



SHOW BUSINESS

MEBAA
SHOW



Ali Alnaqbi: "We can see there's at least 25% growth from last year on the movement of aircraft"

BOUNCING BACK UAE BUSINESS BOOM BOOSTS SHOW

The MENA region's business aviation showcase opens its doors this morning after a four-year hiatus due to the global pandemic. But, according to the team behind the event, it has come back bigger and stronger than before.

Managing director of the organising team from Tarsus,

Tim Hawes, said numbers are up. Speaking at a briefing ahead of the show, Hawes said that MEBAA was not just about the GCC region, but was also attracting a growing international audience.

"We are expecting more than 1,500 visitors to the show; we have 95 countries represented – our largest ever international

pre-registration – and have a 10% increase in our exhibitor numbers. An incredible 42 of those companies are first-time exhibitors," he said.

This is not a surprise to the MEBAA chairman, Ali Alnaqbi. Speaking at the briefing, Alnaqbi said that the business and private aviation sector was booming in the

UAE. "The Dubai market is really growing," he said. "A lot of things have happened lately, especially Dubai Expo 2020, and now the FIFA World Cup in Qatar. But that impact is momentary.

"We are looking for continuation and healthy growth

● CONTINUED ON P5



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CONTINUED FROM P1

throughout the years to come. That is happening and we can see it in many areas, When I travel, I meet many people who have requests for aircraft to be registered in the UAE.”

There has been an increase in the number of aircraft from Russia and the Ukraine now operating from the UAE, but Alnaqbi said many other countries, too, were seeing the benefit of being based in the region.

“We can see there’s at least 25% growth from last year on the movement of aircraft – from the 2020 fiscal year-to-year.

Post-pandemic positives

“The indicators are very healthy and we can see the trend that the pandemic imposed on us by moving a lot of passengers from airline first-class and business-class to private and corporate aircraft continues.

“People don’t want to go back because they realise how good and convenient it is to fly privately and how inexpensive it is as well.”

Alnaqbi believes this adds to the attraction of the MEBAA show. “We need to be showing and assuring people that we can provide the right equipment and the right aircraft, so they can be very competitive when it comes to the pricing.”

With the UAE being rated among the top places in the world to live, it is no wonder that it is seen as popular base. “There’s a lot of trust in the Middle East from investors,” Alnaqbi said.

“A lot of corporates, too, are now moving their operation to UAE. With all the political upheaval in the world we are hoping to find a way to make these transactions easier, particularly to meet the demand to register aircraft here.” ▲



Nick Weber, regional vice president, ExecuJet MRO Services is looking forward to the opening of the new facility

ExecuJet MRO shaping up for the future

Across from the entrance to the MEBAA event, the new ExecuJet MRO and FBO is rapidly taking shape. Select business partners and customers will be able to visit the 15,000sqm MRO facility during the show, with the centre planned to become ExecuJet’s new regional headquarters in Dubai once it opens in first quarter of 2023.

The facility will be able to house 18-24 business jets simultaneously. Nick Weber, regional vice president, ExecuJet MRO Services, said: “We have increased MRO space, particularly in the wheel shops, the battery shops, the electrical ELT department, sheet metal shops, and a spray booth that is built into the workshop area. It is designed to cater for growth within the sector, and the increase of business aircraft in terms

of size. It will cater for the Falcon 6X, and the 10X when that comes into service.”

ExecuJet MRO is now part of Dassault, but still remains an independent operator. Weber explained the relationship: “We are now owned by an OEM, but we continue to support other aircraft types, which was always Dassault’s vision.

“What Dassault has brought us is increased scope. We did not support Falcons here in the Middle East prior to the acquisition back in 2020. It has given us opportunity to support another OEM brand, but also to be an OEM service centre itself.”

The boom of MRO support in the region will put pressure on the available talent.

Weber said: “We are moving into the new facility with 140 personnel.

We will probably be at a staffing contingent of around 250 in 10 years’ time. The majority of the growth will be engineers and technicians and we have entered into internship programmes with local UAE universities and colleges, which kicked off around 2016.

