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On the cover: General Aviation and Business Aviation in India are mired in a quagmire of taxes, policy regime, procedures and processes. It will require a concerted effort on the part of the Ministry of Civil Aviation to put best practices in place, liberalise these sectors and enable a conducive environment for corporate travel to flourish in the country.

Cover illustration by Kunal Verma

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Dear Readers,

The news that the Ministry of Civil Aviation has come out with the revised draft of the National Civil Aviation Policy, which we hope to see soon taking industry’s reactions into consideration, in indeed a positive step in the right direction. We keenly look forward to the great outcome out of the deserving emphasis being given to the regional connectivity. We have all the reasons to be sure that the General Aviation and Business Aviation sectors will grow manifolds in our country provided the necessary corrections and improvements are implemented timely enabling conducive environment in our country.

Currently, the challenges are little far too many. While this issue includes a first-hand account of Rohit Kapur, an operator and also the in-charge of acquiring business jets, on the trauma a potential owner/operator has to go through. This also includes deliberation by Sanjay Julka as to how a business jet was stranded on ground for over six months due to paperwork shows the apathy that continues to exist in bureaucratic corridors. The pillar-to-post syndrome still persists. Even now the vast majority of bureaucracy prefers such red-tapism as they stand to benefit, while the industry suffers.

Nonetheless, we can sense a silver-lining that today there is a government in place, which is willing to listen, although it’s the process of implementations which will eventually bring in ‘Achhe Din’ (good days for all of us) and must receive the attention of the policy makers and all the associated authorities.

BAOA has constantly been on the job of exchanging the meetings and communications with the concerned agencies and the Ministry and we optimistically hope to foresee some fruits of their effort not in a very distant future.

It would be important to mention that we need to move to the scale of the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) of the US which is not only a strong lobby but also an organisation which is promoting General Aviation and Business Aviation in a big way. The recently concluded NBAA Conference & Exhibition is testimony to its popularity. We should learn from the best practices which prevail internationally engaging well with the government too!

Best wishes for the New Year ahead!

J. Baranwal
Editor-in-Chief
MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, BAOA

As President of our Association, I would like to put in a certain perspective to a basic question: What is BAOA’s responsibility? It is of course to work for a better all-round business environment. But it is also to do our bit to lift industry morale, help create excitement, and, in our own small way, infuse a spirit of camaraderie within our industry, and so on. All this may sound rather lofty, and rightfully so, this is primarily the job of the government. However, these are also the ‘end results’ of our efforts. From Aircraft Owners/Users, to Pilots/Engineers/Technicians, to Commercial/Admin/Managerial staff and even DGCA officials … we are all in it together. It is to this end, that I stated the above perspective as a responsibility of BAOA, as to what we are working towards.

A word about industry growth—I think we are all realistic enough to know that broad business aircraft numbers for the nation are not going to grow in a great hurry. But what will happen, at least during the next year, is a sort of ‘slow cleansing’ in the industry. Many BA aircraft are being sold out of India. Many are also coming in. Depending on the net flow, we may or may not see real growth in the near term. But we are on the right path, with better quality planes coming in (albeit slowly), more serious players and innovators coming in, better safety practices being forged, with broader SMS foundation laying, greater transparency and speed on its way within DGCA (we are told that the eDGCA project will have some 70 odd regular DGCA functions going online, and this will probably be launched in the coming months). But overall, in the short run we must all brace ourselves to face churn, loss of jobs and so on. Hopefully, it is all for a better tomorrow. A big spike in this has been the floods that hit Chennai airport. There is a human side to the tragedy, as also a huge economic loss which is still being assessed. Let’s hope we can tide over this.

Staying with the same theme of transitioning/cleansing—The initial CAP 3100 adoption process for the industry has been a period of great pain and anguish for all of us, given the changing and arbitrary interpretations, lack of transparency and clarity, with many requirements being unjustifiable. Certainly it could have been ushered in a better manner. But the initial adoption phase is behind most of us, and there is no denying it has been ultimately good for the industry. It has brought in a sort of order, standardisation, and plugged the gaps greatly in terms of manuals and compliance.

Having met many operators, handlers and member representatives over the last few months; I sense both emotions—optimism and scepticism. This is a consequence of the daily battles we fight as Operators, and the hassles we face in the industry. It is possible that some people do not realise the extent of activism and advocacy, the number of meetings, the convincing, the letters and follow-ups being done by us. I would personally like to engage with people and try to explain to them our work and efforts, if not achievements. It will in any case also be great to imbibe every viewpoint coming from the industry.

Today, we are probably one of the most active associations amongst other industries in India. We are also the youngest, yet amongst the largest, when compared to business aviation associations around the world. After interacting with some other BA associations from other countries, I realised they too have their share of problems and BAOA is actually fairly active as compared to some of them (Let’s leave out the NBAA of USA which is in another league!) This is not to say that we do not have room to improve. Please do e-mail or call your thoughts for this. I will end by saying that ‘greater membership only gives us greater leverage in our efforts’. I therefore urge all our members to help us expand the membership base of BAOA. The raw fact is that the association has provided a unifying voice to the lawmakers, and we are being heard and acted upon. Our strength and leverage only increases with an ever wider membership base.

Safe flying,

Jayant Nadkarni
President, Business Aircraft Operators Association
FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT

Navigating the Minefield of Acquiring Bizjet

ILLUSTRATION: Anoop Kamath
“This is one of the most traumatic experiences that I have undergone, and I have sworn that I will never make this mistake again.”

By Rohit Kapur

NOTHING IS MORE TRAUMATIC for a potential aircraft operator than going through the process of regulatory nightmare of first acquiring and then getting clearances to operate an aircraft in India. The process can take anything from 12-18 months, from the time you decide to buy an aircraft or helicopter, till the time you actually start flying one. This is not for the weak hearted. In fact, the process probably would make a good case study in one of the IIMs or the Harvard Business School, to bring out why the mission of ‘Ease of Doing Business’ in India, especially in the aviation industry, will never succeed, unless a thorough review of the entire process is carried out and streamlined.

So, this is how it goes presently. You are a potential aircraft/helicopter buyer for the first time, as you have realised that your business will grow manifold in case you have the flexibility and mobility to travel as per your convenience in your private aircraft. You have finalised your aircraft type, and have also negotiated the price with the original equipment manufacturer (OEM), who is ready to deliver you the aircraft within four to five months, and he needs a 10 per cent deposit to block your serial number, as any manufacturer will want. You approach your bank to do the needful. Hang on, the bankers tell you that you cannot remit more than $1,00,000 as advance without a no objection certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) / Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Considering that you are buying an aircraft worth about $10 million, you actually need to pay $1 million to the OEM. Well, you go back to the OEM and tell him that the Indian system does not allow more than $1,00,000 to be wired, so he will have to do with one per cent deposit, instead of the 10 per cent that he needs. The OEM is not happy, but accepts since he now understands that this is how it works in India.

SECURITY CLEARANCE
So now you start the process of getting the famous NOC from MoCA/DGCA. For first time applicants, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) requires that all directors of the company acquiring the aircraft need a security clearance. This is a process which can take anything from three to four months, as there are various wheels within the MHA which need to turn before the directors are security cleared. God bless you in case any of your director is a foreign national, you might as well sack him, or stop dreaming about buying your aircraft! The process is completely opaque, with no way of knowing where your security clearance process is at the moment, and when it will be cleared. It is quite possible that after four months you might get a simple one-line stating that your director X has not been security cleared by MHA...no reasons...so please start the process again after sacking director X and hiring director Y in his place!

