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DAY 2

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Not pulp fiction. Actor and pilot John Travolta drew crowds as he shared his aviation lore and experience with attendees yesterday at Bombardier's Aircraft Connection display.

MARIANO ROSALES

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PT9 POWERS PRATT PLANS

By Kerry Lynch

Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&WC) has taken the wraps off the PT9, a 2,000-shp clean-sheet turboprop engine that draws on the PT6 name but incorporates new architecture scalable to multiple platforms. The engine maker unveiled the centerline powerplant today at NBAA-BACE 2026, and with Transport Canada certification already in hand.

P&WC president Satheeshkumar Kumarasingam stressed the engine is neither a replacement for, nor a successor to, its venerable PT6 line but is designed with new technologies that could adapt to future applications such as hybrid operations. With the PT9, Kumarasingam said, "We leaped ahead in this next-generation architecture and product line"

to bring more modularity, scalability, and maintainability.

"The PT9 engine represents the next evolution of turboprop propulsion, delivering significant advances in performance, efficiency, and adaptability to meet the needs of modern aviation," he said. "Designed around evolving customer needs, including advanced digital capabilities and future-ready hybridization, its architecture can be tailored to diverse airframe types and provides a strong foundation for continued innovation and technology integration."

P&WC is not yet ready to announce an aircraft platform for the PT9 engine, but Kumarasingam told **AIN** the company has been in discussions with most major manufacturers and has received feedback from potential customers that shaped the direction of the development.

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AINalerts

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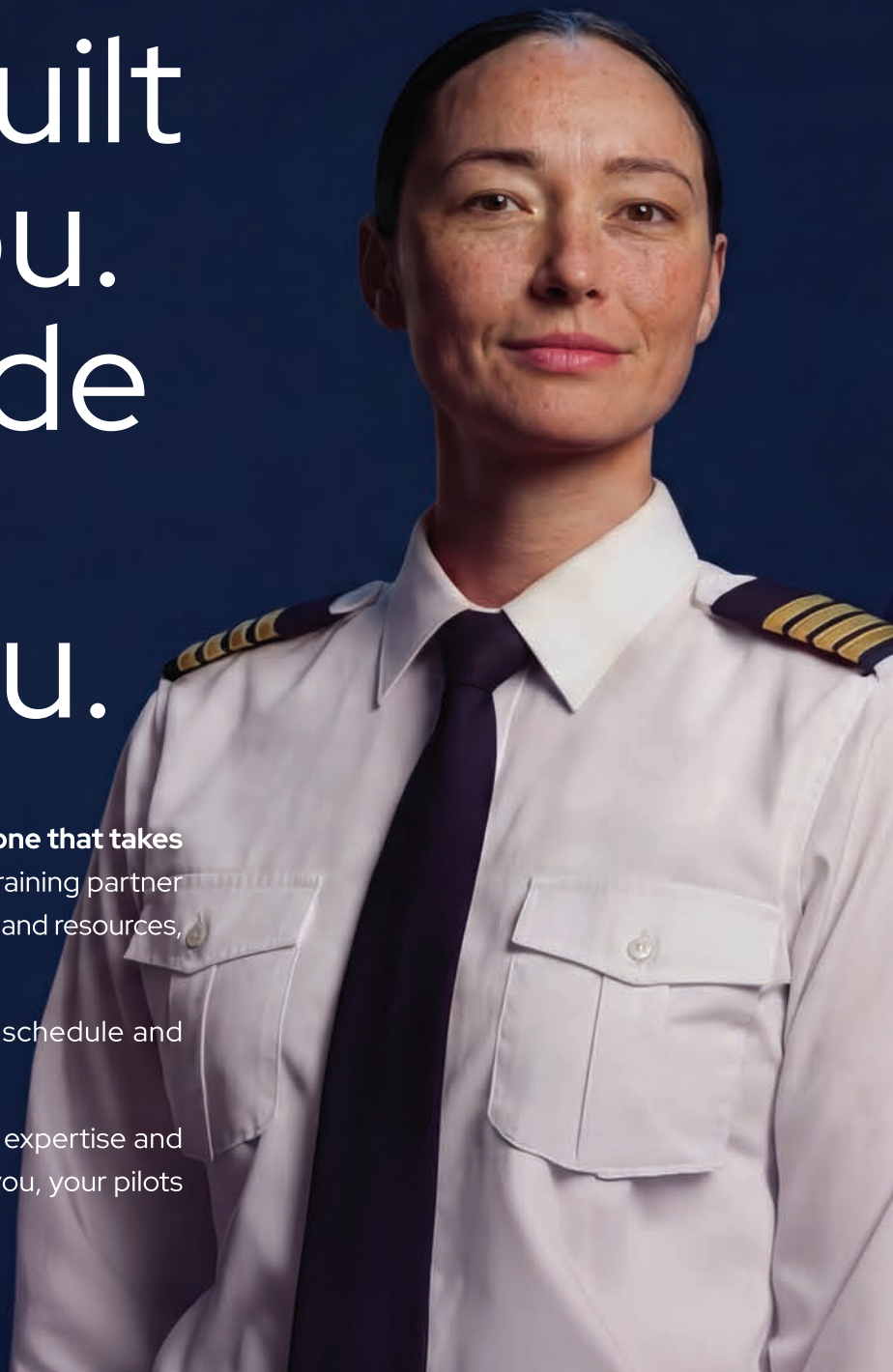


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Dassault said the EASy IV flight deck upgrade for Falcon 2000 models, when paired with the FalconEye combined vision system, improves situational awareness.

Dassault hits EASy IV button for Falcon 2000s

By Kerry Lynch

Dassault Aviation launched an EASy IV flight deck upgrade program for new-production Falcon 2000LXs, as well as for retrofit in all EASy-equipped Falcon 2000 models, the manufacturer announced yesterday at NBAA-BACE.

To be available at the end of the decade, the upgrade brings the twinjet in line with the other Falcons with EASy IV avionics, including the Falcon 6X and 8X in forward fit and older Falcon 7X and 8X trijets in retrofit.

Powered by Honeywell Primus Epic avionics, EASy IV provides faster processing, higher-resolution displays, and new functions. Features include enhanced graphical flight planning, advanced datalink communications, 2D and 3D airport moving maps, additional Jeppesen chart features, a next-generation

flight management system with RNP approach capability, ADS-B In with airborne and surface traffic, and SiriusXM weather. It further includes improved takeoff and landing data performance computations.

When paired with the FalconEye combined vision system, Dassault said the system improves situational awareness, enabling pilots to more safely navigate through almost any weather.

“The EASy IV program has been a request from our customers for years,” said Carlos Brana, executive v-p of civil aircraft for Dassault Aviation, noting it brings the latest safety technology to the aircraft. Dassault has produced more than seven hundred 2000-series Falcons since service entry in 1995.

The EASy IV comes as Dassault continues to progress on development of its upcoming

flagship, the 7,500-nm, Mach 0.925 wide-cabin Falcon 10X. The French airframer confirmed in July that certification on the program had slipped to 2029, but the flight-test program is spooling up with the first prototype taking to the skies on June 19 with the second following on September 24.

Brana estimated that the third and fourth flight-test aircraft will join the program next year. Noting that about 100 hours have been accrued thus far as the pilots expand the flight envelope and test systems, Brana said the aircraft has performed as anticipated.

Meanwhile, Dassault continues to expand the capabilities of the 5,500-nm 6X, which entered service in late 2023. This includes working toward high-altitude airport certification, Cat II low-visibility approach certification, and EASA approval for LED light detection on the FalconEye combined vision system.

However, Brana confirmed that Dassault has ended production of the large-cabin Falcon 900, saying the company continues to evaluate potential upgrades. While Brana did not refer to this as a potential for such an upgrade, Dassault has trademarked the name Falcon 9X.

Meanwhile, Dassault Aviation chairman and CEO Éric Trappier told reporters at NBAA-BACE that the Middle East conflict continues to bring geopolitical challenges and the supply chain still faces difficulties. “Despite these and other factors, the business jet industry has shown remarkable [resiliency].”

Air traffic is growing, and business aviation is playing a key role in global business expansion. “This activity translates to sales, particularly in the United States,” he said. ■



MARIANO ROSALES

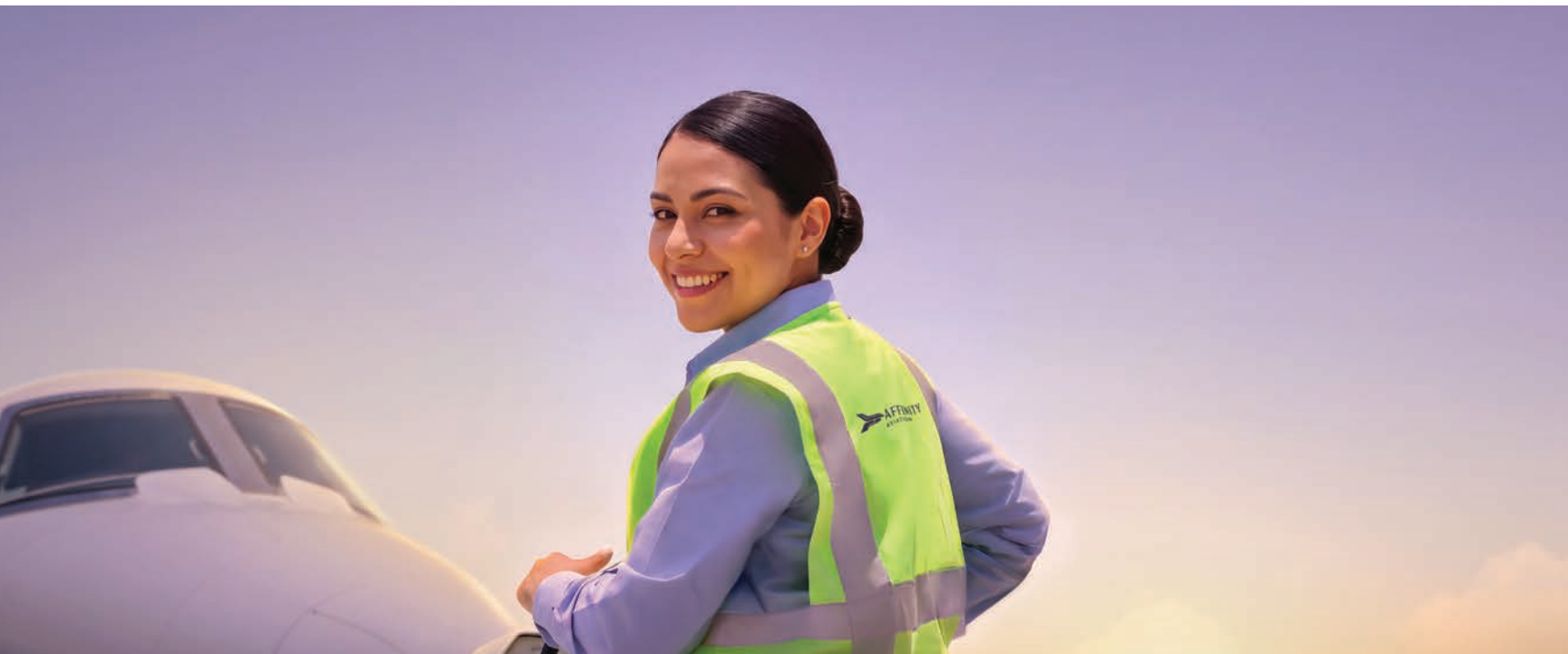
SJ36 Sizzles

On Monday evening, SyberJet unveiled its SJ36 full-scale mockup during a ceremony at Henderson Executive Airport (KHND). The super-light jet, a stretched version of the SJ30-2, is set for certification in 2032.

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Former NASA astronaut Charlie Precourt (left) and NASA administrator Jared Isaacman talk space race and sonic flight at BACE.

NASA shoots for moon, supersonic over land

By Hanneke Weitering

Quiet supersonic flight and a moon race with China took center stage on Tuesday morning at the NBAA-BACE opening session. In a fireside chat with former space shuttle commander Charlie Precourt, NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman said flight testing of the X-59 supersonic noise demonstrator is going better than expected.

Both men are longtime business jet pilots. Isaacman, who has logged more than 8,000 flight hours, set a round-the-world speed record for light jets in a Cessna Citation CJ2 in 2009 and co-founded adversary air training company Draken International. Precourt, a four-time space shuttle astronaut and NBAA board member, has more than 11,000 hours in more than 90 aircraft types, holds type ratings in several Citations, and chairs the Citation Jet Pilots Association's safety committee.

Precourt led the conversation on the Horizon Stage. The session, which NBAA dubbed "The Launch," also featured the presentation of NBAA's Meritorious Service Award to Air Lease founder Steven F. Udvar-Hazy. Stephanie Goetz, a speaker and pilot of The Pink Jet, served as emcee.

Drawing on his experience flying high-performance jets, Isaacman said he runs NASA the way pilots approach a good flight debrief:

plan thoroughly, execute, and then focus on what went wrong. "Anyone who's been in a good flight debrief knows that it's the most confidence-inspiring thing possible to talk through what you got wrong," he said, adding that projecting a "facade of perfection" is "probably one of the most unhealthy things you can do" as an organization.

"The test data so far is extremely encouraging," Isaacman said of the X-59, the centerpiece of NASA's Quesst mission to enable commercial supersonic flight over land. "We are doing a lot better than we thought we would so far."

Meanwhile, the FAA in June proposed replacing its 1973 ban on civil supersonic flight over land with a noise limit. Under this proposal, operators could fly supersonically over the U.S. without special authorization as long as sonic boom overpressure at the surface stays at or below 0.11 pounds per square foot.

Initial operations would rely on a Mach cut-off in which speed, altitude, and atmospheric conditions refract the boom upward before it reaches the ground. The FAA aims to finalize the rule, along with separate takeoff and landing noise standards, by mid-2027.

Isaacman tied the X-59 program's recent momentum to NASA's push to rebuild in-house expertise. "We had no flight-test capabilities at all at NASA earlier this year. It

was all entirely outsourced," he said. When he was confirmed as NASA administrator, he added, the X-59 had flown only once before sitting in maintenance for five months.

NASA's own test pilots have nonetheless flown the X-59 from the start. Nils Larson piloted its first flight on Oct. 28, 2025, and Jim "Clue" Less flew its first supersonic flight in June.

In late September, the X-59 flew a record six times in one week and reached a top speed of Mach 1.53, according to NASA. It has since reached its 50-hour maintenance checkpoint, Isaacman said, and NASA plans to bring the aircraft to its Max Power Air and Space Expo at Kennedy Space Center in Florida on November 7 and 8.