“To date we have had 30 interns going through the facility and, of those, I am proud to say we have employed 20. We are looking after the industry as a whole, but also our own organisation. The industry requires around 87,000 engineers and technicians by the year 2037, but ExecuJet has endeavoured to retain staff, and we offer scholarships and work experience. The intention for us, and in line with the government request, is to try and entice more UAE engineers in future.”



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▲ NEWS IN BRIEF

Tamarack making 'smart' moves

Tamarack Aerospace is in 'serious talks' with several MENA corporate prospects about upgrading its fleets with its patented Smartwing wingtip technology. "It is arguably the most dramatic fuel-saving, range-increasing, ride-smoothing and safety technology available in aviation right now," said CEO Nick Guida, who is attending show. Smartwing wingtips instantly react to turbulence and can provide up to 30% fuel savings and range increase under the right conditions for business jets and boast double-digit benefits for single-aisle aircraft. "You know that current traditional wingtips only provide an average of 4-5% efficiencies and they are ubiquitous. We will displace that technology," said Guida. "Our immediate goal is to leverage our talks with the majors and start installing our wing tips on single-aisle aircraft, including A320s."

A conference package to delight

MEBAA will be hosting a free-to-attend conference at the show for the first time. Show organiser, Tim Hawes, said the three days of conference will include 20 sessions addressing key themes. "A lot of these have come out of the last couple of years. There have been changes in the industry and we will be looking at future insights, statistics, and analysis of what we expect over the next year," he said. "Attendees can pick and choose the areas that they're most interested in. They can go and sit in those sessions."

Skyplan unveils new training offering

Skyplan Aviation Academy is at MEBAA with news that its Dubai-based flight dispatcher training is launching at the show. "We have just received our flight dispatch training organisation (FDTO) certificate from the GCAA. This means that we can now offer flight dispatch theoretical and on-job training in the UAE," said Muhammad Sami, president and CEO of Skyplan. "We have 40 years of experience in flight planning and flight dispatch that we are looking forward to sharing with our students. We've developed a competency-based programme that meets ICAO and GCAA, UAE standards." The company has invested in state-of-the-art facilities, which includes a dedicated classroom

space where trainers can deliver lectures and engage with students on a one-on-one basis if needed. "Our instructors come from diverse backgrounds including airline operations, military aviation, air traffic control, and other related fields – so they bring a wealth of knowledge to the table when it comes to teaching students about best practices in flight dispatching procedures and safety protocols," said Sami. "Our state-of-the-art on-the-job training (OJT) centre is situated within our Skyplan Operations Control Centre (OCC), which brings together the best of both worlds – professional training from knowledgeable instructors combined with an engaging experience through our technologically

advanced system. Not only does it equip our students with essential skills, it also allows them to familiarise themselves with realistic scenarios that are relevant to their future careers." Sami said the company was inspired to open a flight dispatch training organisation after seeing a rise in demand. "We have seen that our partners need assistance in safely managing their ever-growing fleets of aircraft in highly congested airspace environments, while staying compliant with all applicable rules and regulations." "We believe this training academy will result in improved safety standards overall within the industry, as well as a more efficient management of airline operations in general."



▼ "We have just received our FDTO certificate from the GCAA" – Muhammad Sami, president and CEO of Skyplan at the show



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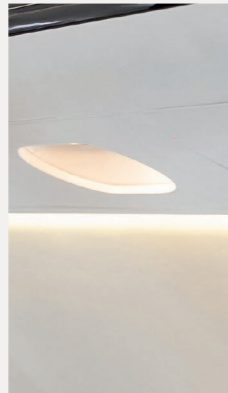
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Empire building: BBJ adds new dimension

Dubai-based Empire Aviation Group has announced the induction of a Boeing Business Jet 737 into its fleet of managed aircraft.

The sales, charter and continuing airworthiness management organisation (CAMO) specialist, marks its 15th anniversary at MEBAA this year.

It has expanded to manage aircraft based across the Middle East, Asia and Africa, including

business jets, helicopters, sea-planes and air ambulances, since its launch in 2007.

Empire currently has 20 business jets under management and air operator certificates or equivalent in three countries.



Commenting on the company's crystal anniversary, founder and managing director Paras P Dhamecha said: "Empire Aviation has successfully developed into an award-winning



The newly inducted BBJ, an ultra-large-cabin, long-range aircraft

global private aviation service provider to aircraft owners and charter clients, thanks to the team and the support of all our partners.