So four months down the line, you are security cleared, ready to move to the next step to obtain the NOC from the DGCA. You also need to make sure that you have to get a valid parking permission from your airport for your new aircraft. If you are in one of the metros, forget getting this permission from your local airport manager. Somehow you manage to get a letter from the Airport Director of Raipur, who is a friend of yours, that he will allow you to park your aircraft at his airport. Who cares that you need your aircraft in Delhi, and it’s going to be parked at Raipur! The letter is essential to take you to the next step.

FIVE-STAGE PROCESS
The DGCA now sets up a project team to oversee your aircraft acquisition, which is a five-stage process. These are:

- Pre-application
- Formal application
- Document evaluation
- Demonstration and inspection and
- Certification

The team comprises members from Flight Inspections Directorate (FID), Airworthiness, Air Safety and Air Transport. An initial pre-application meeting is called for by the team to meet you, and see whether you look affluent enough and capable of buying an aircraft. So you dress up in your smartest suit, and go to the DGCA for this meeting. After a few hours of this meeting, you are left wondering as to why you were called. The only reason for the meeting was that they wanted to explain to you the process, and the pain that you are about to endure, and see if you are strong hearted enough to go through it. Well, I’m still hanging in there!

You also need to make sure that you have to get a valid parking permission from your airport for your new aircraft. If you are in one of the metros, forget getting this permission from your local airport manager.
ACQUISITION

Set it right: If the policies and directions are placed right, business aviation will grow exponentially

RIGMAROLE AT THE BANKS
Well, the NOC arrives after a few trips to the DGCA and a few heartburns, a few weeks later. The OEM is breathing down my neck for his 10 per cent payment, and is probably tracking my NOC even more than my team. It's six months since I booked the aircraft, and he still has only one per cent of the payment. He wants to be paid now, as the aircraft is ready for delivery, actually. I go to my bankers with the NOC, and ask them to pay the first and the second instalment of the payment together, amounting to 70 per cent of the value, as the aircraft is almost ready for delivery. Just wait...my banker tells me that they need to approach the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for making this payment, as this is advance payment, and it needs RBI clearance. Well, well, I tell the poor OEM that there is still some grief left for him. Applications are made, and RBI takes another four to six weeks to clear this payment. By this time, the OEM is ready to kill me with the first AK-47 he can lay his hands on, but he has to smile everytime he meets me. After all, I am the customer.

CAP 3100
Simultaneously, my process with the DGCA continues. They have a process called the CAP 3100 which I have to go through. All I know is that process was imported from Sri Lanka, but why...no one seems to tell me! It involves submitting about 25 manuals. There is 267-page guideline on how to go about the CAP 3100. Every stage involves the DGCA project team to review your documents, and giving you the feedback for the same. It requires a few hundred trips to the DGCA, and probably the same to your GP, to get your blood pressure checked after every trip. “This is for your own good” you are told by stern looking FOIs, after every trip. I hear you. I wish they would also think of my good when I pay the monthly interest on the loan amount that I have taken for an asset which is nowhere near to making itself useful. Besides, the monthly salaries to the staff...the pilots, QC, CAM, Safety Officer, Operations Manager, etc., continue to drain my finances. But I don't care, since the DGCA process is for my own good, and needs to be done!

DGFT CLEARANCE
Three months have passed since my initial NOC. The DGCA document evaluation process is progressing well...the manuals have been reviewed once and corrections made. The DGCA is now ready to give me the NOC for import. However, since I plan to operate the aircraft in the private category, I still need an NOC from the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) before I can import the aircraft. I am told that the DGFT committee sits only once in a month to review all cases of aircraft import, the third Thursday of the month. Was that only yesterday? So now I have to wait for another month before it is approved. Well, how does another month matter, we are already eight months down. One more month, and we would have actually produced a baby from conception in the same time.

INDIAN CERTIFICATE OF AIRWORTHINESS
So, all set. The big day. All permissions in place, my new aircraft is landing in Delhi today, being flown by a ferry company who will deliver it to India under the US registration. It lands,
and I’m there to see it. One look and I feel that probably the wait was worth it. I am told the import process will take two days. Great, so I can plan my first trip on Friday, today being Tuesday. Boss hang on, I’m told. We now need to de register it and get it into Indian registration with Indian Certificate of Airworthiness and Certificate of Registration. Back with the DGCA for the balance of the CAP 3100 process, that is the demonstration and the inspection phase. Here we go again. First the Aero Mobile Licence, then the C of R, the C of A, the table top exercise and finally the proving flight. Maybe two months, if you are lucky, and another two, if you are not. After all, the DGCA is a busy organisation, and we do need to see the availability of FOIs, AW officers, etc. It’s still on track. However, there is a minor problem. The pilots who had undergone training on specific type at flight safety to fly this aircraft, suddenly tell me that their currency has expired, since it is six months over since they had undergone the training. So what do I need to do? Send them back to US for recurrent training of course. Besides the cost, it’s going to take them a month to do so. No worries, please do your recurrent while the DGCA does my tabletop exercise...another month before I fly. It is only 14 months since I started. I was told it can take 18, so I’m good for another four.

TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE
So all those of you who found the above experience funny, I can assure you, as the operator of this aircraft, I do not see any humour in this. I have aged 10 years, and now have high BP, which even my business never gave me over all these years. This is one of the most traumatic experiences that I have undergone, and I have sworn that I will never make this mistake again. What is wrong with going by train or commercial flights and why do I need to buy one?

But I do have a few questions to ask my friends in the Ministry/ DGCA, and other authorities who have created this process. These are:
- Why do I need a security clearance to buy an aircraft? I am the Director of a company, I have a DIN, and I have a valid passport which was given to me after due security clearance? Is buying an aircraft such a sensitive operation that I can be a threat to national security?
- If you still insist that I need a security clearance, why cannot you set up fast-track system for it, and allow the DGCA process to work simultaneously? Even ‘Tatkal’ passports are given provisionally, and security clearances can be done later on. Since the process is long anyway, can’t it be done in a way, that my security clearance is required to be submitted before my aircraft is finally imported?
- Why do you need valid parking permission from any airport? This is a farce. General Aviation (GA) aircraft are not like scheduled airlines and do not need night parking bases. They operate on requirement, from anywhere in the country and overseas, and do not need to have parking permissions, as scheduled airlines do.
- The DGCA process is too long. I can assure you that 80 per cent of CAP 3100 is ‘cut and paste’ from other CAP 3100s. Can we not avoid wasting time in reviewing this, and only focus on the balance 20 per cent which is specific to my operation? I have not understood the purpose of some manuals, like the PDTM Manual. There is a CAR on PDTM, I have to follow it, or be penal-

VALUE THE TIME THAT FLIES
To conclude, the regulatory authorities need to understand the commercial concerns and the financial losses of aircraft owners and operators. While no one is suggesting that safety standards should be diluted, a number of processes need to run concurrently to reduce the time frame. We need to ensure:
- Permission to buy an aircraft be given within four to six weeks of the application.
- Security clearance should be given automatically for people holding valid Indian passports. For the others, it should be given provisionally to continue the process, and to be available before final import of the aircraft.
- Parking permissions at airports should not be required for general aviation aircraft. They should only need to produce a certificate from a certified MRO stating what will be their maintenance base.
- Transfer of money up to 10 per cent of the aircraft value (limited to ₹5 million) be allowed in the automatic route without reference to the RBI, accompanied by a CA certificate and against firm contract.
- For additional amounts of money, the RBI to process the application within two weeks of the initial permission given by the DGCA.
- DGCA Cap 3100 process should be completed in four weeks maximum—two weeks for document evaluation and another two weeks after aircraft lands for demonstrations and inspections. Avoid personal contact as far as possible. Most interaction online.
- DGFT application and approval should be online.
- No requirement for proving flights for NSOP. This is specific to scheduled airlines.