Looking beyond the X-59, Isaacman said he expects "a very healthy X-plane portfolio to emerge in the years ahead." Taxpayer-funded aeronautics research should target radical airframe and propulsion designs at very low technology readiness levels, not work companies would fund anyway, he said.

A Close Race to the Moon

Isaacman warned that the U.S. and China could land astronauts on the moon within months of each other. "This one's going to be close," he said. China aims to put astronauts on the lunar surface before 2030, while NASA is targeting 2028, before President Donald Trump's term ends.

Before astronauts land on the moon, the two countries are already racing to claim the best sites for a moon base at the lunar south pole, where there are water ice and crater ridges that get near-constant sunlight, Isaacman explained. "There's only so many good parking spots there," he said, adding that a few robotic landers and rovers could "quite literally deny access" to rivals.

Isaacman described the moon as the place to perfect habitats, surface power, communications, and spacesuits before attempting the six- to nine-month journey to Mars.

Isaacman said the U.S. must win this second space race as it did the first, then hold itself to the same candid review pilots expect after every flight. China sent its first astronaut into orbit in 2003 and could now beat the U.S. back to the moon, he noted. "We got to have that real fighter debrief on how we wound up in the situation where we could ever have allowed it to be that close."



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EASA nod for Honda upgrade program

By Matt Thurber

The Honda Aircraft APMG S upgrade program is now available to owners of HondaJets registered in the European Union, following validation of the program by EASA. Authorized Honda and Honda Aircraft's Greensboro, North Carolina service centers can install the update.

Honda Aircraft has consistently offered upgrades that were designed for new HondaJet models to owners of older variants of the light jet. "We are trying to have more points of satisfaction to our customers," said Honda Aircraft president and CEO Hideto Yamasaki.

Not all buyers interested in a HondaJet can afford a new one, he explained, but they may find a preowned and upgraded HondaJet an



MARIANO ROSALES

The APMG S upgrade lets HondaJet owners upgrade for half the cost of a new aircraft, and includes Honda Aircraft's Advanced Steering Augmentation System.

attractive option at roughly half the price of the latest HondaJet Elite S. "That is perfectly suitable with the current APMG S version," he said. "Most of the [new] technologies are there, so we are trying to get those to the customer."

At the same time that a classic HondaJet might be in the service center for the APMG upgrade, other work such as interior refurbishment can take place. "[This gives] the customer the feeling that he has bought a new jet with that kind of pricing point," Yamasaki said.

The APMG S upgrade includes Honda Aircraft's Advanced Steering Augmentation System, which improves ground handling in crosswinds, a 300-pound mtow increase, and graphical weight and balance functionality on the twinjet's Garmin G3000 avionics.

"At Honda Aircraft, we are deeply committed to continuously enhancing value by bringing

customers across Europe and to continue supporting the success of the global HondaJet community."

Meanwhile, progress continues on Honda Aircraft's next airplane, the Echelon, which promises midsize jet comfort and performance but in a light jet. Competitors are pursuing this new market niche, such as SyberJet with the SJ36 and Otto Aerospace's Phantom 3500.

"I think that is proof that the market is there," Yamasaki said. "There is a demand for that [type of] aircraft. What we are focusing on is making sure that we deliver on the numbers we provided before, and we are keeping track...so I think it's given us the confidence that we'll be able to offer what we promised to the market."

The first Echelon wing has been completed, and assembly of the first airplane is expected next year, with first flight in 2028 and service entry in 2031. Projected four-passenger range is 2,625 nm, with 450-knot cruise speed, maximum altitude of FL470, and seating for up to 11 occupants. Engines are Williams International FJ44-4C turboprops, and avionics will be a Garmin suite.

Potential customers have signed more than 530 letters of intent for the Echelon. ■

meaningful innovation to customers throughout their ownership journey," said senior v-p and chief commercial officer Amod Kelkar. "We are pleased to make these enhancements available to more



BARRY AMBROSE

Good things come in threes, even at BACE

A trio of well-known industry names has combined to develop a futuristic bit of cabin technology. Yesterday at NBAA-BACE, Lufthansa Technik (LHT), F-List, and Pilatus Aircraft unveiled the nice Intelligent Cabin Electronic divider demonstrator. The device features a 14.5-inch OLED touch display integrated directly into the cabin divider frame. At the touch of a finger, the screen's customizable digital content appears right out of the surface. The screen can mirror an attached cell phone, provide cabin controls, or a moving map among other displays. LHT v-p of original equipment and special aircraft services Andrew Muirhead (second from left) noted the unit could be flight-ready within two years. It will be initially presented as an option on the Pilatus PC-24, with other applications to follow.



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Grand Junction hangar expansion

West Star Aviation: Enhancing Customer Experience in a Data-Driven World

In today's business aviation environment, success takes more than technology. It requires the right combination of data, execution, and personal connection. It takes the right tooling, facilities, and systems to execute at an elevated level. But just as importantly, it takes the kind of human interaction customers continue to value and expect. At West Star Aviation, that balance is essential. Technology and data help drive smarter decisions, but they will never replace the relationships at the heart of the business.

That philosophy guides how West Star continues to invest in the future. From expanded hangar capacity and upgraded customer spaces to improved software platforms and dedicated Customer Experience Representatives, the company is making meaningful investments with one goal in mind: delivering the best possible experience for every customer.

That commitment starts with listening. Aircraft owners and operators want responsive service, clear communication, dependable turnaround times, and confidence that their aircraft is in expert hands. West Star's response has been to improve not only its maintenance capabilities, but every touchpoint surrounding the service experience.

BUILDING MORE CAPACITY

So turnaround timelines stay on track

A major part of West Star's customer-experience investment is physical expansion. More capacity reduces constraints, improves access, and creates the operational efficiency customers need in an environment where downtime matters.

In Grand Junction, additional hangar space is under construction to support growing demand. Scheduled to open mid-October 2026, the new facility adds 40,000 square feet of hangar space, 40,000 square feet of back shop, and 32,000 square feet of new ramp space.

In Chattanooga, West Star is also expanding with a new facility scheduled to open February 2027, bringing 40,000 square feet of hangar space, 15,000 square feet of back shop, and 30,000 square feet of two-story office and customer office space.

These investments are about more than square footage. They are about reducing bottlenecks, increasing access to maintenance and repair capacity, and improving the predictability customers rely on when planning aircraft downtime.



Patricia Spann, Customer Experience Coordinator

“Data helps drive the future but people define the experience.”



Newly remodeled customer office space

BEYOND THE HANGAR

Designing the customer experience

West Star recognizes that the customer experience goes far beyond the hangar floor. That is why the company has focused on reimagining customer office spaces across its facilities, creating a more comfortable, functional, and welcoming environment for customers spending time on-site while their aircraft is in maintenance.

The goal is simple: provide a space that feels less transactional and more supportive. Updated offices are designed to be cozy, productive, and accommodating, giving customers places to work, hold meetings, recharge, or simply feel at ease. From reliable connectivity and quiet workspace to everyday conveniences, the updated spaces reflect a deeper understanding of how customers use these facilities and what helps them feel confident and comfortable during a maintenance event.

STRENGTHENING THE DIGITAL WORKFLOW

Keeping aircraft closer to “return to service”

Better maintenance execution starts with better planning and coordination. West Star is launching a new digital production control system designed to help get aircraft back in service faster and more efficiently, while maintaining the highest standards of safety and quality.

By replacing paper-based processes with real-time digital workflows, teams gain greater visibility and can make faster, more informed adjustments as work progresses. For customers, that means improved communication, greater schedule confidence, and less downtime.

Digital work cards, live progress tracking, automated documentation, and mobile access will help keep projects moving and aircraft closer to return to service. West Star will begin testing the system this November, with plans to expand it across the network in 2027.

KEEPING PEOPLE AT THE CENTER

As important as technology has become, West Star knows it can never replace human connection. Business aviation is relationship driven. Customers want more than updates on a screen. They want someone who understands their concerns, knows their aircraft, and can help guide them through the maintenance experience. That is why West Star has added Customer Experience Representatives in East Alton, Grand Junction, Perryville, and Chattanooga.

These team members provide a concierge-style level of support throughout the customer’s visit, from ensuring they have what they need on-site to helping them understand the scope of work, coordinating with operations, and finding answers when questions arise.

For CEO Stephen Maiden, relationships with our customers and our people are at the heart of everything we do. That is especially important in aircraft maintenance, where customers need to understand what is happening with their aircraft, have confidence in the maintenance process, and know their concerns are being heard. Our investments in the customer experience are a direct result of listening to them and understanding where we can communicate more clearly, provide greater visibility, and make the maintenance experience easier to navigate.

Some customer relationships have been built over decades, while others are just beginning. No matter how long we have known each other, trust is earned by listening, communicating clearly, being responsive, and taking care of customers in the moments that matter.

PROGRESS BUILT ON TRUST

As West Star evolves, one thing remains constant: customers want a partner they can trust. They want efficient processes and digital convenience, but they also want a real person to call and expert technicians they trust with their aircraft.

For nearly 80 years, West Star has been built on relationships, trust, and taking care of customers when it matters most. As we invest in what comes next, that will never change.

AIN ROUNDTABLE



Ben Mohr



Jiri Marousek



Serge Christiaans



Richard Boll

Preparing for potential navigation spoofing and jamming challenges

By Kerry Lynch

GPS spoofing and jamming—and more broadly, interference with global navigation satellite systems (GNSS)—remain a security and safety concern for operators worldwide. While technology companies are looking at a range of solutions in the flight deck, regulators and industry experts are looking at operational guidance to arm pilots for these encounters. **AIN** convened a panel of experts to discuss the problems that continue to plague operators and fixes on the horizon. *Honeywell Aerospace sponsored this roundtable.*

The Participants

BEN MOHR—Offering Director for Alternative Navigation Products for Honeywell Aerospace

JIRI MAROUSEK—President and CEO of AirTera

SERGE CHRISTIAANS—Aviation Cyber-hybrid Defense Specialist for Dyami Security

RICHARD BOLL—Chair of the NBAA Domestic Operations Committee's Airspace, Air Traffic, and Flight Technologies Subcommittee and Retired Corporate Pilot

The Discussion

On Explaining GNSS Jamming and Spoofing

BEN MOHR ► We talk mostly about GPS, but these threats certainly apply to other GNSS [global navigation satellite systems] signals as well. Jamming is a deliberate attack against GPS. It overpowers the signal with a lot of noise and essentially denies operation of a GPS receiver.

Spoofing is a little bit different. It's a more sophisticated attack, where someone actually fakes a GPS signal and transmits it, and that can provide misleading information. It's in some ways more dangerous than jamming because you don't necessarily know that you have a problem. From the receiver's point of view, you're receiving a signal, you know where you are, except that it's misleading information.

On the Extent of the Problem

SERGE CHRISTIAANS ► [I've encountered GPS jamming and spoofing] quite often, actually, especially flying in the eastern part of Europe or flying through Europe diagonally from left to

right. We have quite a few areas where there's jamming and spoofing in a combination. A spoof normally starts with a jam, especially with the L2 band, and then it ends up as a spoof.

RICHARD BOLL ► Fortunately, in the United States, where most of my flying has been, we have not experienced the GPS spoofing events that Serge is mentioning. But we are experiencing more GPS jamming events. These are not so much nefarious events, but accidental events. And yes, I have experienced GPS jamming.

JIRI (YIRKA) MAROUSEK ► Whether getting worse or better, it really doesn't matter, I think, as long as we address the right problem. In my head, we're just trying to make it boring. We're not going to make it go away. There will be jamming, intentional or unintentional. If it's domestic [U.S.], a lot of it is predictable, and it can actually be briefed for the air op. It doesn't have to be nefarious. There are clearly nefarious issues that need to be addressed with procedures and new tech, probably both. But, especially domestically, we can just brief it. A lot of times the data exists, and it's just not used.

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On International Handling

SERGE CHRISTIAANS ▶ ICAO [the International Civil Aviation Organization] is supposed to be leading in this. But I see them lagging, as any large organization does that creates regulation. They don't really understand yet how complicated this is.

I still remember the initial GPS jamming on the Iraq-Iran border in September 2023. Nobody had any clue what was happening. Well, we figured it out, and we have procedures now, but we don't have alternatives yet. I'm happy Ben is working on some great alternatives for that.

But now we also have military threat actors who work in the cyber domain who are knowingly and willingly creating chaos. That is something aviation cannot handle yet. The risk formula that we're using at the moment does not cover that. It covers only things that have happened before.

On Technologies in the Works

BEN MOHR ▶ Honeywell Aerospace has been working on technologies to address these types of issues for 10 years, at least. We have a number of different technologies, both inertially based and then other sensors.

We have the capability now to detect adverse GPS conditions with some of our products and allow the user to just use an inertial-only solution, for example, that can address the problem. Obviously, you don't have the accuracy you would with the GPS-aided solution.

Longer-term, we have things like using alternative sources of information. We have

a vision navigation system, for example, that compares a camera image to a map and can figure out where you are based on that, replacing the GPS input into the navigation system. Similarly, we can use radar systems and other types of sensors to help solve that problem.

The adoption there will be probably first on the defense side. But longer-term, I think those things will make their way into the commercial side.

On Obtaining Information Surrounding Jamming and Spoofing Incidents

JIRI MAROUSEK ▶ That's where FRATs [flight risk assessment tools] come in—where running the right FRAT up front makes the most sense, whether a safety management system or whatever flight risk assessment tool the operator uses. It should be a point of parity that they all ingest that information and present it to the pilot in a high-priority format.

RICHARD BOLL ▶ The FAA is working on something called a Navigation Operational and Planning Agility Suite, or NOPAS. It's a tool that's being developed by Mitre. It's going to give the FAA Command Center the ability in real time to track unplanned GPS interference events and [other] inadvertent unplanned events where we have GNSS interference.

There are also plans to make a front-facing tool, web-based, that will allow pilots, like we have the TFR maps here today, in real time, to pull up areas where GNSS interference may be occurring.

SERGE CHRISTIAANS ▶ Notams don't work for pilots. Often you have 20 pages, 30 pages—it's just a line of frequencies, a line of coordinates. Notams are a compliance thing. It's not an operational thing. It's not going to work when there's multiple areas that are jamming or spoofing sensitive. Quite often, it is not being spoofed intentionally, but somebody is trying to protect their critical infrastructure against drones. So, we are collateral damage.

But we can find out. A Swiss university, the Zurich University of Applied Sciences, built a GPS-wise website that I use every day before every briefing, before every flight, to look where actual jamming and spoofing is going on.