"There is no doubt that we have benefitted from Dubai and the UAE's position as an international aviation hub with world-class infrastructure, facilities and regu-

lators. Our journey continues and the exciting addition of the BBJ quite literally adds a new dimension."

The newly inducted BBJ, an ultra-large-cabin, long-range aircraft, is being managed and operated on behalf of its owner from its base in Dubai.

World tour finale for the G700

Gulfstream Aerospace is displaying a fully outfitted Gulfstream G700 production test aircraft on the static, as the jet ends its world tour.

"Two fully outfitted G700s have flown to major events and private showings across 20 cities and six continents as part of our efforts to give customers direct access to the aircraft," explained Mark Burns, president, Gulfstream.

"The strategic route of the G700 world tour reflects the strong demand we are seeing in established markets, such as Europe and the Middle East, and in growing markets for us, including Southeast Asia, India and Africa."

The initial fully outfitted G700

production test aircraft first flew in April 2021 and was joined by the second outfitted aircraft in September.

"To ensure uncompromised cabin maturity upon entry into service, Gulfstream has taken the interior through thousands of test points and flight hours," said Burns.

The production test aircraft showcase the industry's only ultragalley, with more than 10 ft/3m of counter space; a grand suite with fixed bed and bright, spacious lavatory with full vanity and shower; a circadian lighting system; an all-new award-winning seat design; and the lowest cabin altitude in the industry at 2,916 ft/889m when flying at 41,000 ft/12,497m.



A Gulfstream G700 production test aircraft is on display on the static at the show, as the jet ends its world tour

Collaboration key to reducing MEBAA's carbon footprint

With business aviation accounting for around 0.04% of all global man-made carbon emissions, stakeholders across the sector have bold ambitions to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Business aviation leaders are committed to the ongoing exploration of new methods and technologies to reduce the sector's carbon footprint through the increased production and supply of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), as well as the development of new propulsion technologies.

However, one message repeatedly being shared, is that collaboration across the sector is key to achieving the industry's net zero goal.

Reinforcing this message is the collaboration at this year's MEBAA between the show organiser, Tarsus, and its carbon offsetting sponsor, Air BP.

With support from Air BP, the show organiser has been working to reduce the carbon emissions from the event, and as the carbon offset sponsor, Air bp will then offset any remaining emissions.

This year marks 90 years in the region for Air BP, which provides fuel and services to business and general aviation, as well as commercial and military customers. Through its direct business and joint ventures, the company is currently operational in UAE, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. It markets fuel at 20 locations throughout the region providing fuel and services to around 190 customers.

As well as being the carbon offsetting sponsor for this edition of MEBAA, Air BP's commercial, general and military account manager, MENA, Alexandre Geahchan, is joining a panel discussion on strategies in business aviation during the show today. He will be discussing the short and long-term perspectives of fuel suppliers in ensuring sustainability.



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Bombardier hints at new ME MRO facility

Bombardier has eyes on a new MRO facility in the Middle East as it continues its global expansion following the opening of a major new service centre at London Biggin Hill Airport.

The UK-based site, which was inaugurated last week, extends to nearly 250,000sqft with a new hangar that has transformed from eight to 22 service bays, capable of accommodating up to 14 Global 7500 aircraft at one time.

Jean-Christophe Gallagher, executive vice president, services and support, and corporate strategy at Bombardier, described the Biggin Hill centre as the company's "beacon" in the region with jets flying in from Europe, the Gulf and Africa.

But he also hinted at further

expansion aimed at servicing those customers closer to home.

"There are key markets where we have only made modest investments," he said. "You could draw a conclusion that there are more things to do in the Middle East, and I'm going to leave it at that."

The expansion at London Biggin Hill comes after Bombardier launched new facilities in Miami, Florida and Melbourne, Australia and a significantly expanded service centre in Singapore. That site is the largest OEM business aviation maintenance facility in Asia Pacific.

The Biggin Hill centre, the largest business jet MRO facility in the UK, offers heavy maintenance and modification capabilities,

wheel and battery shops, a component paint shop and full-service interior finishing capacity for its family of Learjet, Challenger and Global aircraft.

Bombardier has also announced a new partnership with Jetex as its preferred FBO provider at London Biggin Hill, with the company offering customers concierge services onsite.

