

A SUPPLEMENT TO SP'S AVIATION



# BIZAVINDIA

VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 1

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FUTURE OF  
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## EXCLUSIVE

**ALI AHMED ALNAQBI**  
FOUNDING AND EXECUTIVE  
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# G800 NOW CERTIFIED



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#### ON THE COVER:

The recent US FAA, European EASA certifications for Gulfstream G800 confirms the ultra-long range G800 as the world's longest-range business aircraft, with enhanced performance, exceeding original expectations.

**Cover Photograph:**  
Gulfstream

A SUPPLEMENT TO SP'S AVIATION 2025

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As India charts its course toward the vision of *Viksit Bharat* (Developed India), Business and General Aviation are poised to play a pivotal role in strengthening and diversifying the national aviation ecosystem. However, challenges persist and a unified, solutions-oriented approach will be the key to resolving them while preserving the growth trajectory of the industry.

Dear Reader,

The encouraging pace of developments in recent months — including the import of nearly 10 new single-engine helicopters in just two months — is a testament to the growing momentum in this segment, underlined Harsh Vardhan Sharma, President of BAOA. In his letter in this edition of *BizAvIndia*, BAOA President further reflects on the success of the *BizAvIndia 2025* conference. The event drew participation from key stakeholders and senior officials from regulatory and policy-making bodies.

Manish Kumar Jha reports on the *BizAvIndia 2025* conference, which convened policymakers, industry experts, aviation leaders, and sector stakeholders to collectively chart a roadmap for the sector's future. Held under the theme "Transforming Business Aviation for *Viksit Bharat* – Policy Reforms, Sustainable Growth, and Innovations", the conference addressed the opportunities and challenges facing the sector, from policy reforms and sustainability imperatives to emerging business models and advanced technologies. The conference got a further boost by the active participation of Naveen Jindal, an Industrialist, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and a huge proponent of business aviation in India; and Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Director General of the DGCA India.

This issue features an exclusive interview with Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi, Founding and Executive Chairman of the Middle East and North Africa Business Aviation Association (MEBAA) and re-elected Chair of the IBAC Governing Board. Alnaqbi was quite forthcoming to our request for an interview during MEBAA 2024 and offered a candid perspective on Business Aviation's evolving role in the Middle East, its challenges, and the importance of reshaping public perception about the sector's value and contribution. Meanwhile, MEBAA 2024 reaffirmed the Middle East's growing influence in Business Aviation. Marked by strategic announcements and new collaborations, the show spotlighted technology innovation and a dynamic range of aircraft offerings. A show report on MEBAA 2024 is included in the magazine.

This edition also includes a detailed report on Gulfstream Aerospace's G800 long-range business jet that recently got certified in the US and Europe with FAA and EASA certifications. The Savannah, Georgia-based manufacturer announced today that it has secured the certifications for the new aircraft, the longest-range business jet in its fleet, after exceeding expectations during performance testing.

There is another report on the AERO 2025 show that witnessed remarkable participation from 760 exhibitors across 38 nations, featuring 328 aircraft and drawing over 32,000 visitors from 80+ countries.

Given the growing threat of GPS interference and spoofing incidents, this edition includes a special feature on best practices to counter GPS spoofing attacks. Pilots and OEMs recommend reporting the incident immediately to the air traffic controller.

All this and more in this issue of *BizAvIndia*. Welcome aboard and we wish you many happy landings!

J. Baranwal  
Editor-in-Chief

## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, BAOA



PRESIDENT



BUSINESS AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

Dear Members,

The BizAvIndia 2025 conference, on March 24, 2025, was a resounding success and marked a significant milestone in our journey. Held in New Delhi, this year's event witnessed unprecedented participation from key stakeholders, including the Member of Parliament Naveen Jindal, the Director General of Civil Aviation, and the Joint Secretary from the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Their presence and active involvement of senior officials from the DGCA and the Ministry of Civil Aviation brought great depth to the discussions. We also saw enthusiastic participation from our members, making this the biggest and most vibrant BizAv show ever hosted by BAOA in the capital. The deliberations were meaningful and enriching, reflecting the maturity and aspirations of India's General Aviation and Business Aviation (GABA) sector. We have recorded the key discussions and shared them with both the Ministry and DGCA. Follow-up meetings with both authorities are currently underway. We urge all members to continue engaging proactively and send their inputs on any suggested amendments to Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs) to MD BAOA, which will serve as the nodal point for collating these recommendations.

At the same time, we are facing a new challenge at Mumbai Airport, where General Aviation operators have been asked to vacate their existing parking stands on the pretext of development and improvement works at CSMIA. This matter is being taken up seriously through all appropriate channels. However, our preferred approach remains one of constructive collaboration with the airport operator, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and the safety regulator. We are confident that by working together, we can arrive at solutions that do not compromise the operational continuity of GA/BA in nation's commercial capital, Mumbai.