On Vision-based Technology

BEN MOHR ▶ There are several different ways to do it, but the one that Honeywell Aerospace focuses on has a downward-looking camera. You compare what that camera sees to a database of satellite imagery. You can use that to figure out where you are. That's typically accurate to around 10 meters, although it can be a little bit better at lower altitudes.

The challenge with vision-based nav is it doesn't work over the ocean. It doesn't work in thick clouds. You're not going to find one single solution. There's no silver bullet here. It's going to be a combination of different sensors that you have to combine to meet the particular needs of your application. Vision can combine with one of the radio-based approaches, like we talked about Iridium earlier.

We're also looking into magnetic anomaly navigation. This looks at local variations in the Earth's magnetic field. It's not as accurate as vision nav, but it works over oceans; it works through clouds. There are complementary technologies like that that you could combine to produce a full solution.

RICHARD BOLL ▶ At least domestically—now, we can't cover the world—we're looking at alternate position, navigation, and timing solutions. We've instituted the VOR MON [Minimum Operational Network] program to provide the backup VOR in case GPS goes down. We've also taken action to increase the DMEs [distance measuring equipment]. We're not there yet, but we're looking to get en-route coverage down to 5,000 feet agl, and



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terminal coverage at the core of 30 airports down to 1,500 feet. What we are looking at down the road is, can we bring that even lower? Can we do RNP approaches down to RNP 0.3 accuracy?

On Training and Preparation

RICHARD BOLL ▶ I don't think we've emphasized [GNSS threats] enough in our training. We've been emphasizing GPS, at least in the United States. Serge flies in an environment where we have nefarious and protective GPS jamming and spoofing. In the United States, we have basically military-planned GPS jamming events, and they are fairly coordinated.

But the other issue is when we get GPS jamming events that we cannot trace. For about three hours in 2022 in the Denver area, we had a GPS jamming event that we couldn't figure out. It happened the day after we rolled out the big 5G radar altimeter interference deal. Everybody thought that was tied to that. It wasn't until the Denver Metro found out that their wheel brake monitoring system wasn't reporting on the rail cars that we [realized] the only input [for that] was GPS. We figured: "Hey, this is GPS interference."

A month later, for about 48 hours, we had intermittent, widespread GPS jamming in Dallas. We don't really have a real explanation of what caused that. We have no way to communicate that information to pilots through notams, other than the ARTCC.

JIRI MAROUSEK ▶ We touched on the first line of defense, better procedures and training with the information we have. The information we have is not used as well as it should. It's not briefed as well as it should, and it's just not brought into the cockpit in a way that's actionable for the pilot. That will address a lot of the at least non-nefarious issues.

When it comes to nefarious issues, then we shouldn't rely on a single source of data. When it comes to GPS, there's longer-range hardware that Ben and teams like his are going to have to deliver. But what's in the cockpit now?

There are companies like Cyviation and others that are doing the in-flight cybersecurity on top of monitoring for soundness of

signals. Software is going to be ahead of hardware because certification and retrofitting are not cheap and take time.

On Pilot Advice

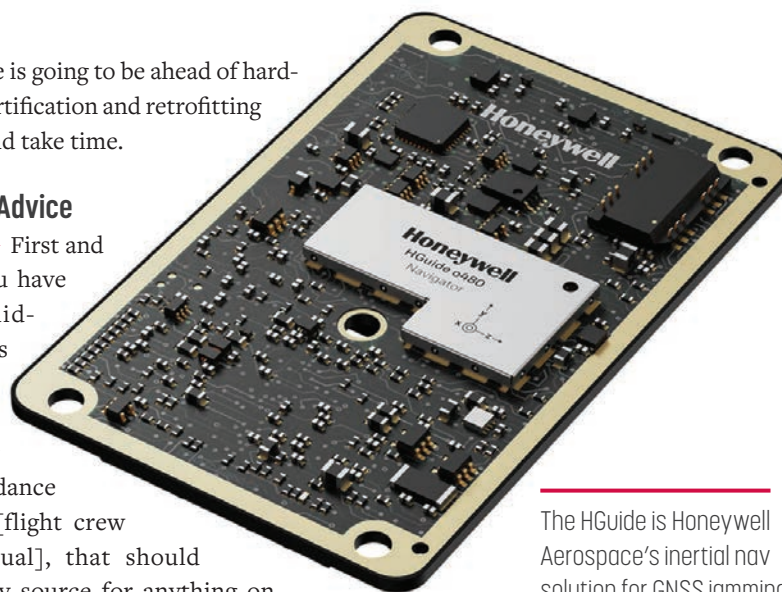
RICHARD BOLL ▶ First and foremost, if you have any OEM guidance, such as aircraft flight manual supplements, or operational guidance in the FCOM [flight crew operating manual], that should be your primary source for anything on GNSS interference.

The FAA just published its GNSS interference guide. This guide will help you develop the SOPs [standard operating procedures] or develop the background information on the differences between GPS jamming or spoofing. We would like operators to download this. It's on the [FAA] Flight Standards website: FAA GPS Interference Guide. We're working with the FAA to keep that updated.

JIRI MAROUSEK ▶ This needs to be part of the nomenclature of primary training. [Also], you can turn on your EFB as a layer. Many providers present information to crews. And this has to be part of the nomenclature, part of the product design, and part of how we present the information. It has to be normalized just like weather.

RICHARD BOLL ▶ It's also important that we, as pilots, prepare ourselves for operating in a non-GPS environment. For a lot of airplanes, like what Serge flies, you can revert to an IRU [inertial reference unit].

But there are a lot of airplanes out there [that] if GPS goes away, your RNAV system is gone. They don't have a DME/DME backup. I'm seeing way too many pilots starting to disregard VOR navigation. They think, "I don't need to have to fly a VOR approach. I don't need to know how to do a conventional ILS to a missed approach because I've always got the missed approach in the FMS." When was the last time you went to a 141 or 142 school, or



The HGuide is Honeywell Aerospace's inertial nav solution for GNSS jamming.

training center, flew an ILS approach with a conventional missed [approach]?

SERGE CHRISTIAANS ▶ I agree. It's skills that we lost because we rely on the cheap and accurate GNSS.

It's about training and keeping your skills up. We have airports in Finland in remote areas that only have RNP approaches or LNAV approaches. Once the Russians start jamming because they have a 1,300-km border with these guys, you have to close the airport. There are no alternatives. Communities are being shut off, isolated.

On Future Technologies

BEN MOHR ▶ [In the future, we have] vision, magnetic anomaly, [and] low-Earth-orbit satellites. Celestial is another one on the horizon, using stars [for position information]. You can now also use satellites, space debris, anything that reflects enough light to see with your telescope. It can give you increased accuracy. So that's an area of work for us.

There are others as well. You can model the vehicle dynamics, use that as a constraint on your inertial [solution]. That's probably for lower-end platforms, not so much for crewed aircraft.

But there are many different techniques, radar-based techniques. Like I said before, I don't think there's really any one silver bullet. I think what you're going to see is a hybrid system that combines multiple sources. ■

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Here in Las Vegas, Blade has a helicopter shuttle to/from the static display for as low as \$195/pp.

MARIANO ROSALES



Blade slices time for trip to static display

By Hanneke Weitering

Blade is again flying NBAA-BACE attendees by helicopter between the Las Vegas Convention Center and the Aircraft Connection static display at Henderson Executive Airport (KHND). Meanwhile, parent company Joby Aviation is using the show to promote the electric air taxis it plans to add to Blade's network.

Rides on the shuttle cost \$195 for NBAA members and \$245 for nonmembers this week

during the show. Those prices are unchanged from last year, when Blade returned to the BACE under Joby ownership. NBAA said the service has sold out in previous years.

"Our service between the Las Vegas Convention Center and Henderson Airport highlights the value of vertical transportation by providing attendees with a fast, reliable alternative to ground congestion," said Blade founder and CEO Rob Wiesenthal. "NBAA attendees will not only enjoy Blade's urban

air mobility services today using conventional rotorcraft but will also see the quiet and emission-free future with Joby's display at the NBAA Aircraft Connection," he added, referring to the show's renamed static display.

Representatives from Joby are available at Blade's check-in area to discuss its plans to run electric air taxis on Blade routes. The Santa Cruz, California-based company also has a booth on the convention floor.

Joby bought New York-based Blade's passenger business in August 2025, and Blade now accounts for nearly all of Joby's revenue: \$36.2 million of the \$38.6 million it reported for the second quarter. Joby cited Blade's performance when it raised its full-year 2026 revenue forecast to between \$115 million and \$125 million.

Blade's pitch to business travelers extends beyond helicopter shuttles. On November 19, Blade will restart BladeOne, a seasonal service that sells individual seats on jet flights linking Westchester County Airport (KHPN) near New York City with Florida's Miami-Opa Locka Executive (KOPF) and West Palm Beach President Donald J. Trump International (KDJT) airports.

USAC Airways 695, a subsidiary of Los Angeles-based semiprivate jet operator Aero, will fly the service through May 2, 2027, using a regional airliner refitted with 16 seats. Wiesenthal describes BladeOne as filling the gap between a \$1,000 first-class ticket and \$25,000 private jet charter. ■

North Shore FBO marks NBAA show debut

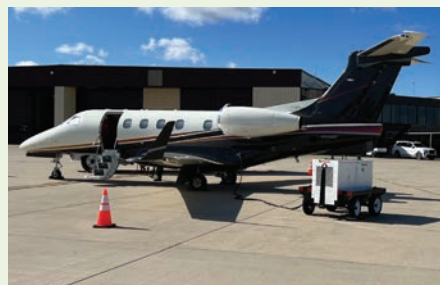
Among the FBOs appearing in the Avfuel lineup this year at NBAA-BACE is North Shore Jet Center, the lone FBO at Chicago-area Waukegan National Airport (KUGN) that is making its NBAA show debut.

Signature Aviation had operated the facility for a decade, but the Waukegan Port District, which manages KUGN, decided to bring the facility under airport control at the end of Signature's lease. North Shore began operations at the beginning of this month.

"Opening North Shore Jet Center was the result of months of work by a team that cares

deeply about aviation," said general manager Steve Bowlin. "I'm proud of the care they put into preparing this operation and the way they're bringing our commitment to safety and service to life at Waukegan."

The port district plans to invest in facility enhancements, including remodeling the existing 1970s-vintage two-story 9,000-sq-ft FBO terminal—which has a passenger lounge with fireplace and refreshment bar, pilot lounge with snooze room, conference room, and flight planning area/business center—within the next year.



North Shore Jet is the lone FBO at KUGN.

It will also add U.S. Customs assistance and ramp-side vehicle access with enhanced features such as expanded concierge services. A new \$5 million terminal is planned for 2031 to support the continued growth of the airport. **C.E.**

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Kodiak 900 migrates to Swiss Alps

By Kerry Lynch

Daher Aircraft has handed over the first Kodiak 900 to a customer in Europe, the company announced on Monday at NBAA-BACE. Roland and Claudia Primus of Switzerland took delivery of the turboprop single at the Daher manufacturing plant in Sandpoint, Idaho, where the aircraft and its Kodiak 100 Series III sibling are manufactured and assembled.

The French-headquartered airframer introduced the Kodiak 900—a larger, faster version of the original Kodiak 100—in 2022 with U.S. certification in hand. EASA approval followed in 2023, followed by Brazilian ANAC validation in 2025.

Powered by a 900-shp Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-140A turboprop engine, the Kodiak 900 has a maximum cruise speed of 210 ktas and incorporates refinements including landing-gear wheel fairings and optimized airflow through the ducts, inlets, and air intakes to reduce drag and increase speed.

The 10-seat utility aircraft also incorporates a 3.9-foot fuselage extension from the Kodiak 100, increasing cabin volume by more than 20%, to 309 cubic feet.

With the latest delivery to the Primus family, Daher has delivered 35 Kodiak 900s to operators ranging from private and business owners to multimission users in public safety, law enforcement, and wildfire suppression, among others.

Transitioning from a Cessna 182 to the Kodiak, the Primuses will use their turboprop single for flying to small airfields, with plans to mountain bike in the Alps and Pyrenees, surf and wing foil on the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, and trek and explore northern Europe, as well as ski tour along Greenland's west coast. They plan to base the aircraft at Bad Ragaz Aerodrome (LSZE) in Switzerland,



The TBM 980 and Kodiak 900 (in background) are on display this week at NBAA-BACE.

MARIANO ROSALES

which has a 495-meter (1,624-foot) runway.

“After reviewing the various product solutions, the Kodiak 900 was a perfect fit for us,” Roland Primus said. “We wanted to transition to a turbine-powered aircraft, and the Kodiak 900 ‘ticked the boxes’ on speed and performance, along with the ability to operate on grass and gravel strips. Its short takeoff and landing capabilities—as well as its stable handling qualities at near-stall speeds—also are important for our mission profile.”

The Kodiak 900 has a high-wing configuration for improved visibility, Daher noted, and added that the aircraft’s extended cabin provides room for mountain bikes, windsurfing

equipment, and the gear needed for expeditions in Northern Europe.

Daher, which acquired the Kodiak line from Quest Aircraft in 2019, has seen the program accelerate since it was added to the product line, complementing its TBM high-speed single turboprop family, said Daher Aircraft CEO Nicolas Chabbert. In all, 375 Kodiak 100s have been delivered. He also said he believed the Kodiak 900 deliveries would push past 40 by year-end.

Meanwhile, Daher Aircraft has expanded on its system integration capabilities for multimission Kodiak applications as that business continues to grow. ■

Signature Aviation elevates Tailwins rewards

Signature Aviation rolled out an enhanced value version of its Tailwins by Signature crew rewards program this week at NBAA-BACE.

According to the FBO mega-chain, the revamped free program offers more ways to earn points, new redemption options, and a tiered structure that promotes customer engagement across its global network.

Under the new schedule, available exclusively to eligible U.S.-based pilots, members can earn up to four times the points on jet-A purchases and up to five times on sustainable aviation fuel through qualifying activities, including making reservations directly through the company’s website.

As part of the new rollout, Tailwins will offer three membership tiers—Aviator, Ace, and Legend—unlocked through interaction with the service provider.

Signature Vision, a refreshed online portal, will provide an overview of member status, as well as tier progression and status benefits. Existing Tailwins members will automatically transition into the updated program with their current points balance intact, while new members can enroll online and begin earning immediately.

“Pilots are a key focus of the Signature experience, and we want to make choosing Signature more rewarding than ever,” said Signature COO Derek DeCross. **C.E.**

The Pilatus logo, featuring the word "PILATUS" in a bold, sans-serif font, flanked by stylized wing-like symbols on both sides.

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Viasat has enhanced its JetXP airborne connectivity product line for bizav to allow for tier selection.