In 2019, Bombardier signed an agreement with Jetex to establish a new line maintenance station in Dubai, providing enhanced service capabilities in the Middle East. The 3,000sqft facility, at Dubai World Central Al Maktoum International Airport, is home to the OEM's technical engineers, who are certified for all Challenger series and Global series business jets.

Fighting the urge to go 'grey'

Major events in the region, such as the FIFA World Cup and the Dubai World Expo, have seen a rise in the likely number of illegal charters – but it is a small percentage of what it used to be.

Industry associations such as MEBA and other IBAC members have been battling what is dubbed the 'grey market', where private owners or operators illegally charter out their aircraft. There has been considerable success but when demand rises so does the grey market.

"Our role as an association has been in raising awareness among everybody using that aircraft, whether it's the stakeholder, the aircraft owner, or even the authorities," said MEBA chairman, Ali Alnaqbi.

"We have succeeded in many cities and many countries in the region. We may have failed in other countries. We have seen a significant drop as a lot of authorities adopt rules and regulation against illegal charter."

Italy sees Middle East traffic swell

Italian business aviation airport operator, Milano Prime, has today reported a 13% annual increase in traffic to and from the Middle East when compared with 2019 figures. While the FIFA World Cup has played a key role in the recent surge in traffic, Milano Prime also credits the development and consolidation of relationships with partners in the region for this growth. Milano Prime is showcasing its infrastructural enhancements at this year's MEBA, including a 4,700sqm. maintenance hangar, which is currently in the final stages of construction at Linate Airport in Italy.



Jean-Christophe Gallagher speaking at the opening of a major new service centre at London Biggin Hill Airport

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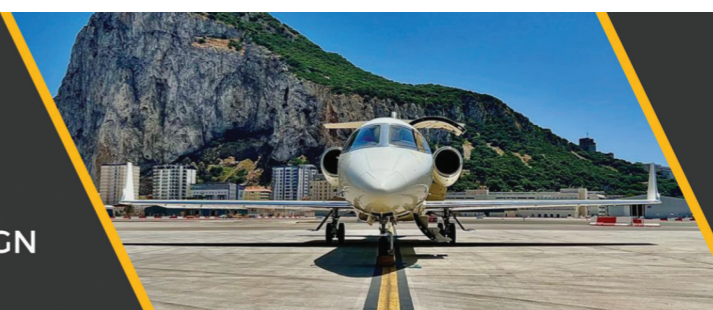
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Falcon flagship lining up for the long-haul operators

In demand: The Falcon 8X is a big favourite in the Middle East

Dassault Aviation is exhibiting its Falcon 8X very-long-range jet on the static.

Large-cabin Falcons, like the 6,450nm/11,945km Falcon 8X, make up a third of the 75 Falcons operating in the region.

The 8X can fly non-stop from New York to Dubai, Dubai to Adelaide and Jeddah to Sao Paulo, and also access short runway airports like London City or Lugano, Switzerland, that are typically off limits to big business jets.

“Operators in the Middle East highly value the performance, flexibility, robustness and technological excellence of large-cabin models like the Falcon 8X, which draw heavily on decades of Dassault fighter aircraft experience,” said Dassault Aviation chairman and CEO Eric Trappier.

“This appreciation can only grow with the arrival of the new Falcon 6X and 10X, which will set a new standard in the



large-cabin segment.”

The popularity of large-cabin Falcons in the Gulf region is expected to grow further with the introduction of the all-new extra wide-body Falcon 6X, currently

in the final stages of its flight-test campaign, and the ultra-long range Falcon 10X, due to reach the market in late 2025.

The 5,500nm/10,186km Falcon 6X has already received a

significant number of orders from the Middle East and several aircraft are due for delivery to customers in the region shortly after its anticipated entry into service in mid-2025.

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UAE TAKES TOP SPOT AS REGION'S JET HUB

The UAE has overtaken Saudi Arabia with the largest fleet of business aircraft in the region. In a special Insights report from Ionic Aviation, issued for the MEBAA event, it shows that, despite having a population of a little over ten million, the nation's total

of 108 jets makes it 25% larger than that of its more populous neighbour, Saudi Arabia.