I can assure you that there is a huge potential out there, if the above is implemented.

The author is an operator of business aircraft. He has been intensely involved in the aircraft acquisition process.
Many of the aircraft in India are already capable of using GAGAN and some OEMs have offered to carry out updates for GAGAN compatibility, without cost

By Group Captain R.K. Bali (Retd)  
Managing Director, Business Aircraft Operators Association
THE RECENTLY ISSUED REVISED draft National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2015) envisages wide use of indigenously developed GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation (GAGAN) in the coming years, which would enable GA/BA aircraft make Cat 1 approaches at most of the under-served/un-served small airfields, located in remote areas of the country. The launch of GAGAN, this year, puts India among the list of four elite nations in the world to use satellite-based navigation system.

The draft NCAP 2015 also speaks of mandating only GAGAN enabled aircraft to be newly registered in India from April 1, 2017, onwards. This mandatory requirement should have been envisaged at least three years ago when the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) issued a detailed Civil Aviation Policy in 2012 and, parallel consultations held with aircraft manufacturers to optimally use the upcoming GAGAN technology. However, it is better late than never and all possible steps should be taken to quickly integrate aircraft operations in India with GAGAN.

GAGAN TECHNOLOGY
Starting from very early aviation days of pilot and navigator using ‘familiarity with terrain in good visibility conditions’ to evolution of ‘aeronautical charting and analysis’, the pilots now have the facility of precise and computerised nav-igation available through the geospatial technology (GST) offered by GAGAN. Paper charts have been replaced by electronic flight bags (EFB) with electronic terrain obstacle data (ETOD). The end-users of GST technology in aviation, offered by GAGAN, would, inter alia, include instrument procedure designers, aircraft performance engineers, terrain awareness warning system manufacturers, airport surface – map display manufacturers, airport planning organisations, airport security providers and airport emergency services providers.

When it comes to use of GAGAN technology for aircraft operations, most of the airlines operate larger aircraft that are already compatible with ILS/NDB approaches available at airfields connected by scheduled services. Therefore, GAGAN technology doesn’t offer them any immediate benefits to airlines other than enabling landings from non-ILS end. It is the GA/BA industry, operating smaller aircraft and connecting remote/interior airfields in the country, that would be the biggest beneficiary of GAGAN technology. However, from a larger perspective, GAGAN technology is bound to benefit the entire aviation industry during the future times. It is from this long-term perspective that we all need to work for fast-tracking measures for fully utilising GAGAN technology and maximising the below-mentioned benefits:

BENEFITS OF GAGAN
- Enhanced capability to operate from remote/smaller airfields, especially during adverse weather conditions. Usage of non-ILS runway ends of airfields, when it becomes necessary.
- Reduced separation standards which allow increased capacity in a given airspace, without increased risk.
- Immediate access to greater number of airports enhancing remote air connectivity.
- More direct en route flight paths.
- Fuel savings. Pilots have reported savings of 5 per cent.
- Fuel savings also results in reduced carbon emissions.
- New precision approach services.
- Smaller and simplified equipment on board the aircraft.
- Significant government cost savings due to the elimination of maintenance costs associated with older, more expensive ground-based navigation aids (to include NDBs, VORs, DMEs, and most Category 1 ILSs).

GAGAN COVERAGE
GAGAN covers a vast area, extending from most of Australia in the east to middle of Africa. In the north-south direction, it covers most of China/East Europe in the north to entire Indian Ocean in the south.

GETTING AIRCRAFT GAGAN ENABLED
Many of the aircraft in India are already capable of using GAGAN and some OEMs have offered to carry out updates for GAGAN compatibility, without cost. However, in case of most OEMs, for aircraft older than five years, the cost to upgrade would vary depending on the existing equipment on board, as modifications need to be done to GPS, FMS, flight director, etc. It is here that government needs to step in and consider granting soft loans to small GA/BA operators to finance the upgrades. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) should also tie up with OEMs to bring down the cost of upgrades.

CREW TRAINING
Additional crew training for using GAGAN would be minimal as most of the crews get trained on CAT 1 approaches and also undergo refresher course regularly.

DGCA’S ROLE
DGCA has been well aware of GAGAN having been operational since July this year and it needs to work very quickly on coming up with CAR outlining regulatory requirements for approval of aircrafts and crew for flying GAGAN approaches. Pilots having undergone training for American WAAS or European EGNOS should be facilitated to get GAGAN letter of approval. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has spent nearly 8000 crore to set up this infrastructure. There are only three other SBAS networks in the world, in US/Europe/Japan that are similar to GAGAN. Everyone is looking forward to DGCA supporting this leap in technology by coming up with a time-bound and hassle-free policy to enable the Indian aircraft operators to indigenously developed GAGAN technology. GAGAN would prepare India to seamlessly move into the top three nations in the aviation world, globally.
Regulatory and Tax Regime is Denying ‘Achhe Din’

By following a difficult, stern and archaic regulatory and tax regime, the government is only discouraging industrialists from owning these resources by laying out a series of hurdles for their operation.

By Sanjay Julka
Vice President, Business Aircraft Operators Association
EARLY THIS YEAR, when news of Supertech’s Cessna Citation Jet being stranded on ground for over six months due to paperwork appeared, it not only exposed the Directorate General of Civil Aviation’s (DGCA) snail paced approach at processing and finalising permits, but also the unreasonable regulatory and tax policies that exist. In Supertech’s case the paperwork related to CAP 3100, a certification system necessitated by the DGCA that outlines the procedure to obtain an air operator’s permit.

The notoriously long time taken by the DGCA in issuing the permit is what likely dissuades many international investment opportunities from transpiring beyond the feasibility meetings. The outcome of the breakfast meeting between the Boeing CEO and the Prime Minister on September 29 of last year or multiple ‘pro business environment’ statements being issued by him over foreign soils will be closely followed by aviation enthusiasts who will be disappointed if the state of the prevailing aviation regulatory and tax environment does not change to promote business interest.

DIFFERENT REGULATORY STANDARDS FROM REST OF THE WORLD
Businesses affected by such long delays could only voice their frustration to empty ears and hope for the advent of what the forecasts predicted for ‘Achhe Din’ (good days) under the Modi Government. However, with aircraft still on ground, most of them are still waiting for the realisation of the words in the Prime Minister’s speech prompting for competing with world powers and integrating standards to that of global practices. To compare, the aviation regulatory bodies in America or Europe take only one month from the time of an aircraft’s procurement to clear it for operation. The DGCA, although claims to take up to three months, but invariably takes six months for the same job.