Viasat connectivity now gives three tier options

By Matt Thurber

Satellite communications provider Viasat has enhanced its JetXP business aviation airborne connectivity product line to make it easier for customers to choose the right service level. The simplified service plans—effective Jan. 1, 2027—include suggested retail pricing for the first time.

Part of the impetus for the revamped plans is Viasat's addition of two satellites in geostationary orbit (GEO), ViaSat-3 F2 over the Americas and F3 over Asia-Pacific, which joined F1 to complete the ViaSat-3 constellation and triple the bandwidth available from this network.

"That brings a tremendous amount of capability and capacity to our ecosystem," said Claudio D'Amico, v-p for OEMs, partners, and fleets for business aviation. "With those satellites, we have a lot more flexibility in terms of how we iterate and design solutions for our customers."

Customer feedback indicated a preference for harmonized service plans, he explained. "The primary feedback was [that] satellite

communications is a very complex technology, but the way you buy it doesn't have to be. It's having the additional capability of the ViaSat-3 satellites, and the flexibility those satellites bring...and a goal to try to make things simpler on how we deliver the service to the customer."

Each ViaSat-3 satellite was designed for 1 terabit per second of capacity and has dynamic beamforming capability. "We can form a beam to a specific aircraft and follow that aircraft throughout the footprint of the satellite," he said. "This enables a consistent experience in areas where you have a lot of demand."

Improved performance centers on North America, the area of highest demand, but the ViaSat-3 satellites also cover the rest of the Americas, the Pacific Ocean, and Asia. ViaSat-3 does not yet cover Western Europe and Africa, where JetXP runs on Viasat's GX network.

In the revamped portfolio, Viasat is offering three global service tiers, from light to medium to unlimited, available for Honeywell JetWave and JetWave X systems and Gogo's Plane Simple Ka satcom.

Viasat has published manufacturer suggested retail prices for all plans using JetWave X

and Plane Simple Ka terminals, starting at less than \$11,000 per month for unlimited global service, with fixed pricing for the term of the service agreement, either one or three years.

"All of these plans have priority in terms of network," D'Amico said, "as well as uncapped speeds, which we've done for some of the other plans that we've had in the past."

Viasat isn't offering regional coverage plans because these wouldn't meet customers' needs for simplicity. "That's our message: simplify the pricing, simplify the experience, and predictable budgets," said Adam Sheppard, Honeywell's general manager, services and connectivity. "It's meant to be simple for the end customer. The price points that Honeywell and Viasat have created are extremely compelling for a global service, so there wasn't a need to complicate it more with regional-based pricing."

While low-Earth-orbit (LEO) satcom is gaining popularity, GEO satcom remains a significant part of the market. One way this is evident is the number of customers opting for dual-orbit satcom, installing both a LEO and a GEO system on the same airplane. This can prevent coverage outages if one system has a problem and also helps in regions where LEO satcom is prohibited but GEO is allowed, such as China, or where LEO is being jammed.

"Honeywell's original projection for customers in the business aviation market for taking two systems was around 10% to 15%," Sheppard said. "We're seeing that number closer to 40% to 50%, and it's significantly higher than we anticipated."

JetWave X also has built-in redundancy because it runs on both the ViaSat-3 network and the former Inmarsat GX network, which Viasat now owns. "We're a single system that has redundancy built into it, which is great for customers," he said. JetWave X's software also lets it work alongside competing satcom systems, according to Sheppard. "We will make sure that you have a connection the entire time, no matter what network you're on."

D'Amico is urging JetXP customers to upgrade to the latest software version to take advantage of the added capacity over North America. "It's a significant amount of capacity that we're bringing to that customer base," he said. ■



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CAA lands Jet Av MRO discounts in Europe

By Curt Epstein

The Corporate Aircraft Association (CAA), known for its program that provides fuel pricing discounts to its Part 91 aircraft operator members, has inked an agreement with Jet Aviation for CAA member-exclusive maintenance discounts at the FBO/MRO provider's Europe, Middle East, and Asia facilities.

Jet Aviation aircraft services include scheduled maintenance, drop-in line maintenance, pre- and post-flight inspections, worldwide AOG support, and aircraft inspections via AI drone. The discounts apply to Jet Aviation's facilities in Basel and Geneva, Switzerland; Vienna, Austria; Dubai; and Singapore.

"Across our global network, we are committed to working with our partners to offer customers a seamless aircraft operational experience," said David Best, Jet Aviation's senior v-p of regional operations and general manager for the Americas. "We are happy to continue to grow our partnership with CAA, and work together to support CAA members across their business aviation needs in the U.S. and beyond."

Jennifer Zecchino, CAA's director of marketing, expects the agreement to eventually expand to include Jet Aviation's U.S. service hubs as well.

"It offers more value to our members, and what we want to get is that value in this industry; that we're working harder for them on the fuel side, on the maintenance side," she told *AIN*. "So not only are you getting a fuel discount and saving at the FBOs, but you're also getting discounts with our preferred partners as well."

She noted that the association, which was founded three decades ago, now lists more



The Corporate Aircraft Association has signed a deal that will grant members with discounts at Jet Aviation service hubs in Europe.

than 13,500 members, accounting for approximately 70% of the Part 91 market. It has agreements with approximately 320 FBOs in the U.S. (including Hawaii), the Caribbean, and Europe who have agreed to provide CAA's members with discounts of at least 10 cents per gallon.

Zecchino added that some FBOs have found that being a CAA-preferred provider has boosted traffic, and as a result are offering even larger discounts to attract more aircraft.

The association charges \$500 a year per tail number for membership, but as Zecchino pointed out, on a larger aircraft, that cost could be recouped in just one or two fuel stops.

"All we require is that you're Part 91," she explained. "Just provide the documentation that you are, and for the first 90 days, you can try CAA out for free. See the fuel pricing, see your savings, and if there's value to your flight department, try before you buy."

An interactive jet fuel application is available as well to help members with their trip planning. "They can actually put in their flight plan and their entire route along the way, and find those CAA-preferred [locations] for their fuel stops so they get those guaranteed fuel savings," said Zecchino. ■



BARRY AMBROSE

Hands on! StandardAero techs demo PW inspections

StandardAero technicians at the company's BACE booth are assembling, inspecting, and reassembling a P&WC PW535A turbofan during the show. Technical experts are also on hand to discuss inspections and other maintenance and AOG considerations.

Velocity Mx Solutions rounds its first BACE

By Curt Epstein

Among the companies making their NBAA-BACE debut this year is Delaware-based Velocity Maintenance Solutions. The FAA Part 145-certified maintenance, repair, and overhaul provider, which currently occupies a 20,000-sq-ft hangar at Wilmington Airport (KILG), is preparing to move into a larger facility there following a multimillion-dollar renovation.

The MRO will transition to the neighboring 75,000-sq-ft complex, formerly occupied by Dassault Falcon Jet, by the end of the month.

“The expansion of our facilities at KILG represents an important next step in Velocity’s continued growth,” said CEO Bryan Weiss. “Moving from our current 20,000-square-foot hangar

into a 75,000-square-foot facility gives our team substantially more capacity and flexibility to support our customers, expand our scheduled maintenance capabilities, and accommodate larger and more complex projects.”

Velocity offers AOG support, scheduled maintenance, avionics, pre-buy inspections, non-destructive testing, digital dent assessment and mapping, and parts procurement.

With a 40,000-sq-ft hangar at WILG that can accommodate up to a Bombardier Global 6500, the new location will double the company’s hangar footprint, allowing it to support more aircraft, improve workflow and turnaround, and increase the level of service it provides to customers.

As Velocity continues to expand its capabilities

and customer base, the company also expects to grow its workforce over the next 12 to 18 months, adding certified technicians and other aviation professionals in the Wilmington area.

The company also operates a fleet of 14 mobile repair team trucks that provide nationwide coverage, with emphasis on the East Coast. Trucks are based throughout the U.S.

“Our team has considerable experience supporting all principal business aircraft OEMs, including Bombardier, Gulfstream, Dassault Falcon, Textron, and Embraer,” Velocity president Michael Baker added. “We have built our operation around safety, quality, responsiveness, and service excellence.” ■



The Delaware MRO’s KILG refurb is set to double its footprint.



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Airflow AI offers lift for seamless ops planning

By Matt Thurber

Business aircraft operators can sample Jeppesen ForeFlight's new Airflow-powered agents and consolidated capabilities this week at NBAA-BACE 2026. The AI-powered Airflow agents work in the company's Dispatch platform, and updated ForeFlight Mobile features are also available, bringing together safety management, flight tracking, paperless cockpit operations, runway performance, fuel, and aircraft privacy tools.

The move to consolidate these functions is intended to help business aircraft operators simplify operations by using one platform instead of multiple products from different companies.

"Business aviation operators are expected to run like airlines, often with a fraction of the staff," said Jeppesen ForeFlight CEO Brad Surak. "To do that effectively, their tools need to work together. We're bringing the entire operation into one connected ecosystem, from the initial trip request through the final safety report."

The Airflow AI agents, now part of ForeFlight Dispatch, include Trip Feasibility and Ops Briefing. Before an operator launches a mission, Trip Feasibility checks for potential issues such as sanctions, permits, notams, weather, and airport restrictions. The Ops Briefing agent helps ensure a shared operational picture by consolidating notams and current and forecast weather.

Jeppesen ForeFlight has added privacy ICAO address support so eligible operators can file flight plans using an alternate temporary ICAO address. This helps mask ownership information that is usually available via public flight tracking to ensure privacy for the aircraft's owner.

A safety management system (SMS) and flight risk assessment tool (FRAT) are two recent additions to Jeppesen ForeFlight's business aviation tools. The benefit of incorporating the FRAT is that it is tied to a particular flight instead of being a separate form. The operator can configure the risk factors, weighting, and thresholds.

SMS also sits inside the ForeFlight system so that users can report hazards from any device, and it includes a risk register, investigation and corrective action tracking, and reporting to safety leadership. The SMS and FRAT are designed for small- to medium-size Part 91 flight operations.

Jeppesen ForeFlight has added flight-event alerts to Dispatch's tracking, so operators receive notifications of weather events, critical notam-related events, holding-pattern entries, and go-arounds. This eliminates the need to constantly monitor a moving-map tracking system to see if any company aircraft are experiencing one of those events.

Dispatch lets users claim events using an "acknowledge flight events" tool, ensuring everyone knows someone has taken responsibility for the event.

Other improvements include traffic layer filtering to reduce clutter; auto zoom for TV view, which keeps an operations center display framed on active flights; and geofencing, to generate an alert when an aircraft crosses a defined boundary.

Electronic signatures stay attached to a record once the flight crew signs it.

In the active navlog, planned alternates and their filed routes stay available for the whole flight, according to Jeppesen ForeFlight, "so you can divert along the filed route after a missed approach or go direct from wherever you are."

Using the cockpit sharing feature, two pilots can work on the same flight on their own mobile devices in ForeFlight, with changes automatically reflected on both.

Weight-and-balance tools allow crews to apply curtailments during flight and to define "custom curtailment rules that match how their operator actually flies the aircraft."

Enhanced airport diagrams show clearer taxiway, hot spot, and surface detail and are designed to provide better readability on the flight deck.

Mobile clearance delivery will be available from a growing list of airports, allowing pilots to request and receive a clearance on their devices. They can also use mobile clearance to cancel an IFR flight plan once on the ground.

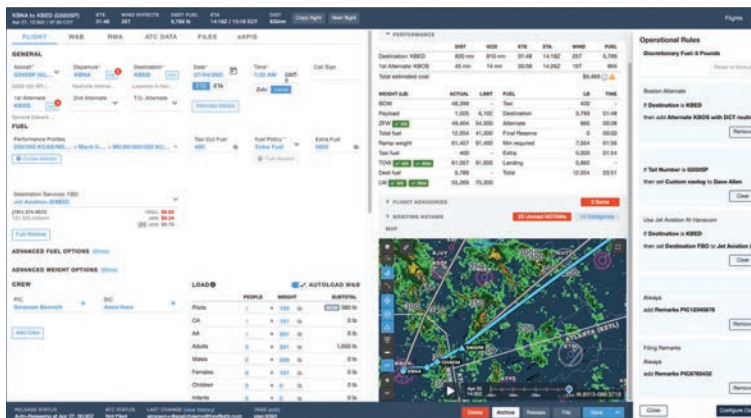
Another useful feature is GPS alerting and cross-check, which "monitors GPS integrity and cross-checks position against independent sources, alerting crews to interference or degradation rather than leaving it to be inferred."

ClearNotams, which Jeppesen ForeFlight introduced in July, presents notams in easy-to-read plain language, but users can always click on a link to see the original notam if concerned about the accuracy of the AI transcription.

ForeFlight Mobile's runway analysis now includes the Hawker 800 and Cessna Citation Ultra. Runway analysis provides alternative one-engine-out flight paths at certain airports, enabling takeoffs at higher weights.

Finally, ForeFlight's fuel feature has added fuel release confirmations, retail pricing comparisons alongside contract pricing, home-base fuel-farm accounting, fuel tankering scenarios for up to 50 legs, and uploading of minimum-to-waive-fees files "for simpler, more effective fueling strategies."

Operators can test drive Airflow-powered agents and capabilities at BACE. The AI agents, part of ForeFlight Dispatch, include trip feasibility checks and ops briefing, which consolidates notams and weather.



Buy one, Gogo free with new Longitude, Latitude

By Matt Thurber

Buyers of Cessna Citation Longitudes and Latitudes set for delivery starting in 2028 can select Gogo Galileo with free installation, according to Textron Aviation, making it “the first original equipment manufacturer to provide such an option for customers.”



Gogo’s Galileo low-Earth-orbit satellite communications system is now available for Textron Aviation’s Cessna Citation Longitude and Latitude. Starting in 2028, buyers can select free installation.

The Gogo Galileo HDX low-Earth-orbit (LEO) satcom system runs on Eutelsat’s OneWeb global LEO satellite network, which provides download speeds of up to 60 Mbps for the HDX system.

Customers who select Gogo Galileo for their Longitudes and Latitudes will pay a guaranteed service rate for three years.

“To stay productive wherever they fly, our customers rely on connectivity, and they’re

looking for solutions that perform reliably around the world,” said Chris Hearne, Textron Aviation’s senior v-p of engineering and programs. “Achieving FAA certification of Gogo Galileo HDX on the Citation Longitude and Latitude is the result of a strong effort across our teams and gives customers another factory-supported connectivity option to keep them connected wherever their missions take them.”



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What, where, fly with NetJet data fed to AI

By Hanneke Weitering

About 20% of JetNet customers now query the company's aircraft, transaction, and flight-activity data through artificial intelligence (AI) assistants, JetNet Group chief data scientist Christoph Kohler said on Monday at NBAA-BACE.