More than half of all aircraft are based in the business, tourism, and cultural hub of Dubai, while a quarter of the fleet are based in the capital

city of Abu Dhabi. According to Ionic, the dominant aircraft types are in the 'heavy' (ultra-long and corporate airliner/bizliner) segment representing more than two-thirds of all aircraft.

While Bombardier is the largest OEM by fleet size with 30% of the fleet, it is notable that the Boeing Business Jet (BBJ) product line makes up more than a fifth of all aircraft. This includes 24 BBJ1, BBJ2, BBJ3, 747, 777 and 787 variants that are operated for the governments of Dubai and Abu Dhabi by Dubai Air Wing and Presidential Flight respectively, and Royal Jet.

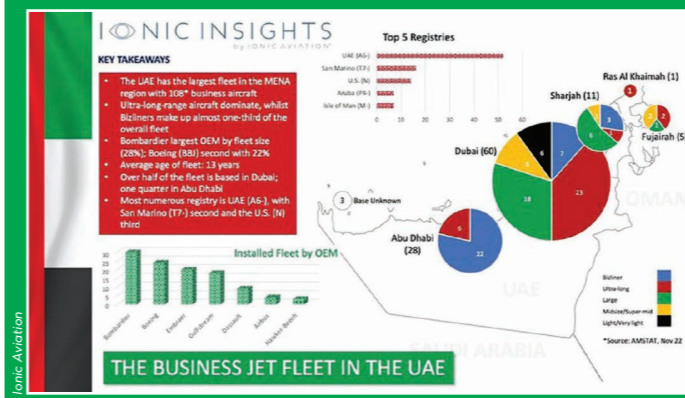
Unsurprisingly, light jets make up less than 6% of the fleet. The largest owner-operator of the type is Emirates Flight Training Academy in Dubai, with a total of five Embraer Phenom 100EV aircraft. Interestingly, the Cessna Citation product line

does not currently feature.

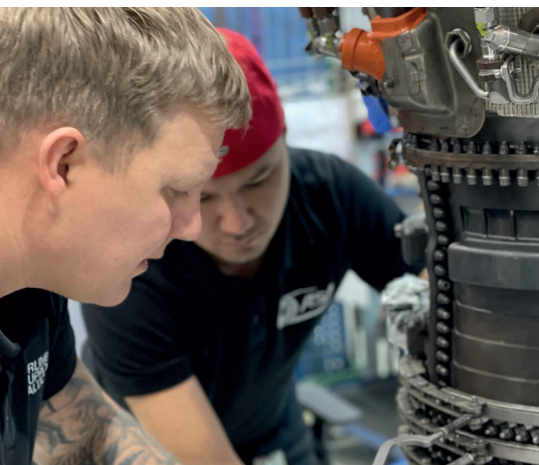
Overall, the average age of the fleet is 13 years; with almost half of all aircraft now under the GCAA's A6 registration. Investment and the availability of finance is key to that success.

According to the Ionic report, the financing of bizliners, particularly wide-bodies for ultra-high net worth individuals (UHNWI) clients, is most commonly driven by a handful of international private banks, which do so on the basis of a client's wider wealth relationship.

“Asset and credit-based solutions exist for narrow-body variants such as BBJs, ACJs and the Embraer Lineage, albeit at more conservative advances and with faster amortisation than might otherwise be available for other new and pre-owned business aircraft,” Ionic said.



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Jetcraft: Hot market to continue in 2023

The market for business aircraft will slow a little in 2023 but it will be a “soft landing”, Pascal Bachmann, senior vice-president of sales at global aircraft trading firm, Jetcraft, told Show Business here at MEBAA.

“The market peaked in September/October when we were in a situation where there was almost no aircraft availability,” said Bachmann. “Inventory is rising a bit but demand exceeds supply so prices will remain stable.”

“There are a lot of buyers who are waiting. They will enter the picture in Q1 and Q2 and that will drive the market.”

The past two years have been stellar for Jetcraft. It performed 121 aircraft transactions in 2021, its highest ever, and expects a similar volume this year, with 17 aircraft deals to close before year-end, said Bachmann.

Despite headwinds such as global recession and the war in Ukraine, it will remain a sellers’ market for business aviation aircraft well into 2023 driven by high market demand and the lack of aircraft availability, he said.