PILOT LICENSING
Another example of differences in world standard exists in that of pilot licensing and privileges. World over, an experienced pilot starts flying as a captain on a machine not previously endorsed on his licence after undergoing simulator training. However, in India, the pilot is required to fly a further 100 hours with a supervisor before he can fly the new aircraft as captain. As a result, Indian companies recruit foreign pilots, who, by virtue of worldwide practice, would have begun flying as captain immediately after their simulator training and thereby gained experience faster and at a competitively earlier phase in their career. Recruiting foreign pilots when thousands of Indian pilots sit unemployed, is a shameful state which does not carry adequate justification. Moreover, since foreign pilots are governed by their home regulatory body, they are not required to comply with the ‘100 hours of actual flying under supervision’ clause even though they regularly operate within Indian airspace. These contradictory mandates under which pilots fly lack concrete reasons.

World over, pilots undergo ‘proficiency checks’ once in a year; Indian pilots undergo checks twice in a year. World over, route checks are not conducted for non-scheduled or on demand charter flights; Indian pilots have to undergo route checks on the aircraft, every year. Likewise, there are innumerable requirements/restrictions imposed on Indian pilots which are not applicable in other countries. If one were to press any regulatory official for a reason, it would not be surprising to hear ‘Indian conditions’ as the prompt response. As for what these ‘conditions’ are, the question is left unanswered. Unless one were to know the conditions leading to the formulation of strict rules, how would one know when these conditions would cease to exist?

This lack of clarification results in escalating costs, grounded aircraft, experienced pilots becoming deficient, and an abundance of newly trained and jobless co-pilots.

Support to ‘bring in change’, by some officials at DGCA, often gets drowned amidst the bogey of ‘Flight Safety’ or ‘File Movement’. These are the two mantras widely used by non-progressive and over-cautious officials to snub those officials who are prepared to work with the industry in bringing about the much needed change. Unless this mindset is addressed, there is very little that could change at DGCA.

TAX HURDLES
The Ministry of Finance, in the year 2007, in an inexplicable move, increased the customs duty on private aircraft from nil to 20 per cent. As a result, industrialists, who had brought in aircraft for private use for themselves and their company officials immediately reapplied for commercial licences. The load on DGCA multiplied as the oversight requirements increased manifold. The result was that DGCA became over stretched and was ultimately downgraded by FAA. Once again, more costs, grounded aircraft, a false perception of Indian aircraft being unsafe and related effects discouraged foreign investment. Few Indian industrialists even chose to buy their private airplanes under foreign registry. Business aviation, which was forecasted to grow exponentially, slumped into recession.

WAY FORWARD
Business aviation contributes to the growth of cities and mankind as it promotes industry, tourism, lifesaving medical flights, etc. By following a difficult, stern and archaic regulatory and tax regime, the government is only discouraging industrialists from owning these resources by laying out a series of hurdles for their operation. Instead, they need to be encouraged to invest further and bring in more aircraft that serve as assets of national importance.

The DGCA/Ministry of Civil Aviation need to answer as to why a new aircraft needs to be grounded for months, why Indian rules/regulations are not in sync with world standard practices. Likewise, the Finance Ministry needs to be questioned on how much revenue they have earned by increasing custom duties on business aviation aircraft vis-à-vis the resultant retarded growth of this sector and nation.

A revolutionary push to change the regulatory and tax policies which have together been perhaps the only impediment to the growth of this industry is required. There is a need to understand that civil aviation is not for the rich but for everybody as growth of civil aviation will bolster growth of all other industries.

The new draft National Civil Aviation Policy has addressed many of the hurdles mentioned above. It has some flaws which hopefully will be addressed before finalisation. The issue of complete roll back of ‘custom duty’ on business aviation operators is the most important omission which hopefully will get included before the policy is issued. Execution by the way of change of mindset, of DGCA being a facilitator and not a regulator, is what the industry and the nation needs.

Remember, ‘The Railways brought in industrialisation in the country, Civil aviation can bring in economic supremacy.’
In a Club of its Own

It is the country’s largest and oldest private air charter service provider and has been growing steadily, despite the many challenges. The Director and CEO of Club One Air, Bhupesh Joshi, while welcoming the revised draft of the National Civil Aviation Policy, talks to BizAvIndia about air charter business in general and Club One Air’s activities in particular.

By R. Chandrakanth
**Interview**

**BizAvIndia (BAI):** Could you give a profile of Club One Air?

**Bhupesh Joshi (Joshi):** We are India’s largest and oldest private air charter service provider with a fleet of eight aircraft which have the capability to fly and meet the needs of our guests even beyond our national borders.

**BAI:** How many aircraft you have, please give the aircraft make and seating capacity?

**Joshi:** At present, we have three types of aircraft — Cessna C-II and XL, Falcon 2000 and CRJ 100 with luxury seating capacity of 7-18 guests. The aircraft promises luxury beyond imagination and the services are unparalleled. Over all, the experience that we want our guests to have is that of simple awe!

**BAI:** What is the nature of your operations?

**Joshi:** We have extended our services to as many sectors as possible. From the corporates to the regular holiday maker and celebs; almost everyone has travelled Club One Air. With our fleet strength, we are capable of operating multiple flights to multiple cities on any given date. We have charter flights that take you on pilgrimage sightseeing, to sporting destinations as well as adventure holiday spots. In short, we have a charter to ferry you for all your needs.

**BAI:** What is your unique selling proposition and differentiator in the market?

**Joshi:** We are the only company which has its own MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) in place and has specialised technicians to take care of every maintenance need of our aircraft fleet. In the business segment that we operate in, we provide end-to-end customised solution to our guest’s requirements.

**BAI:** Are there any expansion plans for Club One Air, if yes, could you give details?

**Joshi:** Yes, we are looking to increase our fleet size to 19 by the end of 2019. Along with a thought-out expansion plan, we are also looking to increase our footprint in various other service segment of guests and the airport services.

**NCAP LOOKS PROMISING**

**BAI:** The government has announced the revised draft National Civil Aviation Policy. Could you give your reaction on how it may impact positively business aviation, if at all?

**Joshi:** The draft looks very promising. There are some apparent take-aways from the entire plan. The upgrade of airports will open new routes for travellers. However, all this will only be possible with multi-pronged approach by the Centre and state governments. The 5,000 crore business of MRO services which caters to just 10 per cent in India will get a major boost if the draft is implemented as it will bring in business from various sources.

**BAI:** While we see that the government is keen on increasing regional connectivity, it has not taken into consideration the role and GA/BA can play in this regard. Could you highlight how charter business can really help connecting un-served destinations, thus improving regional connectivity?

**Joshi:** Again, it is a matter of infrastructure and skill development. Out of 476 airstrips only 75 are operated by scheduled airlines. On the other hand, NSOPs like us operate up to 100 airstrips. So, upgrading more and more strips will put more destinations on our map which will help us to promote these locations for our guests who would want to travel to these destinations for their purpose.

**TIME RIPE FOR FOREIGN PLAYERS TO ENTER**

**BAI:** The government has also announced opening up of FDI in general aviation/business aviation. Your take on that and how do you think this will help the industry?

**Joshi:** There is already a FDI in helicopter business but barring one or two foreign companies nobody came forward. However, with time the economic might of India has grown and entrepreneurship boom has seen the arrival of many big players in the market along with huge investments in various segments. The trend looks more upbeat on the aviation front where the industry has grown at 10-15 per cent and NSOPs business has grown by 20-30 per cent. So the time is right for foreign players to enter the market and create competitive environment in the whole segment.