Kohler—who also manages WingX, JetNet Group's flight-tracking arm—said JetNet made its “AI connectors” available to customers with enterprise subscriptions in May. The connectors link JetNet and WingX databases to customers' AI assistants and workplace apps like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and WhatsApp, so users can ask questions in plain language and get answers from that data.

Most early users are aircraft brokers, market analysts, airports, and supply-chain companies, Kohler said. “I'm expecting to see more and more verticals, especially, I would say, after the fuel and FBOs, the OEMs are going to work on this more intensively because there's more cooperative legacy to kind of work through. It's important to realize that this is not an AI solution on its own.”

JetNet supplies the data, and customers choose their own AI tools. A “semantic layer” built on aviation knowledge steers those tools to the right information. Researchers at the company's headquarters in Utica, New York, check the data for accuracy, and engineers ensure every answer can be traced back to its source.

JetNet's aircraft data and WingX's flight-tracking data also power Ramp Monitor,

a JetNet application that tracks aircraft movements on service ramps to estimate each supplier's share of handling, parking, fuel, and maintenance business, with history dating to January 2025. Some of those figures are estimates, according to JetNet.

Ramp Monitor calculates fuel sales from the length of the flights aircraft make after leaving a ramp, and it infers likely maintenance work from how long aircraft sit at known facilities.

Tracking data shows where business aircraft go but not why—a gap that a separate JetNet partnership aims to close. JIQ, JetNet's market intelligence platform, and Seefeld Group, a Montreal-based marketing research and behavioral economics consultancy, launched the UtilizationEx survey this week at NBAA-BACE.

The survey asks operators about mission requirements, aircraft availability, maintenance, training, operating costs, fleet composition, and owner priorities. JIQ will pair their answers with WingX flight-activity data to explain aircraft utilization trends and forecast demand.

“Flight activity data does a tremendous job of telling us what operators were able to fly. But it does not tell us what they were thinking or what influenced their behavior,” said Seefeld Group president Charles Porteous.

Seefeld will lead the research and analysis, working with marketing research firm Ad Hoc Research on survey design and execution. Seefeld plans to collect data in the first quarter of 2027 and deliver results to subscribers in the second quarter. ■

IBAC Core Program will aid small ops with risk mgmt

The International Business Aviation Council's (IBAC) new Core safety program helps small aviation organizations manage risk. Unveiled this week at NBAA-BACE 2026, Core assists small operators, ground handlers, and maintenance and service providers in building a safety management foundation without audits, formal compliance reviews, or strict implementation timelines, IBAC said. It provides practical tools and step-by-step guidance on understanding, managing, and communicating daily risks.

“Building a strong management foundation is at the core of our industry's resilience regardless of the team's size or administrative resources,” said IBAC director general Kurt Edwards. “The Core framework provides small teams with a practical approach to risk at their own pace. Its supportive toolkit is designed to strengthen safety practices and team communication and can evolve with operations as they grow into formal safety systems over time.”

The Core platform includes flexible, team-paced risk flows for small-scale operations, a risk management framework with guidance videos and tailored tools, a non-audit framework that focuses on hazard identification, and rolling deployment through IBAC member associations globally.

In other news this week, IBAC named four more industry partners, increasing that program to 10 organizations and expanding its global reach. Industry partners collaborate with IBAC to support its mission and advocate for global business aviation.

The latest partners are U.S.-based private aviation services company Solairus Aviation; aviation developer Berthaphil Clark Freeport Aviation Properties, based in the Clark Freeport Zone, Philippines; business aviation international procedures training company Scott International Procedures; and Canadian aerospace consultant Crimson Air Services. **K.L.**



JetNet Group chief data scientist Christoph Kohler talked at NBAA-BACE on Monday about tools that link JetNet and WingX databases to customers' AI assistants.



Roland and Max Egon Becker. Max founded Becker Flugfunk in 1956.

Bretzels, beer on tap today at Becker birthday bash

Visitors to the Becker Avionics NBAA-BACE booth this afternoon (1 p.m. to 5 p.m.) can enjoy bretzels (German for pretzels) and beer while they learn about the company's seven decades as a manufacturer of air traffic management equipment and avionics for airliners, business jets and turboprops, light aircraft, and special-mission applications.

In the business and commercial aviation arena, Becker's products range from remote communications and navigation radios to control heads and even ADF receivers for the few areas where non-directional beacons are still operational.

For pilots, Becker's digital voice communication systems are more familiar since the company's units are installed in a variety of helicopters and airplanes. Other products include audio jack boxes and panels, an intercom amplifier and PA system amplifier, a Part 25-qualified ADS-B transponder, and a remote marker beacon receiver.

Becker Flugfunk was founded in 1956 in Baden-Baden, Germany, by Max Egon Becker, an automotive radio expert. The company started manufacturing VHF radios and branched into navigation radios and audio panels, and then other products to serve a variety of customer needs. **M.T.**

Filling the skies: Cirrus expands midwest ops

By Matt Thurber

Cirrus Aircraft completed a multimillion-dollar expansion of its Grand Forks, North Dakota manufacturing facility and opened a warehousing center in Duluth, Minnesota.

The Grand Forks facility, which added 30,000 sq ft, is designed to sustain current and forecast production rates with a streamlined flow of composite parts for manufacturing the company's SR-series high-performance pistons and SF50 Vision Jet.

Its 60,000-sq-ft warehousing center in Duluth adds space for parts storage and processing to support aircraft production, aftermarket services, and innovation. The new warehouse consolidates multiple satellite facilities, improving efficiency for these



The SF50 celebrated its 10th birthday Monday.

activities and supporting the Duluth operation and staff members.

"As our fleet continues to grow around the world, we are investing in the infrastructure and capabilities needed to support our aircraft and owners throughout the ownership experience," said Cirrus CEO Zean Nielsen. **I**

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Gen3 times three logs more than 1,220 test flights

By Hanneke Weitering

Textron Aviation's three Cessna Citation Gen3 light jets are advancing toward FAA certification, having logged more than 1,220 combined flight-test hours, the company said Monday at NBAA-BACE 2026. Textron expects all three twinjets to enter service next year.

Each of the Gen3 models features Garmin Emergency Autoland, which can guide the aircraft to a suitable airport and bring it to a full stop if the pilot becomes incapacitated or another emergency arises. According to Textron, the CJ4 Gen3 will become the first light jet to reach the market with the system.

Nearly 1,100 of the flight-test hours belong to the CJ4 Gen3, which has two test aircraft in the program. Recent testing has covered electrical systems and hot-weather performance for certification. This week, the Wichita-based airframer also announced the rollout of the first production CJ4 Gen3.

As the largest Citation model in the light jet segment, the CJ4 serves owner-operators and corporate flight departments, as well as air ambulance, maritime patrol, search-and-rescue, and aerial survey operations. The Gen3 version gets more capable Garmin G3000 Prime avionics. Textron projects a maximum range of 2,165 nm, 451-ktas top cruise speed, seating for up to 11 occupants, and a 6,930-pound useful load.

Testing on the CJ3 Gen3 has passed 60 hours, with its single test aircraft now



MARIANO ROSALES

The three Cessna Citation Gen3 light jets are making steady progress toward their respective FAA certifications, with Textron Aviation hoping to put all three into service next year.

evaluating landing and braking performance. The cabin features swivel seats, RGB accent lighting, connectivity options, and a lavatory skylight that provide natural lighting. Textron lists a maximum range of 2,040 nm, a maximum payload of 2,135 pounds, seating for up to 10 occupants, and room for 1,000 pounds of baggage.

The M2 Gen3, the smallest of the three Citation models, first flew in June and has logged more than 75 hours. Its program will

soon begin simulated en route Autoland activations, testing the full sequence from airport selection through landing and stopping.

In the cabin, the M2 Gen3 gains ambient lighting, illuminated cupholders, wireless charging for personal devices, USB-A/C ports, and an optional side-facing seat that folds to hold cargo. The airplane will offer a maximum range of 1,550 nm, 1,510-pound maximum payload, seating for up to eight occupants, and up to 725 pounds of baggage capacity. ■



MARIANO ROSALES

Bombardier gets into the game with trading cards

Bombardier is handing out the first set of collectible trading cards at the NBAA-BACE static display. The limited-edition cards come in a three-set box, and they commemorate Bombardier's aviation story, including company milestones and the aircraft it manufactured over the years. During BACE, visitors asking for a box of the trading cards are encouraged to donate at least \$20 to Corporate Angel Network.

MD Onboard navigates medical turbulence

By Matt Thurber

Northwell Health's MD Onboard has launched a pediatric emergency medical advisory service for its passenger gate screening and inflight medical events products. This provides 24/7 access to two-way video with board-certified emergency physicians specializing in pediatric medicine.

Also on tap for the MD Onboard aviation medical platform is a partnership with the Centre for Aviation Psychology (CAP), which provides mental health, resilience, and peer support solutions for aircraft operators.

Children account for 9% to 12% of reported inflight medical emergencies, according to MD Onboard, citing published studies. "Children are not simply smaller adults, particularly in an emergency and especially within the constraints of an aircraft cabin," said MD Onboard CEO Grant Jeffery.

He added, "Introducing dedicated pediatric emergency medicine expertise into the inflight environment represents an important advancement in aviation medical care. By offering this service, we are creating a more precise, specialist-led model, connecting the right clinical expertise, technology, and operational context to every case in real time."

The partnership with CAP allows the two organizations to "offer airlines and business aviation operators a structured, confidential, and aviation-specific support model designed to help crew access the right support earlier, before personal challenges escalate into safety, performance, or fitness-for-duty concerns," according to MD Onboard.

Clients will benefit from MD Onboard's and CAP's provision of confidential peer support,



MD Onboard is now offering pediatric emergency medical advisory services via two-way video conferencing with board-certified pediatric specialists. It has also added peer support for adults in partnership with the Centre for Aviation Psychology.

resilience resources, clinical escalation pathways, and critical incident support. Its anonymized reporting is also aligned with aircraft operators' safety management systems.

"Crew wellbeing is no longer a standalone HR topic," said MD Onboard chief growth officer Wehda El Aridi. "It is a core component

of operational resilience, safety culture, and organizational performance."

The integration with MD Onboard enables "helping operators support their people earlier, more confidentially, and in a way that reflects the operational realities of aviation," according to the company.

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Ramping up for launch, Magnifica is recruiting

By Kerry Lynch

A year after unveiling plans to build an airline that fills a niche between first-class airline and private aviation with a fleet of Airbus A220s and A321neos, Orlando, Florida-based Magnifica Air has kicked off a series of recruitment drives as it takes the next steps toward launching operations. The company introduced its “private class” concept at NBAA-BACE 2025, describing an operation that “combines the privacy, personalization, and ease associated with private flying with the safety, reliability, and operating discipline of scheduled service.”

Charles and Stacey Carey, founders of the Magnifica luxury hospitality brand,

co-founded Magnifica Air with aviation veteran Wade Black and brought on chief development officer Sean McGeough, who has held roles with Airbus Corporate Jets, Nextant, and Hawker Beechcraft. To start operations in 2027, Magnifica Air signed a leasing agreement with Air Lease for four A220-300s and two ACJ321neos, to be configured with 45 to 54 seats and two to four private suites.

Magnifica Air unveiled its first ACJ321neo with livery in February, and that aircraft is now undergoing completions. Its first A220-300 is now in production, the company said.

Meanwhile, Magnifica Air is looking to hire in areas such as flight and ground operations, technical and maintenance support, guest experience, and corporate functions.

These positions are based in Orlando. Magnifica Air is further building a network of pilots, flight attendants, technicians, and customer service professionals interested in future opportunities.

Its recruitment drives kicked off last month with the company’s participation in the Military Influencer Conference Hiring Fair in Tampa, Florida, and continued over this past weekend at RTAG (originally called Rotary to Airline Group) in Orlando. Magnifica Air is also making a hiring push at its booth this week at NBAA-BACE 2026 in Las Vegas.

“When we stood at NBAA last year, private class was a vision for how the journey could work differently. Twelve months later, that vision is becoming tangible,” said Black, Magnifica Air’s CEO. “We have our first undergoing completion, an experienced team around us and partners helping us build every part of the experience. There is still a great deal of work ahead, but it is exciting to see Magnifica Air taking shape.”

Lifting standards: Symmetry Crew Solutions builds crew connections

Symmetry Crew Solutions, founded by two career pilots in 2025, is providing staffing for Gulfstream operations, and are exhibiting for the first time at NBAA-BACE 2026.

With their experience, founders Brett Rundle and Grady Montgomery have gained first-hand perspective on challenges confronting corporate flight departments and are striving to address the issues of inconsistent crew quality, unfamiliarity with advanced avionics, and lack of continuity between missions. To solve this, they are assembling a team of experienced Gulfstream G800, 700, 600, and 500 contract pilots.

The Savannah, Georgia-based firm is focused on building long-term relationships with operators, enabling them to request specific crew members already familiar with their aircraft and operations. Symmetry can tailor support for executive travel, owner-flown operations, flight-department augmentation, delivery and ferry flights, and new aircraft acceptance.



Symmetry is working to foster operator relationships with Gulfstream pilots.

A former NBAA Corporate Aviation Management Committee member, Rundle spent more than 25 years at Gulfstream Aerospace, including more than 20 as chief demonstration pilot. Holding multiple world city-pair speed records, he is a factory master entry-into-service pilot for Gulfstream deliver-

ies (G500/600/700/800) and is type-rated on eight Gulfstream models.

Montgomery has served as a corporate aviator since 1998 and has been a transition-training captain on the G700/800. He is the former chief pilot for Malphrus International and founder of Part 135 charter Airstream Aviation. **K.L.**



NBAA draws students to BACE

By Kerry Lynch

NBAA's Collegiate Connect program returns tomorrow to NBAA-BACE as the association continues its drive to attract new talent into the business aviation workforce. Collegiate Connect provides students the opportunity to learn about different career paths in the industry and meet with industry professionals.

"Collegiate Connect is a meaningful event for any student exploring a career in business aviation," said NBAA manager of professional development Elayna Hall. "This is a wonderful opportunity to engage directly with industry leaders as well as gain perspectives and guidance from professionals in the early stages of their careers. It fosters the development of connections that position a student to stand out as more than just a name on an application."

Free for college students, faculty, and chaperones, the event opens with a welcome from the NBAA leadership team and Xyla Foxlin, a mechatronics engineer, pilot, and content creator who founded the nonprofit Beauty and the Bolt and advocates for women in STEM.