The Middle East and African regions for private business travel have boomed post-Covid with many entering business jet operations as airlines stopped flying. And this will continue. “Once discovered it’s difficult to go back,” he said.

Jetcraft performed 12 transactions in this region in 2021 and the market is going to increase. “We are seeing increasing potential in this region and in Africa,” said Bachmann. His optimism is based

on Dubai’s excellent global connectivity and the fact that airline networks in Africa offer poor intra-region services, both promoting the rise of business aviation.

“Our customers in Africa need large aircraft and they need range,” said Bachmann.

The need for larger aircraft means Jetcraft records an average aircraft transaction price in this region of \$21 million, compared to Europe, where it is \$16 million to \$17 million and the range requirement is less.

In its recently released Pre-owned Business Jet Market Forecast 2022-2026, the standout trend

Jetcraft has seen over the past five years is the rising number of buyers under 45. It rose to 27% of buyers in 2021 from 7% in 2017.

It is not clear exactly what is driving this trend but what is clear, according to Bachmann, is that for the young entrepreneurs entering the sector “business aviation gives them an edge”.

Jetcraft, owned by board chairman Jahid Fazal-Karim, has been celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and will hold a reception downtown for customers during the show. The business has performed more than 800 aircraft transactions, worth \$14 billion, over the past decade.



Still a sellers’ market: Pascal Bachmann, senior vice-president of sales at Jetcraft

▲ NEWS IN BRIEF

Used jets becoming so hard to get

Surging demand in the second-hand business jet market has pushed the number of available used aircraft to “astoundingly low” levels, according to Janine Iannarelli, president at Par Avion.

“That has been exponential between mid 2020 and Q2 of this year,” said the Houston, Texas-based industry veteran, who heads a marketing firm specializing in pre-owned Bombardier, Embraer and Gulfstream jets, among others.

Iannarelli said the shortage of second-hand aircraft was pushing prices 30-40% higher than they would have been just two years ago.

The issue, largely driven by Covid and changing travel habits of corporate and high net-worth individuals, is compounded by supply chain shortages, which have slowed the arrival of new models as order backlogs build.

Mena Aerospace to expand hangar space in Bahrain

Mena Aviation Real Estate – a subsidiary of Bahrain-based Mena Aerospace Enterprises – is expanding its existing hangar facility at Bahrain International Airport. The move is in response to growing demand for business aviation in the Middle East. The 4,200sqm expansion of the company’s existing 6,400sqm hangar facility will increase Mena Aerospace’s ability to provide aircraft maintenance services for private aircraft, as well as private jet parking. It is expected to be complete within the next two years.

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- Workshop fitout and customization currently in progress.
- Anticipating EASA approvals in 2023.



A breath of fresh air from CTT

An aircraft cabin is excessively dry and the more premium the cabin, the drier it is, so business jet passengers could be greatly at risk.

Fewer people, means less humidity. On a long-haul flight both passengers and crew can suffer from dry air induced fatigue, rapid degeneration of the immune system, dry eyes and an impaired sense of taste.

However, customers opting for the Airbus Corporate Jet ACJ TwoTwenty will be able to fly in

comfort, thanks to a partnership agreement with Swedish company CTT.

ACJ is offering humidification as part of its cabin catalogue for the TwoTwenty, with the CTT system to be delivered as a bolt-on-kit with a supplemental type certificate, as well as fitted into green aircraft.

CTT's humidifier onboard generates the increased level of humidity required to bring the cabin to a comfortable, ground-like level, allowing pilots, crew and passen-

gers to arrive feeling refreshed and healthy, while lowering the risk of contracting infectious diseases.

The joint ambition is to achieve a minimum weight solution while ensuring the highest levels of performance, including optimised humidity in the entire cabin with efficient anti-condensation protection. The humidification system is designed to equally distribute humidified air in the extra-large business jet cabin.

"We are delighted that ACJ



includes humidification as part of the comfort climate in the TwoTwenty aircraft," said Peter Landquist (above left), CTT's VP sales, marketing and customer support.



Maintaining talent... the Jet Aviation way

Aviation maintenance is a highly regulated and complex business, and as the industry grows and demand evolves, approvals and regulations have become ever more complex and challenging. It's something that Hardy Bütschi, VP regional operations Middle East & GM Dubai, Jet Aviation, is well aware of.