**BAI:** Tourism is one of the drivers for business aviation if we look at some of the developed countries. What linkages are missing between tourism and aviation?

**Joshi:** I feel infrastructure has a big role to play. It is this infrastructure that brings connectivity to lots of places. Airports act as the gateway to other cities or regions and there are so many destinations in India that are not even promoted just because of the connectivity issues.

**BAI:** What are the challenges of an air charter operator in India, from buying an aircraft to flying them?

**Joshi:** Air charter operators face taxation hurdles in India, most of the things are taxed which makes the operating costs higher in India. The parking charges, fuel charges, maintenance charges, etc., are the pain points for our segment. Though some good suggestions have been given in MRO segment but we still need to experience the final policy to see the light of the day. There is already a duty of 2.5 per cent for importing new aircraft to India which can be done away with, the duty only hinders the procurement process and makes it tough for players like us to get to the break even without further investment.

**BAI:** What do you think the government further needs to do to ease operations of business aviation industry?

**Joshi:** There are lot many things that need to be done. Some of them have been listed in the draft and we are hoping those will be met with. However, the policies should be flexible enough with a scope of manoeuvrability to make necessary changes at later stages. That is the need of the hour.
The Boundless Potential of Business Aviation

Business jets serve as a business efficiency tool, enabling companies and executives to monitor their businesses

By Claudio Camelier

Although it is widely perceived that business aviation is reserved only for the rich and famous, the reality is that the majority of business aircraft users are business owners. In the US and Europe—where business aviation has its strongest foundation—the average business aircraft seats six passengers and each journey is normally less than 1,600 kilometres, or 1,000 miles. Most companies, regardless of their size, also own their own aircraft, illustrating a commitment to business aviation far higher than many other modes of transportation. Interestingly, through studies made by Embraer in the US and Europe, it is the middle managers that use business jets the most, an executive level not normally associated with gratuitous pleasure trips.

Business jets serve as a business efficiency tool, enabling companies and executives to monitor their businesses and accomplish more travel than relying on the schedules and networks of commercial airlines. By extension, the business aviation industry is a service industry that provides companies—both big and small—a safe, cost-effective and adaptable tool that facilitates operational efficiency, cultivates and preserves customer relations, generates sales and provides on-demand support.

Strong connectivity, which is in part bolstered by business aviation, is a must for any country’s economy to grow in a sustainable way. While there are as many uses for a business aircraft as there are actual business aircraft, there are some universally recognised benefits to owning or operating a business aircraft. Of these fundamental benefits, access to markets has always been imperative, and this has become even more important now that the global commercial aviation sector has adopted an aggressive consolidation effort. In mature markets, this means that cities that once had a lifeline to the international airline networks have lost most, if not all, access to air transportation, and have seen an immediate impact on employment levels and the local economy. In emerging markets, meanwhile, the cities excluded from the airline networks look on as those with active airline operations reap the economic benefits that come with large movements of commerce and tourism.

Business aviation and its infrastructure allows companies to overcome these challenges by providing a direct and efficient method of transportation to tens of thousands of locations ignored by commercial operators. And while communities are sometimes asked to provide an economic benefit to attract commercial airline service, the benefits of commerce are incentive enough for businesses to enter a new market or remain to support and cultivate an existing market sector.

Embraer’s home country of Brazil provides a prime example of this benefit. In the past decade, the main driver of economic success has not been the industrial epicenter of São Paulo—although its growth continues apace—but geographically remote metropolitan regions. At the same time, business aviation traffic into these regions also grew, drawing local and even cross-country investments in natural and industrial resources and providing industries access to a broader pool of talent.

With this larger business aviation footprint came an investment in aviation infrastructure from both the public and private sectors, which facilitated further commercial investment and more regional economic growth. All of Brazil has benefited from this economic growth.

Companies in mature and emerging business aviation markets also benefit from the agility and flexibility that comes with a business aircraft. By operating a business aircraft, companies can directly access an exponentially larger number of communities that would be difficult and costly—if not impossible—to access through commercial travel.

Embraer studies have revealed that the inherent security and privacy of travelling on a business aircraft has facilitated the increased productivity of passengers by 60 per cent compared to peers travelling commercially. The adoption of in-flight Wi-Fi now grants...
greater access to secure networks, offering companies further productivity benefits by utilising business aviation.

Employees using business aircraft also spend less time on the road, providing a healthy work-life balance while also controlling travel costs.

Business aviation can facilitate modern commercial practices. Many businesses now provide near-time services to their customers that commercial aviation simply cannot support. A growing problem with airline delays and poor arrival times aside, business aviation offers companies the quickest, most flexible and secure means to transport parts and personnel at a moment’s notice.

Some of the most utilised business aircraft are those assigned to corporate shuttle duty. Normally operated on a schedule, these aircraft provide employees quick, easy and efficient access to company facilities with minimal disruption to a workday and allow workers to avoid the inconvenience and time constraints inherent to commercial air travel. Corporate shuttles and other business aircraft are also used for the transport of in-house mail and freight.

These tangible economic benefits are bolstered when governments provide an environment for business aviation to grow. Improved infrastructure and appropriate regulations not only foster more business aviation traffic and the associated economic benefits, they also create a foundation for the business aviation support and service sectors to grow. As the number of business aircraft grows, so do the maintenance and spare parts industries, high-revenue sectors that attract and retain skilled, well-paid workers and generate their own industrial growth.

As with any major industrial sector, business aviation provides peripheral economic benefits to local, regional and national economies, but business aviation also creates its own secondary industries that provide major economic boosts in their own right.

These industries are mostly associated with aircraft ownership and can be particularly useful in establishing a nascent business aviation community. Charter companies, for instance, rent aircraft and crew for a specific purpose for companies that require occasional or unpredictable use of a business aircraft or have a need for different types or sizes or aircraft throughout the year. Businesses can also utilise a concept known as fractional ownership to own part (or fraction) of an aircraft in return for a guaranteed number of flights hours as well as maintenance and crew services. In recent years, companies have also signed partnerships, time-share and interchange/swap agreements. Each one of these options requires a base of operation, management, crews, maintenance staff and service workers, all areas of economic interest to any community, regardless of its size.

For companies that need full access to business aircraft, they can either purchase their own or lease on long-term contracts. These aircraft are usually operated through an in-house flight department with its own pilots and maintenance crews, although this work can be outsourced to aircraft management companies. Again, the economic benefits of these operations are tangible.

With these options at their disposal, companies around the world—both large and small—have recognised the importance of business aviation. With close to 20,000 jets and more than 14,000 turboprops working as business tools, local, regional and national economies continue to benefit from these unrecognised workhorses of global commerce. Recent studies by Embraer indicate that while the mature business aviation markets will continue to dominate the industry, it is the economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China—the BRIC countries—that will post the largest growth rates for the coming decade.

With appropriate government support and an accepting regulatory environment, business aviation can contribute significantly to the improvement of local, regional and national economies and provide the necessary access to markets required for global commerce to blossom.

The author is Vice President for Sales in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East, Embraer Executive Jets.
There are many reasons to fly by private jet charter, avoiding all the price fluctuations of commercial airlines and the rigmarole that is attached to it.

