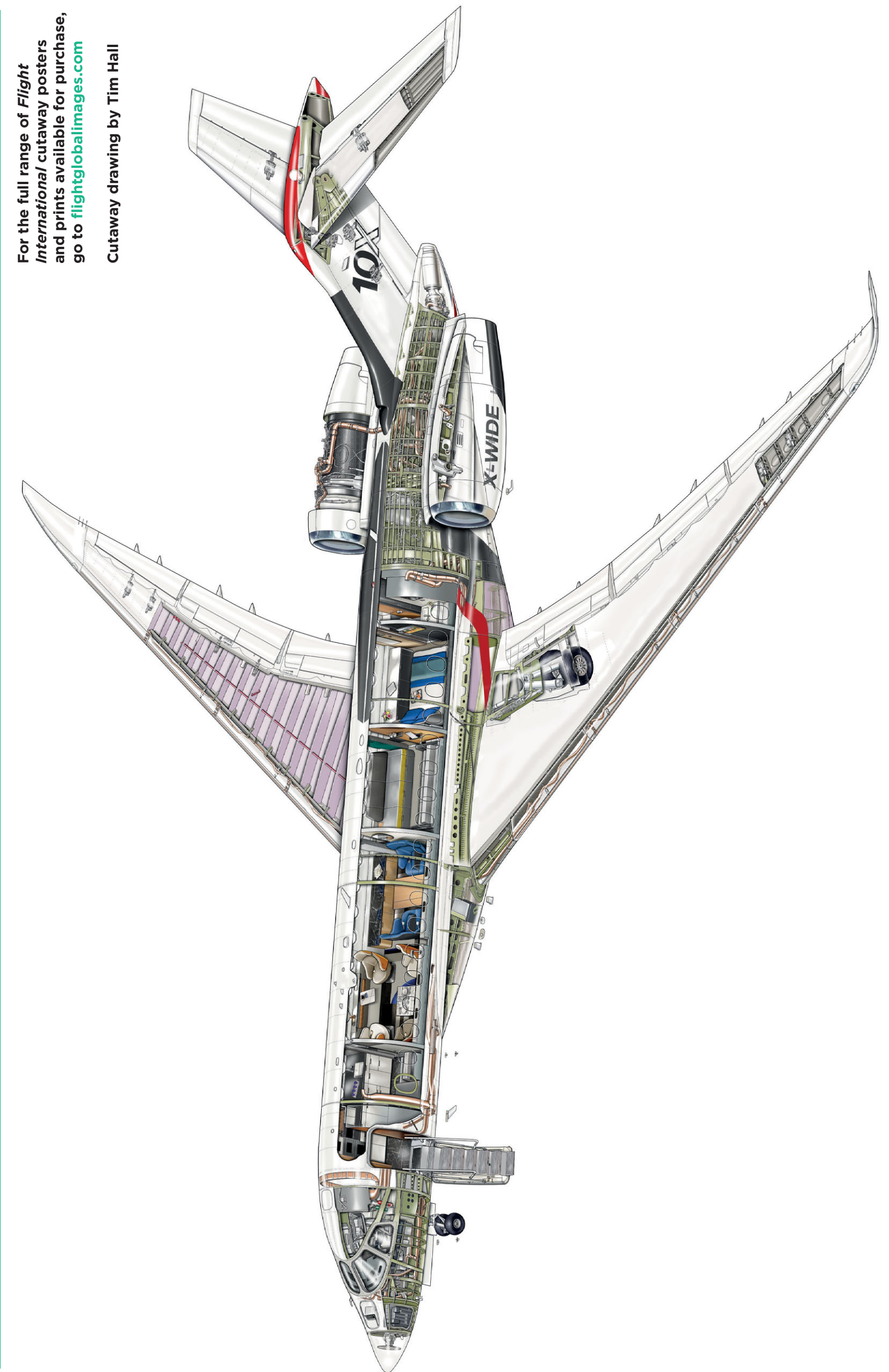
Dimensions	
Length	33.4m
Height	8.4m
Wingspan	33.6m
Cabin (L x W x H)*	16.4 x 2.77 x 2.03m
Accommodation	
Passengers (maximum)	Not disclosed
Powerplant	
Engine (x2)	Rolls-Royce Pearl 10X
Engine thrust (x2)	18,000lb-plus
Performance	
Maximum take-off weight	52,163kg
Maximum zero-fuel weight	30,754kg
Range (at Mach 0.85**)	7,500nm
Maximum operating Mach speed	M0.925
Operating ceiling	51,000ft

Source: Dassault Aviation *Excluding baggage compartment **8 passengers, 4 crew

Falcon 10X

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Cutaway drawing by Tim Hall





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