He said: "The manufacturing cycles have shrunk, resulting in more aircraft types, and more type ratings. At the same time, customers want to bring their entire fleet to one provider for a more efficient experience and a relationship based on trust."

"It can be a challenge to find a maintenance partner who can provide full support to all of their requirements. Our priority is to manage these challenges, while delivering a high-quality seamless service to all our customers, no matter their requirements."

There has been much talk of the shortage of trained talent affecting

service providers across the globe, but Jet Aviation addresses that problem at its root.

Bütschi said: "Finding the right people, with the right mindset is a challenge. However, Jet Aviation is a talent incubator with the ability to identify good people, hire them, nurture them with opportunities for further training and development locally and as part of our extended global network."

"We are committed to supporting local talent and helping young people find their careers in aviation."

There have also been shortages in the global supply – especially for special and specific materials – post Covid. Bütschi said: "We are not currently seeing the same challenges for off-the-shelf materials in the region."

"We also ensure a good relationship with our OEM and supply chain partners," he said. "When experiencing unanticipated challenges, we remain transparent

with the customer to ensure an open and honest relationship throughout the project."

However, the pandemic also brought opportunities. Bütschi explained: "Many customers who had previously travelled out of the region for maintenance brought their aircraft instead to our Middle

East facilities. Over the past year we have seen more requests for larger cabin refurbishment, structural repair projects, avionics modifications, and upgrades at our fixed-wing maintenance site in Dubai, and have adapted and expanded our capabilities to match."



Bütschi (top left): "Jet Aviation is a talent incubator with the ability to identify good people"

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So much to talk about for DC Aviation

DC Aviation Al-Futtaim is taking a leading role in this year's show with a new stand, a social event, guided facilities tours, and participation in the conference.

Holger Ostheimer, managing director, said: "After a such a long absence due to Covid, we look

forward to people coming back to Dubai, attending the show, and visiting us here at our facilities to see what's changed and how things have developed.

"We are providing a shuttle service from the show to demonstrate our capabilities in passenger and

ground handling services. We want delegates to visit our lounges and meet with our aircraft management and maintenance experts.

"We have increased the management fleet and



restructured our maintenance organisation, increasing our capabilities in the wheel shop and battery shop. We have been busy across all areas, from hangar utilisation to aircraft chartering. There is a lot to talk about," he added.

The growing fleet includes a unique aircraft in the Middle East – a PC-12. The single-engine turboprop can seat up to six guests and is perfectly suited for short-haul jaunts of up to two hours.

Ostheimer said: "We have made this aircraft available with the FIFA World Cup in Qatar in mind. It is ideal for smaller groups, or those who may not be in a position to charter a larger business jet, such as our Challenger 604 or 350. It is available at a very appealing price."

Today, Ostheimer will also provide insights on new business models and strategies in business aviation at the first ever BizAv Talk conference.



Above: DC Aviation managing director, Al-Futtaim Holger Ostheimer

The growing DC Aviation fleet includes a unique aircraft in the Middle East – a PC-12

Dynamic way to see and experience training facility

Dynamic Advanced Training (DAT) is a unique safety and security training centre based at Dubai World Central, just 10 minutes from the show. Visitors to the DAT stand can arrange to go and experience the incredible facilities for themselves.

Mark Kammer, director of operations for DAT (right), said: "Watching videos is great but seeing is believing, and experiencing our full-motion

training facilities is something else." DAT is the only centre in the region that has such private aviation-specific facilities. Kammer said: "It is our niche market. There is no other training centre, from Europe to China, that offers business jet-specific safety



and emergency procedure training, or our special VIP service training.

"With our full-motion simulators, we cover all the Gulfstreams, the Globals, Challengers, and

Legacies, so that includes the main business jets that fly in and out of the MEASA region. The wide-body jets are also very popular in the Middle East and, because we cover commercial aviation, we can train for both ACJs and BBJs as well."