By R. Chandrakanth
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 Almost 10 years ago, as a journalist I was visiting an iron ore mine in Bellary district of Karnataka. From Bengaluru to Bellary the distance by road is about 300 km, but way back the national and the state highways were not as good as they are now. The average time taken by road then was about 8 hours due to poor road conditions. In those days, the iron ore sector was riding high, exporting to the world market. Some of the iron ore companies in Bellary were proud owners of private jets. MSPL was one of them and we few journalists were ferried to the remote location in Hospet in the company’s P-180 Avanti II. This was the first time that I travelled in a private jet and the experience was amazing as it offered – time-saving, comfort and ease of access to the remote location. It was a novelty then and the company ended up getting good reports from the journalists. Private jet travel, in a way, helped the company get positive reviews. Subsequently, many of the iron ore companies landed in trouble with stricter governmental controls and some of them had to sell their private jets to stay afloat.

Ten years down the line, the aviation scenario has changed considerably. While the scheduled operators are expanding their network, there are still many areas which they are not just able to cover for reasons of demand; infrastructure and aircraft types. This gap is getting filled partially by private jet operators and other modes of transportation.

Even though it may seem that private charters are for the rich and famous only, of late, several operators are offering packages, whether it is for religious tourism or for private travel, which are attractively priced. There are many reasons to fly by private jet charter, avoiding all the price fluctuations of commercial airlines and the rigmarole that is attached to it.

Remote Connectivity
One of the distinct benefits of private jet travel is that un-served and even under-served destinations by airlines can be covered easily by private jets, particularly in India where there are over 400 airstrips. All that a private jet requires is a paved runway. In the US, there are over 5,000 airports that private planes can use as against the 500 airports for airlines, which means that in a private jet you can often land closer to your true destination. Many historical and religious places in India are in far-flung areas and they can be accessed by private aircraft, be it a jet or a helicopter with ease. For instance, the most popular destination is Agra and it does not have proper airline connectivity. The Kheria airport is under the Indian Air Force and there is a proposal to develop a greenfield international airport, but there is adequate demand for private air travel to Agra. Similarly, destinations such as Darjeeling, Ranchi, Bandhavgarh, to name a few, lack airports and require long car rides to reach.

Unbeatable Convenience
The unique selling proposition of most air charter operators will be convenience of travel. At short notice, even as little as 10 hours, a private aircraft can be requisitioned by a customer to attend that important business meeting or a family emergency or any other contingency which no other mode of transport provides the speed. Unlike a commercial airliner where a passenger has to go through check-in and security formalities, with stipulated timelines, a private jet allows the convenience of hopping on to the aircraft almost anytime. Invariably there is no scanning of passenger bags at the private airports; no removal of shoes, belts, jackets, laptops, etc; no waiting in queue for business class to board first and so on. Sometimes airlines fly at odd hours which means one has to get up at odd hours and travel to the airport which can be completely avoided in private travel.

Speed
It goes without saying that flying is the fastest mode of transport currently. In case of a private jet, since it covers invariably short distances non-stop, it is the fastest, sometimes even beats airlines as they have to go through a series of formalities before take-off and prior to landing. In remote locations, the private jets have the runway all for themselves. The turnaround times of these jets are also amazing as the number of passengers are few and luggage is minimal, the crew can get the engines soaring at double quick time. Even if one opts to travel from a busy airport, private jets can depart from a small facility called a fixed based operator (FBO), which cuts out all the chaos of a commercial terminal. The only hitch here is that at busy airports the mainline airlines are given preference in terms of take-off, landing, parking bay, etc.

Private and Confidential
One of the greatest advantages of private jet travel is that it remains ‘private’ which many celebrities, VIPs and others who have the money and clout would prefer. A celebrity can almost drive up to the jet in his or her limousine and hop on to the aircraft without even being noticed. Whereas in commercial flights, celebrities, even if they are travelling first or business class, will not have privacy and chances are that their moments in the air may be compromised.

Office in the Sky
Commercial airlines, which have now vastly improved on in-flight entertainment, however, does not provide any facility wherein a team of officials may not be able to sit in conference. This is quite possible in a private jet due to seat configuration. On a private charter, passengers can conduct business – on a laptop or conference call – without worrying who is listening or watching or who is being disturbed.

Flexibility
Depending upon the number of passengers travelling and the distance, the customer has the flexibility to choose from the many aircraft available – it could be a very light jet; midsize jet or a large jet. The package of travel is also an option that one can choose – wherein surface transportation, accommodation and food are taken care of.

Luxury
No doubt, private jet travel is associated with luxury, it need not always be. As many corporate houses have private jets to ferry their executives, customers and other stakeholders to remote plants/offices to conduct business in a day and return. One can walk around the aircraft, change seats, take a nap if you will in the bedroom (some have that luxury) or just take a shower before disembarking, to be fresh for the meeting. Indeed, private jet travel provides for luxury with sleeping quarters, inflight catering and entertainment and on ground limousine services.

With all the above features falling in place, private jet travel indeed is relatively stress free (imagine going through long queues, security scan, frisking, etc). Private air travel is no doubt a far superior means of air travel, except, of course, there is a price tag to it. For those who value time, there are both tangible and intangible benefits. All one requires is money or one should be important enough to be flown in a private aircraft. And we see that in India that this breed is growing by the day. ❯
Harris Poll survey released at NBAA confirmed that business aviation is utilised mainly by small and medium-size companies that typically fly turboprops or small jets to maximise employee efficiency and productivity while providing travel schedule flexibility.

By R. Chandrakanth

**Newsmaker:** During NBAA 2015, Aerion announced that Flexjet has placed a firm order for 20 of AS2 top speed is Mach 1.5, which will be the first commercially available supersonic business jet. With this development, Flexjet becomes the inaugural fleet purchaser of the AS2.
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he National Business Aviation Association’s (NBAA) 2015 Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition was once again a resounding success for attendees and exhibitors alike. “This year’s show was enormously successful,” said NBAA President and CEO Ed Bolen. “In addition to the strong participation from exhibitors and attendees alike, our industry’s largest event once again showcased the size and significance of the business aviation community, as well as the passion and professionalism of its people.”

NBAA’s 2015 convention, which took place from November 17 to 19, featured over 1,100 exhibitors in the Las Vegas Convention Center, and more than 27,000 attendees. Additionally, about 100 aircraft were displayed in several locations – at a sold-out static display at Henderson Executive Airport, at an indoor display inside the convention centre and at various exhibitor booths on the convention hall floor. Attendees from the show represented all 50 US states, and 96 countries.

“NBAA’s 2015 convention was a memorable event that showcased our industry’s vitality and relevance,” Bolen said. “We were thrilled by the enthusiasm and activity that marked each of the show’s three days, and we are already looking forward to next year’s convention in Orlando, Florida, from November 1 to 3, 2016.”

Survey confirms business aviation used by small and medium-size companies

The NBAA and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) released the results of survey conducted by Harris Poll that reconfirms that business aviation is utilised mainly by small and medium-size companies that typically fly turboprops or small jets to maximise employee efficiency and productivity while providing travel schedule flexibility. The poll also confirmed that a broad mix of employees – not primarily top executives – fly on business aircraft, which usually travel to community airports that have little or no scheduled airline service.