A panel discussion will follow featuring recent graduates who will share how they prepared for the industry while in school. They will provide details on their coursework, clubs, internships, and extracurricular activities. The next panel, "Career Possibilities in Business Aviation: Beyond the Obvious," will explore the various pathways into the industry. Participants include both new and experienced professionals from flight operations, maintenance, and business functions.

Students will then take a networking tour to connect them with professionals in the career category of their choice: airport business, business management, broker/sales, flight/cabin attendant, innovation and technology, maintenance, marketing, pilot, and scheduler/dispatcher.

The day wraps up at the NBAA-BACE Career Zone, where students can connect with the NBAA team, speak with recruiters, and get headshot photos taken—as well as enter to win a \$200 Amazon gift card. ■

Web Manuals launches Compliance Assistant for AI tool

Aviation document management specialist Web Manuals has introduced a Compliance Assistant feature for its Amelia AI platform. The company said the new function will help aircraft operators take account of regulatory updates to its Compliance Libraries platform, as part of wider interface changes giving a clearer view of changes and how they relate to users' manuals.

According to Web Manuals chief product officer Richard Sandström, the reasoning AI-based feature allows users "to have a conversation" with regulatory databases that can span multiple regulatory bodies. "You can ask questions such as what has changed in the rules and which points are substantial," he told *AIN*. "For instance, you could get guidance over where to look for changes, ask to see all the changes

over the past year, or identify something really specific like an oxygen mask requirement."

To help U.S. aircraft operators save time when preparing for FAA assessments, Web Manuals has integrated the agency's Data Collection Tools (DCT) into its Compliance Libraries platform. Users can add DCT questions to their manuals and quickly identify any missing information and prepare supporting evidence before the assessment.

If the Compliance Assistant feature is unsure about the information requested, it will ask follow-up questions to the user. Searches will only be made in regulatory libraries relevant to each operator, and operators can specify variable considerations such as whether commercial or private flight rules apply in any given

situation. The system conducts its own checks on provided answers and flags anything that falls below a set confidence threshold.

As part of built-in safety measures, Amelia AI's functions have deliberately not been fully automated, ensuring human involvement is part of the process. Users can create follow-up tasks to assign to themselves or other colleagues responsible for maintaining operator manuals.

Compliance Assistant works in conjunction with Web Manuals' existing Document Search and Co-Author functions for archiving and editing regulatory records. In June, the Sweden-based company introduced a new XML Editor feature to help users working with data and records in XML format. **C.A.**

Aero Star builds on Embraer legacy

By Kerry Lynch

Beginning his business with a little bit of cash on hand and a credit card with a 0% interest rate, Aero Star Aviation founder and president Christopher Grinnell embarked on his vision of building a maintenance, repair, and overhaul shop specializing in Embraer business jets in a rented hangar at Dallas Executive Airport (KRBD).

Just a little more than a decade later, Grinnell's business has moved to a rapidly expanding footprint at Dallas Love Field (KDAL), encompassing four hangars formerly occupied by companies such as Gulfstream Aerospace and Elliott Aviation that span more than 100,000 sq ft of space. Aero Star employs nearly 100 people, runs four shifts around-the-clock with plans for a fifth, and has a backlog of work from companies such as NetJets, Wheels Up, and a multitude of individual owners. And as Aero Star continues to raise its profile, it is exhibiting for the first time at the 2026 NBAA-BACE.

This was a business largely built by word of mouth, and importantly to Grinnell, through relationships. "What I love about aviation is how it is camaraderie- and relationship-driven. There are not many industries that are like aviation," he said. "And the biggest thing is service."

Grinnell formed Aero Star Aviation in 2014 but didn't begin operations until 2015. "I started a company because I had in mind that I wanted to do it," he told *AIN*. "And then I didn't really get the nerve until a year later to quit my job. I was very nervous about doing it, and then I just woke up one day, and I said, 'I'm 27. If I'm going to do it, now's the time.'"



Aero Star Aviation has built its MRO business with a specialty in Embraer business jets.

He quickly learned about the expense of such a business; Grinnell had about \$23,000 in cash saved up, opened a credit card with an \$18,000 line, and immediately was over-extended on the first client. "We were doing a big inspection, and I didn't want the customer to feel like he was taking a risk on us. So, I never asked for a deposit. I financed it all myself. And then, I even gave him terms," he said, doing all this because he understood, "It's really risky for people to take a chance on people. I didn't want him to have that fear that he was putting his aircraft, a Phenom 300, in the hands of a kid. And I was risking it."

Grinnell had rented a hangar for a month to begin that business, doing the majority of the work himself with a few contractors who had, in turn, extended terms to him. After that first inspection at Redbird, he rented an office at Love Field in a Signature terminal, which was the former Dalfort facility.

Phenom Experience

From there, because he had Embraer experience, he connected with JetSuite, which was operating Embraer Phenoms. And Aero Star became an approved vendor for NetJets, which was building its own fleet of Phenom 300s, as well as a support provider for Airshare.

Grinnell brought a strong background in the Phenom lines. While formerly with West Star Aviation, he was assigned to the first Phenom that was delivered, a 100 that was purchased by Jim and Betsy Frost. As such, he learned support of the still-nascent line while Embraer also gained experience on the very light jet.

It provided Grinnell insight that few had.

Aero Star moved into its current facility in 2023, and then took over a large hangar vacated by Elliott Aviation next door. Eventually, another hangar became available next to that. Grinnell ultimately was able to take over four hangars, and along with it some 60,000 sq ft of office space. Each one has either undergone or is undergoing renovation.

Noting that's more office space than needed, he said one such renovation will involve adding a gym. He stressed the importance of making Aero Star an attractive place to work, especially given the competitive workforce environment in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

To capture institutional knowledge that Aero Star has been building, Grinnell has introduced an AI tool, Ava (Aero Star virtual assistant), which combines all the data it has in its Corridor MRO management software system. Technicians have the ability to access that information as they work on their projects.

As for capabilities, they continue to grow. Grinnell is also adding service for the Cessna Citation Latitude, finding that a natural progression for some Phenom owners. Aero Star is developing its own component repair specs and building on parts manufacturer approvals as parts have become difficult to secure.

While much of his time is spent on managing this growing array of work, Grinnell still likes to take time to get involved on the maintenance side. "I still try to work on airplanes when I can," he concluded. I enjoy it because it is something I know." ■



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APS provides upset prevention and recovery training in Extra 300s and the SIAI-Marchetti S.211 single-engine jet.



APS offers new spin on spatial disorientation

By Stuart "Kipp" Lau

Aviation Performance Solutions (APS), a provider of upset prevention and recovery training (UPRT), has launched a spatial disorientation awareness and training program that combines instructor-led academics, immersive virtual reality, controlled in-aircraft physiological demonstrations, and structured debriefs. The program helps pilots experience selected sensory conflicts, recognize when their perception is unreliable, disregard misleading cues, and rely on dependable flight information.

"Knowing that your senses can mislead you is different from experiencing how convincing that misinformation can be," said APS chief executive officer Paul "BJ" Ransbury. "The objective is not simply to expose pilots to illusions, but to connect that experience to sound operational decisions: avoiding conditions that invite disorientation, recognizing when perception is unreliable, and maintaining aircraft control using reliable, cross-checked flight information, even when it contradicts what feels right."

In January, the FAA published Information for Operators (InFO) 26003 recommending spatial disorientation training for Part 91, 91K, and 135 operators. According to this bulletin, "To reduce the possibility of spatial

disorientation accidents in the future, the FAA recommends that operators and training providers incorporate spatial disorientation theoretical and practical training into their operations."

Thus, the architecture of APS' spatial disorientation program aligns closely with recommendations outlined in InFO 26003 for theoretical, ground-based, scenario-based, maneuver-based, and in-flight spatial disorientation training.

APS plans to add the program to its existing FAA Part 141 certificate as an Appendix K special operations course. The proposed course is being coordinated with the FAA and remains subject to agency review and approval.

Beyond academic classroom instruction, the APS spatial disorientation program includes immersive virtual reality (VR) simulator visual-illusion scenarios and controlled in-aircraft physiological demonstrations. Current VR experiences include black-hole nighttime approaches, narrow- and wide-runway geometry, and flight in cloud and heavy snow.

The aircraft training component—either in an Extra 300L or SIAI-Marchetti S.211 jet—includes controlled demonstration of the leans, graveyard spiral/spin, and flicker vertigo. According to APS, each event follows a common disciplined progression: experience, recognize, reject, and recover.

APS' spatial disorientation training program operationalizes recommendations of the FAA and FAA Air Carrier Training Aviation Rulemaking Committee concerning physiology, threat avoidance, onset recognition, reliance on instruments, mitigation, and recovery. The course builds on and expands spatial disorientation training that is already integrated into APS UPRT courses.

Its spatial disorientation training program is led by APS v-p of flight operations Norm "DQ" Dequier, a former Canadian Snowbirds demonstration team pilot and advanced UPRT instructor. Dequier served three seasons with the Snowbirds and has flown professionally for more than 30 years.

Dequier told AIN, "The VR black-hole approach and runway-size demonstrations have produced particularly strong results where pilots experience how a convincing visual picture can lead them away from the intended flight path."

He continued, "Aircraft testing in the Extra 300L and S.211 has produced meaningful motion and vestibular experiences, including demonstrations associated with the leans and a graveyard-spiral scenario in the S.211. Together, these complementary environments connect theoretical understanding with practical recognition and response."

Spatial disorientation has been linked to several fatal accidents, including the 1999 general aviation crash that killed John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife, and his sister-in-law, as well as the 2020 helicopter crash that killed Kobe Bryant, his daughter, six family friends, and the pilot.

It may also have contributed to the Jan. 31, 2025 Learjet 55 crash in Philadelphia, which killed all six onboard and two on the ground. The accident occurred at night in IMC with a 400-foot overcast. (The NTSB published a preliminary report in March 2025 and released investigative documents two months ago, but it has not yet determined a probable cause.)

This week at NBAA-BACE, attendees can take a guided "ride-along" in APS' Learjet VR simulation to experience the visual conditions of a nighttime departure in IMC and discuss spatial disorientation hazards. Dequier is offering demonstrations and discussing the new spatial disorientation program at the company's booth. ■

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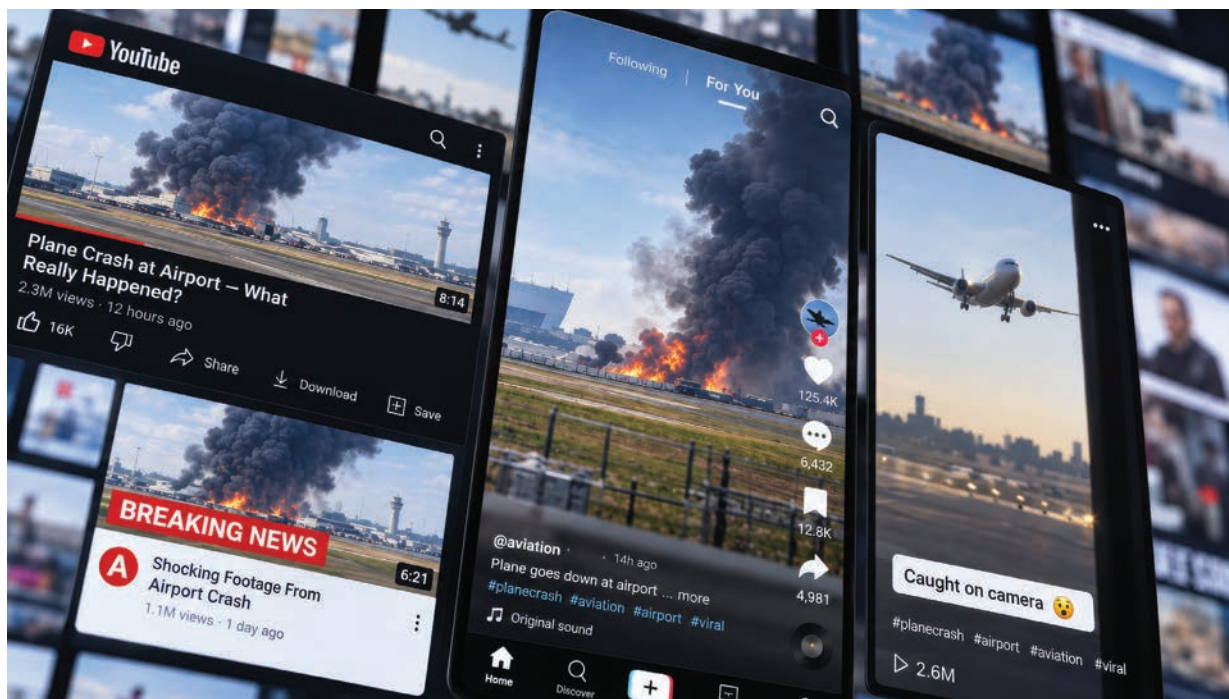
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Hesitating to respond promptly during a crisis allows others to disseminate questionable information.

The narrow window of aviation crisis response

By Amy Wilder

When things go sideways in the age of social media, business aviation operators face a narrow window to shape how a crisis is understood before others step in with their own narratives. What a company does with that critical window has less to do with finding the right words in the moment than with decisions made long before anything happens.

That's the philosophy Gina Shealy—director of emergency operations for Delaware-based emergency response firm Fireside—brings to her work with aviation brands, treating communication, especially on social media platforms, not as an afterthought but as a trained discipline, built the same way as emergency procedures. That means staffed with backups, rehearsed in advance, and governed by deliberate rules about where a company spends its attention.

And, don't try to bury the news, said Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) chair and Flexjet chief safety officer Kent Stauffer. He

warned attendees at the 2026 ACSF Safety Summit in Daytona Beach, Florida, that organizations can no longer hide after a mishap, hoping it will remain quiet.

"It used to be for a lot of us, back many years ago, if you have an event, you try to see how you can suppress the knowledge of that event," Stauffer said. "What's the first thing you do when you have an accident, and you have pictures being taken at the accident scene? You cover the tail number. Wasn't that the adage?"

Also speaking at the ACSF Safety Summit, Shealy was blunt about why that instinct no longer works. "By the time you get the paint bucket out, there's already 37 things out on X and a whole re-creation on TikTok," she said. "That is the opposite of what you should do today."

Stauffer agreed, "Anytime an airplane diverts, there's [someone]...who's watching it, who's already posted it on YouTube." Most companies don't ever anticipate this unless they have experienced it, he added.

Shealy offered an approach drawn straight from the cockpit. "Think about those three rules: aviate, navigate, then communicate," she told AIN. "Communicate is the last one."