The centre's motto is 'we entertain while we train', and Kammer and his expert team believe that crews gain more from a real-life situation. He said: "Our philosophy is reality-based training, so it is a very hands-on approach. In our simulators you can select from a

huge range of scenarios, for realistic scenario-based training. In our 'post-crash' offering we have three survival rooms – the hot and steamy jungle survival, the cold polar survival, and a sea survival pool area, with wind, waves, rain, crashing thunder and flashing lightning. It is challenging and convincing."

And, when you have survived the training, the centre also offers crews a café, with excellent coffee and a wide menu, for relaxing and debriefing.

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Satcom Direct now has connectivity options for both low-Earth and geostationary satellites

Satcom Direct set to announce new Stellar boost

Satcom Direct (SD) says it will soon offer in-flight connectivity solutions for satellites in both low-Earth and geostationary orbits, covering L-band, Ku-band and Ka-band, depending upon the user's requirements.

At the show, it will announce that Stellar Blu has selected SD as its preferred service provider for executive airliner customers using the Stellar Blu Sidewinder product line. The fuselage-mounted, electronically steered array (ESA) terminal is designed to retrofit executive airliners to support a full suite of connectivity services.

The multi-network terminal supports connectivity to Ku-band airtime networks, including the OneWeb LEO constellation, with which SD already has a relationship.

Stellar Blu says it chose to work with SD because of its long heritage and reputation for supporting in-flight connectivity on military,

government, VVIP, and head-of-state heavy jets.

The addition of the Stellar Blu terminal equipment enables the narrow-body business jets to harness the benefits of a fuselage-mounted antenna.

Consistent, reliable performance for aircraft with heavy passenger loads is bolstered by the Sidewinder terminal and OneWeb network, ensuring video conferencing, remote command and control, and other applications are optimised with reduced latency.

Michael Skou Christensen, chief commercial officer, SD, said: "We have successfully developed our advanced technology 'plane simple' terminal series to meet the increasing and diverse connectivity demands of small to large jets.

"Adding the Sidewinder solution to the portfolio complements the series and gives even more choices for our executive airliner customers. Testing has shown that the antenna is capable of exceptional

speeds and there is a massive demand for it in the MENA region, especially on VVIP and head-of-state aircraft," he said.

Stellar Blu will begin in-service evaluation of the Sidewinder ESA terminal in Q2 2023, after which a full suite of STCs is anticipated for Airbus, Boeing, and Embraer airframes.

'Plane simple'

The ESA terminal is currently being type-approved on the OneWeb network. Customers can expect high-speed broadband connectivity on every mission, including routes transiting polar regions, before the end of 2023.

The Stellar Blu terminal will join SD's three other antennas that make up its 'plane simple' range.

The first is a tail-mount Ku-band antenna that delivers global high-speed connectivity via the Intelsat FlexExec service. SD said its design features only two-line replaceable units (LRUs) to sim-

ply installation and configuration while providing a seamless and cost-effective upgrade path as satellite technology advances.

Christensen said: "The plane simple Ku-band tail-mount antenna is now flying with 20 customers, with another 60 in the pipeline. By the end of next year, we aim to have it flying with 100."

In development is a Ka-band version of the tail-mount antenna that will work with Inmarsat's Jet ConneX (JX) service.

"Testing is due to start aboard our Gulfstream G550 next week. It will be fully compatible with the Jet ConneX Ka-band service aboard the new Inmarsat I-6 satellites. It is truly a solution for the 2030s and beyond," added Christensen.

The first dual L- and Ka-band I-6 satellite (I-6 F1) was launched in December 2021 and the next is due to be lofted shortly.

SD is also progressing with the development of an electronic phased array antenna to support OneWeb's advanced in-flight connectivity services aboard smaller business aircraft.

One advantage of flat-panel technology is that it enables high-speed satcom on lighter jets such as the Embraer Phenom 300 or Cessna Citation CJ3.

SD will market and sell OneWeb's high-speed, low-latency in-flight broadband once the service launches next year.

Development is under way with antenna specialists QEST, with initial demonstrator technology scheduled to validate over-the-air performance, in a small form factor across the OneWeb satellite constellation in Q4 2022.

The flat-panel antenna is designed to work with OneWeb's low-Earth orbit (LEO) Ku-band satellite network, which will provide service in the range of 50 Mbps and eventually up to 150 to 200 Mbps. ▲

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Michael Skou Christensen: "Testing has shown that the antenna is capable of exceptional speeds"

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