The survey indicated:

- Most companies using business aviation are small companies.
- Most companies using business aviation have only one airplane.
- More than half of the turbine-powered business airplanes flying today are turboprops or smaller jets.
- Many business aircraft are largely flown to towns with little or no airline service.
- A primary driver of business aircraft use is scheduling flexibility.
- Business aviation missions often involve multiple destinations.
- Companies use both business aircraft and the airlines as appropriate.
- Top management is on-board business aircraft less than half the time.
- Employees use their time on company aircraft to be highly effective and productive.
- Many business airplanes are used to fly humanitarian missions.
- An increasing number of companies are using business aircraft to fly internationally.

“Companies and organisations at all levels continue to recognise and rely on the immense benefits that only general aviation can offer,” GAMA President and CEO Pete Bunce said. “From helping small businesses grow to allowing aid organisations to get supplies quickly to those who need it most in times of natural disasters and medical emergencies, general aviation aircraft are essential tools, as this study demonstrates.”

During NBAA 2015, Flexjet has placed a firm order for 20 of Aerion’s AS2 aircraft, which will be the first commercially available supersonic business jet. Flexjet becomes the inaugural fleet purchaser of the AS2 from Aerion.

The Aerion AS2 business jet has a top speed of Mach 1.5, which is 67 per cent faster than the top cruise speeds of current or anticipated long-range subsonic jets. Carrying eight 1012 passengers, the AS2 has an intercontinental-capable range of 4,750 nautical miles at supersonic speed, saving three hours across the Atlantic versus subsonic aircraft and more than six hours on longer trans-Pacific routes. The three-engine jet, now under development by Aerion in collaboration with Airbus Group, will make its first flight in 2021 and enter service in 2023.

P&W launches the PT6A-140A turboprop

Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&W) announced the launch of the new PT6A-140A turboprop engine and the PT6A-140AG variant – bringing the world’s most popular turboprop family to more than 70 engine models strong. The new engines set the benchmark for performance and fuel efficiency delivering 15 per cent more power and five per cent better specific fuel consumption (SFC).

“Today’s announcement demonstrates our ability to continuously innovate and raise the bar with the PT6A family to make the world’s best engines even better,” said Denis Parisien, Vice President, General Aviation, P&W. “There are more than 70 PT6A engine models used for over 125 different aircraft applications around the globe – a testament to the PT6As unmatched versatility, performance and reliability.”
Embraer Legacy 500 sets new speed records

Embraer Executive Jets announced that the Legacy 500 midsize aircraft has set two new world speed records for its class, totaling six in 2015. “These new speed records reaffirm the Legacy 500’s superior performance and its suitability for transoceanic missions as well as coast-to-coast flights,” said Marco Tulio Pellegrini, President & CEO, Embraer Executive Jets. “The Legacy 500 is also setting new standards in comfort, technology, operational cost and reliability in the midsize class.”

The newest speed records were set for ‘Speed over a Recognised Course’ on a trip from the west coast of the United States to Hawaii, with five passengers on-board. The flight from Burbank to Kahului (Maui) covered 2,165 nm (4,010 km) in six hours, at an average ground speed of 422.25 mph (680 kmph), and the return flight to Phoenix achieved 525.97 mph (846 kmph), covering 2,470 nm (4,574 kmph) in five hours and 30 minutes.

Embraer Executive Jets promoted its fully certified business jet portfolio for the first time at NBAA. Embraer’s Phenom 100E, Phenom 300, Legacy 450, Legacy 500, Legacy 650 and Lineage 1000E, the broadest business jet portfolio in the market, were on static display. Completing 10 years in the market, Embraer Executive Jets global fleet exceeds 930 aircraft which are in operation in over 60 countries.

Gulfstream G500’s first cross-country trip

The flight test aircraft arrived at Henderson Executive Airport on November 13 to join the G650ER, G550, G450, G280 and G150 in Gulfstream’s static display.

The G500 flew from Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport into 75-knot headwinds and arrived at Henderson Executive 4 hours and 36 minutes later, accomplishing the 1,630-nautical-mile (3,018-km) flight at an average speed of Mach 0.85 and altitude of 45,000 feet (13,716 metres). Gulfstream test pilots Scott Martin and Scott Evans were at the controls, with flight test engineers Paul Laddow and Nathaniel Rutland providing on-board support.

After 12 months of extensive customer input, a redesigned G600 mock-up that maximises space, convenience, comfort and capabilities debuted at the air show. The redesigned features include a slimmer passenger service unit for increased headroom and maximised passenger space; an expanded side ledge; additional counter space in the galley; improved seating for enhanced comfort and ease of use; stone flooring in the entryway and forward lavatory; an ergonomically enhanced aft lavatory; enhanced cabin lighting and quieter drawer and cabinet latches.

The refinements made to the G600 cabin also will be reflected in the cabin of the all-new G500, for which certification is anticipated in 2017. Certification for the G600 is slated to follow in 2018.
Textron Aviation’s extensive range

Textron Aviation displayed 11 of its commercial business jet and turboprop aircraft, including the public debut of the Cessna Citation Longitude super-midsize business jet (pic above).

“As evidenced by our extensive line-up at the show, no other aircraft manufacturer offers the broad range of products that we do. We are excited to expand our product offering even further with the new Citation Longitude, which will be a revolution in the super-midsize segment,” said Kriya Shortt, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing. “The Citation Longitude is a perfect example of our commitment to meet our customers’ mission needs through continued product investment.”

In addition to the Citation Longitude, Textron Aviation also showcased its Cessna Citation Latitude, the company’s newest certified Citation business jet. The Latitude, which received FAA certification in June, is on track to achieve European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification by the end of the year.

Rounding out the company’s display of jets were the Citation X+, Citation Sovereign+, Citation XLS+, Citation CJ4, Citation CJ3+ and the Citation M2. “We’re thrilled to unveil the future of this larger Citation family. The debut of the Longitude has been highly anticipated among prospective customers, industry observers and our Textron Aviation team members,” said Scott Ernest, Textron Aviation President and CEO.

Beechcraft Corporation, a subsidiary of Textron Aviation, announced that it had received type certification from the FAA for the new Pro Line Fusion-equipped Beechcraft King Air 350i/ER turboprop. Deliveries are scheduled to begin before the end of the year. Pro Line Fusion-equipped King Air 350i and King Air 250 turboprops made their NBAA debuts at Textron Aviation’s static display.

“Our product roadmap is focused on satisfying our operators’ requirements, and making Pro Line Fusion standard on our production King Airs is in direct response to customer feedback,” said Christopher Tannahill, Senior Vice President, Turboprop Aircraft and Interior Design. “Offering the latest technology in the cockpit and cabin has resulted in great market reaction; our owners and operators clearly appreciate that these new features improve the overall flight experience and value of the King Air.”

Deliveries of the Fusion-equipped King Air 250 are expected to begin before the end of the year. Certification for the Pro Line Fusion-equipped King Air C90GTx is expected in the first half of 2016.
New ultra-long range Falcon 8X by Dassault

Dassault Aviation's new flagship, the Falcon 8X, also made its debut. Since first taking to the air last February, the three aircraft in the flight test programme have accumulated 380 flight hours over 185 flights, and are now more than two-thirds of the way towards FAA and EASA approval. The flight envelope has been fully opened and s/n 01 recently reached a speed of Mach 0.97. The portion of the programme dedicated to certification, including take-off and landing performance and validation of the aircraft's third-generation EASy flight deck, is also advanced.