Applied to social media crisis response, "aviating" and "navigating" represent the planning and training that happen long before anything goes wrong. Communicating—the public-facing part everyone thinks of first—is the last piece of the puzzle, productive only if the framework is in place.

Who Speaks and What They Say

Shealy treats crisis communications the way a flight department treats any other operational function: something that has to be planned, staffed, and rehearsed, not assembled after the fact.

She said the most common failure point isn't a bad message—it's an unprepared spokesperson or, worse, no spokesperson at all. "You need to have a bench," Shealy emphasized. "You need to have multiple faces of the company to be able to step in at any time."

That bench matters, especially when leadership itself is involved in an unthinkable event. Training has to be ongoing, she added, because the media landscape keeps shifting: aviation YouTubers and podcasters have increasingly become the first voices the public turns to after an accident or incident—a

role once held by cable news analysts.

Speed is useful only if the substance behind it has already been settled. Shealy recommends pre-drafted, pre-vetted holding statements—reviewed in advance by attorneys, insurers, and leadership—so a company can respond within minutes of an event rather than delaying while negotiating language in real time.

“Have something short and sweet,” she said. “Such as: ‘We are aware of reported events... we’re waiting to get further details from the authorities.’”

What goes into that statement matters as much as how fast it goes out. Shealy is direct about the discipline required in the early hours: “We are confirming facts only in the beginning. So if you don’t know a whole lot, you don’t know a whole lot.”

She is equally direct about language that can undercut an otherwise sincere message. Shealy described a multi-agency briefing where nearly every organization independently reached for the same phrase—“thoughts and prayers”—and how the repetition drained it of meaning.

“As much as that sentiment may be very, very true—that you really are thinking and praying—it has very much become tone-deaf,” she said. “At the end of the day, do the families or the victims really care about your thoughts and prayers? Yes, you want to be a kind, caring, compassionate organization, but that sentiment is reflected more in what you are doing for the people involved in the response.”

That distinction extends to one of the more legally fraught words in a crisis: “sorry.” Shealy separates expressing regret from admitting fault: “You can be sorry that something happened. You can be sorry that this event occurred, or someone’s injured. That doesn’t necessarily mean admitting fault. A lot of times, working with victims and survivors, we hear, ‘I just wish somebody would have said they’re sorry.’”

How to Sustain the Response

Neither Stauffer nor Shealy argues for engaging every critical voice online. Shealy frames

it as a resource question: “Where’s your time, effort, and energy going? What’s your [return on investment] on that?” Companies that get pulled into refuting every rumor, she said, lose sight of where their energy actually belongs: supporting the response itself, not fighting for the last word.

Stauffer put it more bluntly, joking that operators no longer need the NTSB “because we’ve got plenty of internet sleuths that’ll solve this problem.” The instinct to fight back against speculation, both suggested, is usually a losing proposition.

That doesn’t mean going quiet after the first statement, they said. Shealy warned that companies often lose ground not in the first hours but in the days after an aviation accident or crisis event, when adrenaline fades and attention scatters. “If you’ve put out an initial statement and you’ve never gone back to update it after

24 hours, 48 hours, that’s not great either,” she noted.

According to Shealy, messaging should also be tailored by channel: making LinkedIn more business-focused; “reaching the public first” on X (née Twitter); and issuing press releases and holding press conferences that are more formal in scope. And, she said, this has to run in both directions internally, so frontline employees are informed early enough that they aren’t blindsided, and so no one inadvertently posts something on their personal social media that undercuts the company message.

None of it is instinctive, Shealy said, adding that crisis response has to be built and practiced before it’s needed—the same way pilots drill for emergencies they hope never to face. “The first mistake is thinking it could never happen to you,” she concluded.

In her experience, the companies that come through a crisis intact aren’t the ones that avoid every misstep. She said they’re the ones that already worked to aviate and navigate before the moment came to communicate. ■



Gina Shealy
Fireside director of
emergency operations



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Blackbushe invests in alternative UK airport

By Charles Alcock

Business aircraft operators seeking new landing options in the London area may want to take a fresh look at Blackbushe Airport (EGLK). The facility's private owners are investing around \$20 million to upgrade the site, where a pair of four-bay hangars will open by year-end, with two more planned in 2027 along with a new general aviation terminal building.

Blackbushe, which is a first-time exhibitor at NBAA-BACE, is located about five miles north of Farnborough Airport, offering a similar drive time into central London. Business operations director Rebecca Cornthwaite told **AIN** that the facility is providing light business jets with an alternative to capacity-constrained London-area airports.

General aviation activity—including a flight school owned by the airport—accounts for around 95% of activity at Blackbushe. The airport's management team has stressed that it is not looking to replace the general aviation community, but pointed out that, even at 5% of total traffic, business aviation already generates around 20% of its income. The site also continues to see demand from helicopter operators.

Blackbushe's single Runway 7/25 is 4,215 feet long and 151 feet wide, and is equipped for visual approaches with high-intensity edge lighting and PAPIs. For private operations, the airport can accommodate jets up to the size of Dassault Falcon 8Xs and Gulfstream G550s, but it has wider appeal for commercial flights with aircraft such as the Pilatus PC-24 and PC-12, as well as Beechcraft King Airs.

No Movement Constraints

Unlike its Farnborough neighbor, Blackbushe Airport is not constrained by a cap on annual movements. According to airport managing director Chris Gazzard, Blackbushe is drawing interest from operators seeking workarounds to

weekend restrictions at Farnborough and other locations.

Standard daily operating hours at Blackbushe are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. local time, with extensions available until 10 p.m. subject to a supplementary landing fee that also applies on public holidays. The airport, which is closed only on December 25, offers taxi times to and from the runway of just 2 minutes.

Landing fees (excluding 20% VAT) range from around £225 (\$301) for a Beechcraft King Air to £600 for a Dassault Falcon 8X or Gulfstream G550, with these charges reduced by £100 for based operators. Overnight aircraft parking costs between £37.50 and £250, with no charge for same-day visits.

Gazzard said the availability of hangars will make Blackbushe more "weather resilient" for business aircraft operators. Around 150 prospective clients have already put themselves on a waiting list for hangar space. He expects the new terminal to also be popular, especially with air charter operators.

According to Cornthwaite, Blackbushe has potential to attract a wide array of business aviation support companies as the operator base expands. In particular, the airport is keen to attract maintenance, repair, and overhaul providers.

In August, private flight group and fractional-share provider Flexjet relocated its European helicopter operations base to EGLK. Flexjet's fleet of Sikorsky S-76 and Leonardo AW139 helicopters is operating from a hangar at Blackbushe, supporting shuttle flight services for customers arriving and departing on airplanes at nearby Farnborough Airport and other London-area airports such as Biggin Hill, Luton, and Stansted. The operator is considering moving other managed helicopters to Blackbushe. ■



The new hangars at Blackbushe Airport should attract more business aviation customers, especially those who want to avoid capacity-constrained London-area facilities.

Med mission maxing with Beechcraft 1900Ds

By Hanneke Weitering

Exploits Valley Air Services (EVAS) is using NBAA-BACE this week to introduce Medimax, its medical conversion for Beechcraft 1900Ds, to U.S. operators. Based at Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador, the modification shop is displaying a Medimax-configured 1900D at the show static display at Henderson Executive Airport (KHND).

Joining EVAS at the exhibit are the two firms EVAS recently appointed as its U.S. sales representatives: Las Vegas-based Jetstreme Aviation and TM Aviation, an aircraft sales and advisory firm with operations in Canada and Florida. Ahead of the show, the three companies organized the “Medimax Road to NBAA,” a U.S. demonstration tour for aeromedical operators, health care organizations, and government agencies.

Medimax centers on a powered patient-loading system that keeps patients horizontal during loading and unloading and reduces manual lifting. Patients enter through a rear loading door, while medical crews use a forward entrance.

Layouts for one or two patients can include LifePort stretcher positions, seating for medical crews and family members, a forward lavatory, and a washable hard-surface interior that simplifies cleaning between missions. EVAS pitches the aircraft for bariatric, neonatal,

routine, and long-distance patient transport. It also offers a Cargo Maximizer configuration for freight and logistics work.

According to EVAS, a Medimax 1900D has a range of about 1,100 nm with IFR reserves in zero-wind conditions and cruises at about 265 knots. Actual performance varies with configuration and payload.

Customers can bring their own 1900D to EVAS or have the company find one, and a typical conversion takes three to six months, a Jetstreme spokesman told **AIN**. Both the FAA and Transport Canada have approved the Medimax STC, so converted aircraft can enter service immediately. EVAS does structural, avionics, maintenance, refurbishment, and conversion work in-house and handles engineering, pricing, and contracts.

Separately, EVAS is developing a B1900D-NG concept that would also offer Medimax customers Garmin G950 NXi avionics, five-blade MT-Propeller composite propellers, and new or overhauled Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-67D engines, Jetstreme said.

Jetstreme estimates that more than 200 Beechcraft 1900Ds worldwide could be candidates for conversion. Its long-term goal is to capture about 20% of that market across the Medimax and Cargo Maximizer programs. The companies plan to announce more demonstration stops after the show. ■

Guardian Jet intel mines bizjet data

Brokerage and data analytics firm Guardian Jet launched Guardian Intelligence in its Vault client portal. Guardian Intelligence contains 25 years of proprietary aircraft data, including the firm’s dynamic market survey, which the company is demonstrating this week at NBAA-BACE.

Data shows that buyers are paying premium prices for sought-after late-model aircraft based on third-quarter market activity, according the Connecticut-based firm. “As we enter the fourth quarter, we expect demand to remain selective,” said managing partner Gabriel Bastos. “Buyers will continue to pay for immediate availability when the aircraft fits their mission, but they’re also weighing that premium carefully against alternative models and the financial and operational cost of waiting.”

Guardian Intelligence is intended to give clients clarity for purchasing decisions. Guardian Jet has redesigned its dynamic market survey as an interactive tool that lets clients view the aircraft it tracks, with filters for model year, airframe total time, asking-price range, equipment, and location. Customers can view aircraft for sale, recent sales, valuations, market movement, and individual aircraft details. The data covers consulting and advisory, market, model, and transaction intelligence.

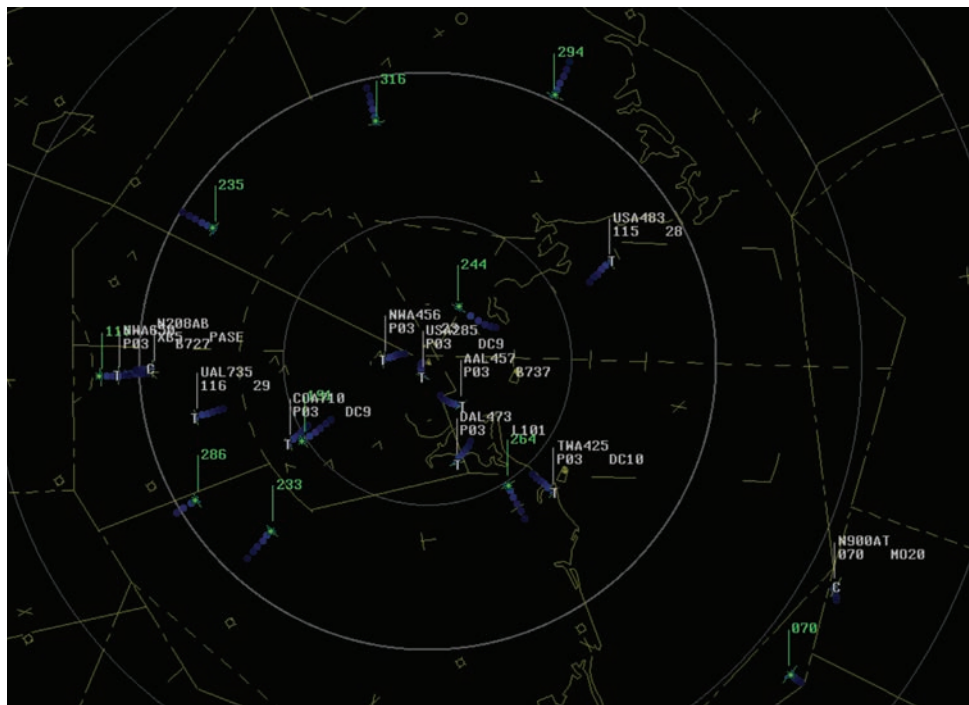
The company has been gathering and sharing market data since 2002, and now is mining it with the assistance of AI. The Vault helps clients track aircraft values. “The better data you give them to query, the better results that you get,” said Guardian Jet founder and managing partner Mike Dwyer.

Dwyer showed **AIN** a market survey for Gulfstream’s G550, manufactured from 2003 to 2019. There are 611 G550s in service, and clients can see each jet’s status, compare attributes and prices, and check maintenance due that will affect value. It also shows considerations such as how much adding a desired feature affects the ultimate price, like adding Starlink. **M.T.**



MARIANO ROSALES

Exploits Valley Air Services brought Medimax, its Beechcraft 1900D air ambulance conversion, to NBAA-BACE 2026. Medimax features a powered lift for patients and various layouts.



Collins Aerospace's MicroElite display for air traffic controllers at contract or non-federal towers.

Collins intros micro but mighty tower at KSBD

By Matt Thurber

California's San Bernardino International Airport (KSBD) is the first airfield to implement Collins Aerospace's Tower MicroElite (TME) system, an FAA-approved airborne position reference tool. The approval allows airports to deploy TME at eligible FAA contract tower airports and privately operated air traffic control facilities.

TME enhances situational awareness at towers without access to FAA traffic feeds such as radar or other surveillance systems, so controllers must rely on visual observation of air traffic. "Many smaller airports rely on visual observation and radio calls to control traffic," said Nicole White, v-p and general manager of connected aviation at Collins Aerospace. "TME provides true real-time modern surveillance."

Installing TME is less costly and simpler versus a dedicated radar system. "TME is a turnkey display and surveillance solution,"

she said, "providing a clear real-time picture of their airspace by combining ADS-B and the radar surveillance feed. There is no major infrastructure, and it's efficient in a wide range of environments."

For controllers, the interface is familiar because Collins designed TME based on its Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System, "providing controllers a familiar, industry-standard interface to monitor and manage complex aircraft sequencing," according to the company.

TME can be deployed at any airport, White said. "It's customizable, and the displays and overlays can be tailored to their unique needs and geography. This allows them to configure the system to what's best for their use."

Timing of the first deployment of TME coincides with the FAA's plans to modernize the National Airspace System. "We're excited to get it into the field," she said. "We have a team of experts out actively talking to a lot of these contract towers and airports." ■

Moove knows the steps to keep operator crew dance cards filled

Moove has added a crew currency management system to its instant booking engine to help Part 91 and 135 operators ensure that flight crewmembers are eligible for a particular trip. The currency checks are done before a flight is confirmed through the customer-facing booking system.