Derived from the popular Falcon 7X and featuring many of its industry leading technologies, the ultra-long range Falcon 8X (6,450 nm/11,945 km) was unveiled in May 2014 at the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition and rolled out on December 17 of the same year. It will offer the greatest range and the longest cabin of any Falcon and the largest selection of cabin configurations in the industry.

Dassault Aviation Chairman and CEO Eric Trappier said: “We anticipate certification by mid-2016, on schedule, with initial deliveries to follow in the second half of the year.”

FalconEye makes debut

Dassault Aviation introduced its proprietary Combined Vision System (CVS) at the show. The system, dubbed FalconEye, was presented on a Falcon 2000LXS on display at the show. The aircraft is a production model due to be delivered soon after the exhibit ends.

“It's in our very DNA to innovate in ways that bring added value to the customer,” said Eric Trappier, Chairman and CEO of Dassault Aviation. “With the advent of our Combined Vision System, operators will benefit from a superior Head-Up Display (HUD) design that affords vastly improved situational awareness and safety regardless of the time of day or weather conditions.”

FalconEye is the first HUD system to combine synthetic, database-driven terrain mapping and actual thermal and low-light camera images, providing an unprecedented level of situational awareness to flight crews. The fourth-generation, multi-sensor camera is composed of six different sensors, fusing images from both the visible and infrared spectrums.

HondaJet nears FAA type certification

Honda Aircraft Company announced that it has completed all function and reliability (F&R) test conditions and is conclud ing F&R flights for the HondaJet. The announcement was made at NBAA. “Honda Aircraft will conclude testing with the FAA in a few days, which will pave the way for HondaJet type certification and entry into service,” said Honda Aircraft Company President and CEO Michimasa Fujino. “We are expecting FAA type certification of the world’s most advanced light jet very soon.” In October, Honda Aircraft completed all Part 23 certification flight testing. The flight test programme has exceeded 3,000 total flight hours and testing was conducted at more than 70 locations in the US.
Embraer Executive Jets announced the delivery of the first Phenom 100E in China. The aircraft will be operated by Wanfeng Aviation Co. Ltd, a subsidiary of Wanfeng Auto Holding Group.

“We are glad that Wanfeng chose Embraer’s Phenom 100E, and it’s an honour for us to support Wanfeng’s growth in China,” said Marco Tulio Pellegrini, President & CEO, Embraer Executive Jets. “Embraer’s entry-level Phenom 100E Executive Jet has won the hearts of owner-pilots, operators, fractional companies and airliners’ flight training academies worldwide due to its reliability, efficiency and advanced technology. The Phenom 100E will create more value for Wanfeng and bring delightful air travel experiences to its passengers.”

Guan Dongyuan, Senior Vice President of Embraer and President of Embraer China, said: “It is an important milestone to have Wanfeng as the launch customer of Phenom 100E in China. It reflects Wanfeng’s trust not only in Embraer Executive Jet products, but also in our Customer Support and Services. The Phenom 100E will help Wanfeng optimise its fleet structure and bring Wanfeng more business opportunities in the future.”

As of today, over 320 Phenom 100s are in operation in 26 countries.

The second PC-24 prototype is airborne!

The second PC-24 prototype (P02) took off from Buochs Airport recently on its maiden flight. The ‘Super Versatile Jet’ with call sign HB-VXB flew across Central Switzerland for a total of 82 minutes. Following on from the maiden flight of the first PC-24 prototype (P01) in May of this year, this first flight by P02 marks another major step forward in the Pilatus PC-24 development programme.

P02 is the second PC-24 to join the test flight programme comprising a total of around 2,300 hours in the air. After completing initial test flights in Switzerland, P02 will be deployed mainly in the USA and in Canada, where it will undergo various systems tests and certification flights in partnership with the systems suppliers. Special scrutiny will be accorded to the avionics systems and the autopilot, but the programme will also include cold weather trials and icing tests.

Capable of flying in and out of very short runways and unmade strips, the PC-24 is the world’s first ever business jet to come equipped with a cargo door as standard. The jet also features an extremely spacious cabin whose interior can be tailored to the customer’s personal requirements. All that makes it a ‘Super Versatile Jet,’ an aircraft that is designed for a wide variety of missions in line with individual needs. Certification and delivery of the first series production aircraft to customers is planned from the third quarter of 2017.
HondaJet receives type certification from FAA

The HondaJet received type certification from the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on December 9, 2015. Honda Aircraft Company and the FAA made the announcement at the Honda Aircraft headquarters in Greensboro, North Carolina.

The FAA presented the type certificate to Honda Aircraft Company President and CEO Michimasa Fujino in front of more than 2,000 people, including FAA Administrator Michael Huerta, government representatives, community leaders, HondaJet dealers, suppliers and Honda Aircraft associates.

“Achieving FAA type certification for the HondaJet is a monumental milestone for Honda,” said Fujino. “We established Honda Aircraft as a new aerospace company and introduced our first product — an advanced light jet with technologies developed from serious research activities. We designed, tested, and have now certified this clean-sheet design aircraft – an unprecedented challenge for Honda.”

Honda Aircraft Company validated the HondaJet’s performance, safety, function and reliability through rigorous ground and flight tests with the FAA. Total flight hours exceeded 3,000, with testing conducted at more than 70 locations across the United States.

“This day was achieved through the collaborative efforts of the FAA and Honda Aircraft Company,” said Melvin Taylor, Manager of the FAA’s Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office. “Collaboration is not easy, it often is a difficult subject. But when it is done successfully like this programme, the rewards are gratifying to us all.”

The HondaJet’s innovative Over-the-Wing Engine Mount configuration, natural-laminar flow wing and composite fuselage make it a higher performance, more fuel-efficient and more spacious light jet. The HondaJet is the fastest in its class at 420 knots (483 mph) and the most efficient in its class.

Embraer releases its 10-year market outlook for business aviation

Embraer Executive Jets released its 10-year market outlook for business aviation at the National Business Aviation Association Convention & Exhibition in Las Vegas, Nevada. The company forecasts a global demand of 9,100 new business jets, worth $259 billion. This is the total market opportunity to be serviced by all manufacturers and represents a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3 per cent per year over the next 10 years. The analysis foresees that demand is likely to exceed the last decade’s deliveries and market value, when approximately 8,190 business jets were delivered, worth $198 billion.

The new deliveries forecast reflects a higher potential demand coming from the US market as well as a reduction in the demand from emerging markets.

The small and medium jet segments are expected to represent the majority of the market, with nearly two thirds of the total deliveries, benefiting mostly from the opportunities out of the North American and European markets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global market outlook for business aviation per region</th>
<th>Deliveries (units)</th>
<th>Market value ($ billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>4,850</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe &amp; Africa</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; Asia-Pacific</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>259</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global market outlook for business aviation per segment</th>
<th>Deliveries (units)</th>
<th>Market value ($ billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Segment</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Light jets</td>
<td>2,420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium jets</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large jets</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a country like India with limited support from the industry and market, initiating 50 years ago (in 1964) publishing magazines relating to Army, Navy and Aviation sectors without any interruption is a commendable job on the part of SP Guide Publications. By this, SP Guide Publications has established the fact that continuing quality work in any field would result in success.

Narendra Modi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India

While we at SP’s cherish our journey started in 1964, founded by our Founder Editor and Founder Publisher Shri S P Baranwal; we do believe that the entry into 51st year and beyond is just a beginning for us. We therefore look forward to constantly evolving and expanding our qualitative efforts during coming years and coming decades.

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