The complexity of matching aircraft availability with crew requirements is challenging and often involves many additional steps. Moove's crew currency management system allows users to customize rules for crew currency within scheduling and trip request workflows.

This includes supporting the complex regulatory logic that is especially relevant for Part 135 charter operators. For example, according to Moove, "FAA night with turbine alternate under FAR 61.57(e) (4) may involve several conditions, time windows, and alternative qualification pathways depending on the pilot, aircraft, and operation."

Moove helps operators build these rules into the booking and assignment process, but it is also adding Ask Moove, which allows companies to use plain-language queries. This includes accessing information from the crew currency management system, as well as scheduling information, passengers records, and crew data.

"Being able to instantly access crew currency and create custom rules connected to our trip request workflow makes aircraft scheduling much faster and more reliable," said Clayton Aviation assistant chief pilot Jeffrey King. "Leveraging the integrated crew-planning spreadsheet against the available crew assignments section provides unmatched scheduling power for our administrative team." **M.T.**

Skyband taps Iridium for GNSS jamming fix

By Matt Thurber

Skyband Systems is seeking an FAA supplemental type certificate (STC) for a GPS jamming- and spoofing-resistant system that uses signals from the Iridium satellite network to provide an alternative navigation solution when global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) are compromised. The Skyband M100 consists of an Iridium receiver coupled with an inertial sensor, and together the system could provide a backup navigation solution for vulnerable GNSS signals.

"We're getting the raw Iridium positioning," said Skyband co-founder and president Robert Wiggenghorn, "and we're fusing that with a high-quality IMU [inertial measurement unit]. What it's doing is developing its own GPS-independent position solution."

At the same time, the M100 is looking at GNSS data on the aircraft's Arinc 429 bus. "We're comparing what the aircraft's primary

[nav system] now thinks its location is to our independent location, and if it sees a divergence, it flags that in two ways," he said.

First, the M100 will send an alert to a cockpit annunciator to let the crew know that there is a GNSS issue. Second, a tablet app will send a notification about the issue and provide an alternative accurate navigation solution on a moving map, including information about hazards such as terrain.

Eventually, Skyband could share that data with third-party electronic flight bag app providers. "But we didn't want to have to wait on them to have that functionality," he said, "which is why we're going to have an app that has basic functionality that is tied to how it integrates with our product. I think there's a lot of value to have our visualization and positioning data extended into other platforms."

The M100 system that Skyband has submitted for STC approval includes the cockpit



The Skyband M100 jamming/spoofing solution.

annunciator, an electronics box, and connection to the Arinc 429 bus. Skyband is targeting the Embraer Praetor 600 for the first STC, which is expected next month. AeroMech is working with Skyband to develop the upgrade.

Production of the M100 has begun, according to Skyband, and "end-to-end system performance has been validated across 17 test flights."

The benefits of using Iridium's 66-satellite, low-Earth-orbit network for position, navigation, and timing (PNT) information have to do with relative signal strength compared to GNSS networks such as GPS. Iridium signals are 30 decibels or 1,000 times stronger than GPS signals, according to Wiggenghorn, "which makes it much more difficult to jam."

To make installing the Skyband M100 easier, it will be a single LRU with no added external antennas needed if there is an Iridium antenna already mounted. More than 70,000 aircraft already carry an Iridium antenna, according to Skyband.

"Iridium has served aviation for more than two decades, and our network was built to be relied upon when nothing else is available," said Iridium CEO Matt Desch. "As GPS interference has grown into a daily concern for flight crews, Iridium PNT offers a signal that is resilient against jamming and spoofing. Skyband's M100 brings that capability into the cockpit, and we are excited to see it reach production."

There is no technical standard order covering what the M100 is designed to do, but Skyband will make sure it meets DO-160 environmental qualifications. A possible future version could provide a certifiable navigation solution to the aircraft's flight management system.

Skyband Systems also produces the GPS Threat Map jamming and spoofing interference monitor website. ■

Clemens Aviation, Alto modernize 900EX

Clemens Aviation has upgraded a Falcon 900EX EASy with Alto Aviation's Cadence cabin management system and cabin audio system to provide passengers with a modern in-flight entertainment experience. The upgrade includes Alto Cadence touchscreen and membrane-style controllers with fit-compatible bezels that integrate with the existing cabin interior. Passengers can connect personal devices to the system via HDMI or Bluetooth.

"The partnership between Alto Aviation, a Heads Up Technologies company, and Clemens Aviation exemplifies the collaborative approach required to successfully execute complex cabin modernization projects," said Alto Aviation senior technical sales manager Brandon Klisit. "By working together

throughout every phase of the program, we delivered an innovative cabin solution that provides long-term value for the operator and an elevated experience for passengers."

"This project demonstrates our commitment to delivering innovative cabin technology solutions that help operators enhance the passenger experience through intuitive design, advanced connectivity, and reliable performance," noted Clemens Aviation co-owner Alex Clemens. "We greatly appreciate the dedication, responsiveness, and attention to detail demonstrated by the entire Alto team throughout this project. Their willingness to collaborate, solve challenges, and ensure every detail was executed correctly made them an outstanding partner." **M.T.**



Safety Standdown is celebrating its 30th anniversary in November.



The always-engaging Tony Kern dresses up in a costume related to the times and his presentation.

Bombardier Safety Standdown: 30 years of evolution, legacy

By Kerry Lynch

Born as a small gathering among Learjet flight demonstration teams in 1996, the Bombardier Safety Standdown will mark its 30th anniversary this year with more than 400 expected in person and thousands more online. Set for November 9 to 12 in Wichita, the four-day event is themed “Evolution Fueled by Legacy” to highlight how safety and the culture surrounding the event have progressed through the years.

“It is a milestone event,” said Chris Milligan, v-p of preowned aircraft services, who takes the lead on Safety Standdown. “It started the same year that I came in [to Bombardier]. The journey that this event’s had with Bombardier is incredible.”

The first Safety Standdown was so positively received that it continued, and by 1999 it had opened to others in the industry and morphed into what it is today. With safety, Milligan said, “We don’t see competition. It’s an industry event.”

Held for free nearly every year at the Wichita Hyatt Regency, the event soon reached a capacity of just more than 400. So, in 2010, Bombardier began streaming the program, extending it to thousands worldwide. Bombardier has also expanded content by posting different material periodically “to try to make it a year-round event.”

Safety Standdown has become a hallmark safety event in business aviation, attracting a range of attendees. Initially geared toward pilots, the event now draws attendees from management, maintenance, and even human resources. But it has gone beyond the industry, garnering interest from the automotive community, among others.

Milligan said this growth “really speaks to the fundamentals of our advisory board,” which represents a cross-section of industry and safety experts. That board begins planning the next event the day Bombardier finishes the current event, he noted. “They are the ones that come up with all the great topics,” he said. Not only do they understand the emerging safety issues, “they know the speakers that are in the industry that are up and coming.”

For Bombardier, it is important that attendees bring back lessons to share and encourage other colleagues to attend. In fact, about 45% of attendees each year are there for the first time. Milligan said he’s been told: “I got so much out of it, I want to send somebody new. I really want to include my organization.”

On the workforce development front, a few years ago Bombardier formed a sponsorship fund to bring in three people, whether students or those new to the industry, to attend Safety Standdown. The fund contributes to their travel expenses so they can attend.

Speakers over the years have ranged from NTSB members and association leaders to

experts in medical fields and safety science, sleep researchers, and those involved in operations—from single-pilot to large fleets. They share personal stories of tragedies, probe key accidents, inform, and challenge the audience.

A perennial favorite returning this year is Tony Kern, director of aviation for Alaskan operations for Hilcorp, former CEO of safety organization Convergent Performance, podcaster, author, and renowned aviation safety expert.

Also on tap this year during the general sessions is Ivan Pupulidy of the University of Alabama at Birmingham and author of *Human & Organization Potential*, speaking on “Risk: The Untold Story.” Jermaine Cadogan, a retired U.S. Marine major, is presenting “Building a Culture of Excellence & Proactive Compliance.” Tim Wade, corporate director of environmental, health, and safety for Flexjet, is discussing “What You Lead, You Leave.” Attendees will also hear discussions on safety under pressure, crew resource management, workforce challenges, emotional intelligence, medical updates, and compliance.

Other luminaries will lead afternoon workshops on a host of topics, with attendees able to choose from up to 11 offerings.

Safety Standdown has also resulted in a spinoff: Bombardier’s Flight Attendant Safety Summit. Held annually in Montreal each August, this event has spread to summits in Europe and Asia. Milligan said Bombardier continues to discuss international Safety Standdowns as well.



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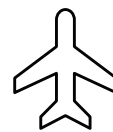
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FBO SURVEY
RESULTS

► continued from page 1

“Based on the market feedback—we have been in conversations with the audience for a while—this has given us the confidence to continue to invest and bring this to certification,” he said, adding parent RTX supported this development based on P&WC’s track record and discipline.

“We feel that this is really well set up in terms of power range and its capabilities for the next generation of turboprop aircraft,” he said, adding the company expects a range of applications. “Our pedigree has always been that it’s never a single engine, single application. It’s always based on a platform capability, both from the ability of the engine to grow in power and capability, as well as multiple applications.”

Positioned in the 1,700- to 2,300-shp range, the centerline turboprop combines jet-like performance with turboprop efficiency, offering 33% more power at altitude and reducing fuel consumption by 20% compared with previous-generation engines, according to the Canadian company. The power plant

employs advanced materials and manufacturing techniques, including select use of additive manufacturing.

Designated the PT9-11A, the engine was certified with an electronic engine control unit that protects the engine from overtemperature and overspeed and combines the propeller control lever, throttle lever, and condition lever into a single lever in the cockpit. “For the pilot, the workload just goes down tremendously,” Kumarasingam said, noting that this is one of the key features carrying over from P&WC’s PT6E-67XP engine

It also has a data collection and transmission unit. “It’s very digitally connected, allowing more than 300 parameters that could be monitored, and this will actually lead to early prognostics of the engine, how it’s faring, and the health,” he explained. In addition, the engine can fly on sustainable aviation fuel.

Another commonality with the PT6 is the 19-inch outer diameter, “but otherwise, when you look at the cross section, I think the market will be pleasantly surprised, and

we’re excited about what it’s going to do.” While not yet revealing further details, he added that the “architecture has been carefully designed to minimize the life-limited parts and make maintenance easy for operators, thereby also managing costs.”

Awarded on September 30, certification followed more than 14,000 development hours in a program that involved an estimated seven articles and 30 specific certification tests. Kumarasingam said the company’s engine development programs typically run about four to five years. P&WC is pursuing FAA and EASA certification.

P&WC will produce the engine at its plant in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, which houses its global center of excellence for the PT6 family. It is in the process of signing up suppliers and is looking at investments necessary to industrialize the engine.

As for the PT6 line, he said: “We continue to invest in the PT6, and the PT6 still has a very long life ahead of it, both in sustainment as well as new product opportunities.” ■

HondaJet and Challengers will fill first missions for Thrive Aviation

Business aircraft charter, management, and maintenance provider Thrive Aviation on Monday released photos showing off the first two aircraft in the livery of its newly launched fractional fleet.

Last month, Thrive announced a strategic partnership and minority investment from Arulean Air—a purpose-created subsidiary of Honda Aircraft—establishing the foundation for a fractional ownership platform. Thrive will operate and manage the program, from client relationship management to flight operations, while Arulean will acquire aircraft for the fractional fleet.

Initially featuring two aircraft types—the HA-420 HondaJet and Bombardier Challenger 3500—the program aims to meet two separate mission profiles. The Honda light jet brings efficiency and performance to regional travel, while the super-midsize Challenger offers a larger cabin and longer range with more passenger capacity. Both aircraft are available



Start-up fractional Thrive shows off new livery.

for tours at the show’s static display at Las Vegas Henderson Executive Airport (KHND).

Las Vegas-based Thrive anticipates adding four to six HondaJets and up to four Challenger 3500s a year as its fractional owner base continues to grow.

“Seeing these aircraft in Thrive’s livery is

an exciting milestone for our team and something we’ve been working toward for a long time,” said company co-founder and CEO Curtis Edenfield. “We have spent the last eight years building the operating platform, infrastructure, and client relationships that make this next chapter possible.” **C.E.**

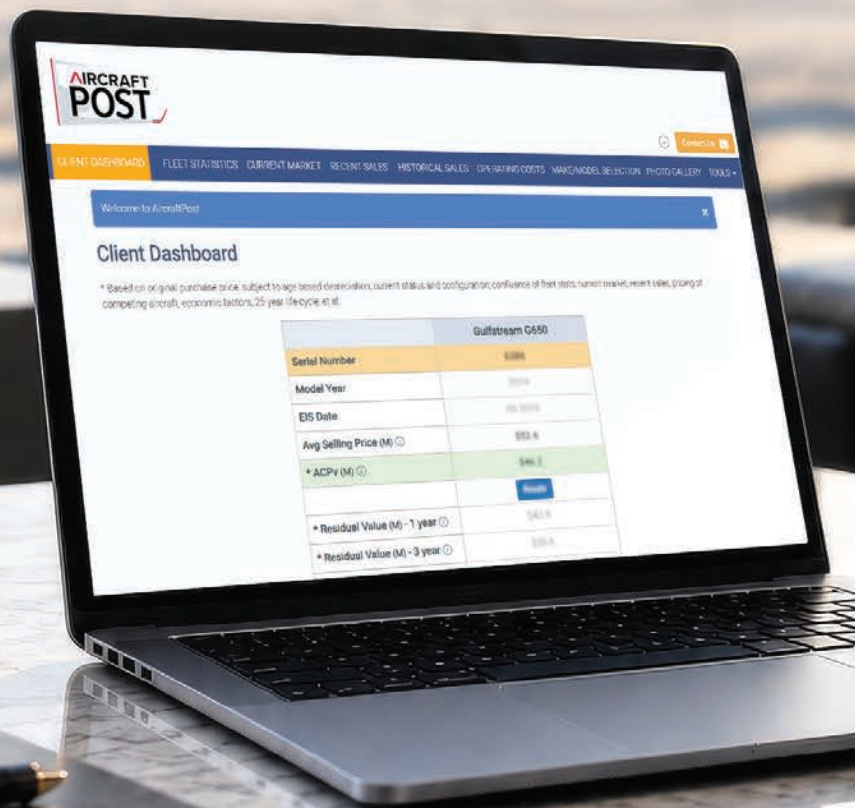


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