On the global front, India's remarkable growth story is capturing the attention of the world, and its positive ripple effects are being strongly felt across the world's GA/BA industry. Business and General Aviation are poised to play an instrumental role in building a strong and inclusive aviation ecosystem as we move toward the vision of Viksit Bharat. It is heartening to see about 10 new single engine helicopters imported into India during these two months.

Let us continue to stay united in our efforts to achieve sustainable and accelerated growth of our sector, while always keeping safety as our foremost priority. Thank you all for your continued commitment and participation.

Happy Landings!  
Jai Hind!

Harsh Vardhan Sharma  
President, BAOA.





NAVEEN JINDAL, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND THE CHIEF GUEST BEING WELCOMED BY HARSH VARDHAN SHARMA, PRESIDENT OF THE BUSINESS AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (BAOA)

# Shaping the Future of Business Aviation in India

PHOTOGRAPHS: BAAO

BY MANISH KUMAR JHA

The conference united industry experts, policymakers, aviation leaders, and stakeholders to deliberate and chart a strategic roadmap for the sector's future

**T**HE BIZAVINDIA CONFERENCE TOOK place on March 24, 2025, at the India International Centre (IIC) in New Delhi, was a landmark event for India's rapidly evolving business aviation sector. With the theme "Transforming Business Aviation for Viksit Bharat – Policy Reforms, Sustainable Growth, and Innovations," this conference aimed to address the sector's future trajectory, explore policy reforms, and advocate for sustainable practices while examining the innovative technologies that are driving change.

The Indian business aviation sector is poised for significant growth, buoyed by a rapidly expanding economy, a burgeoning affluent middle class, and increasing demand for private air travel. However, it faces its share of challenges, particularly in terms of policy reforms, environmental sustainability, and evolving business models. This conference brought together industry experts, policymakers, aviation leaders, and stakeholders to discuss and strategise the way forward for the sector.

### THE GROWTH STORY OF BUSINESS AVIATION IN INDIA

The Indian business aviation industry has witnessed steady growth in recent years, with more corporations, high-net-worth individuals (HNWI), and government entities utilising private aircraft for convenience, flexibility, and time savings. However, the sector continues to face several bottlenecks, particularly in terms of outdated policies, regulatory hurdles, and infrastructure gaps.

One of the key areas of focus at the BizAvIndia Conference was the pressing need for policy reforms. India's aviation policy is often criticised for being restrictive, with high taxes, complicated approval processes, and a lack of infrastructure in tier-2 and tier-3 cities. For the sector to thrive, there is a need for more streamlined procedures, tax incentives, and the creation of a more favourable business environment.

Naveen Jindal, Member of Parliament and the Chief Guest, laid out his perspectives on the immense scope and opportunities in business aviation in India, said, "Business aviation is an intriguing sector. It's fascinating to see how in countries like the US and in Europe, smaller aircraft vastly outnumber larger planes. In India, however, we have an inverted pyramid, with more large aircraft than small ones. There's hope for India to grow its fleet of smaller aircraft, which will not only meet business needs but also inspire a new generation of pilots and aviation enthusiasts."

He added, "In the US, one can drive directly to the aircraft, board, and fly internationally. In India, even for a domestic flight, passengers must undergo multiple security checks when transferring between flights, which wastes valuable time."

"Streamlining ramp-to-ramp transfers would significantly enhance efficiency," he opined.

Government initiatives such as the "Regional Connectivity Scheme" (UDAN) have laid the groundwork for expanding air travel to underserved regions, but business aviation requires a more nuanced approach that takes into account the specific needs of corporate jet users and operators. The conference will discuss how policies can be reimagined to foster greater industry growth, particularly as India moves closer to its vision of a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by 2047.

The representative of one of the key players in the global aviation sector, Airbus, which has a substantial presence in India, also threw light on the opportunities for growth in the Helicopter sector.



(TOP) FAIZ AHMED KIDWAI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE DGCA, SPEAKING TO THE AUDIENCE; (ABOVE) ASANGBA CHUBA AO, JOINT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (MOCA) ADDRESSING THE GATHERING.

Sustainability will also take centre stage. The aviation industry is under increasing pressure to reduce its carbon footprint, and business aviation is no exception. The rise of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), carbon offset programmes, and innovations in electric aircraft are part of the conversation. As the world grapples with climate change, business aviation will need to adopt green technologies and practices to ensure its long-term sustainability.

### IS FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP A FAILING MODEL?

A hot topic that sparked debate at the BizAvIndia Conference is the future of fractional ownership in India's business aviation sector. Fractional ownership—where multiple owners share the use and cost of a single aircraft—has been a popular model for private aviation in many parts of the world. However, India has faced challenges that have led some to question its viability.

In theory, fractional ownership should provide a cost-effective entry point for businesses and individuals who want to enjoy the benefits of private air travel without the full financial burden



**"ONCE THE RIGHT REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT IS IN PLACE, THE MARKET WILL NATURALLY DRIVE THE SECTOR FORWARD, AND THAT'S WHEN WE WILL SEE THE TRUE TRANSFORMATION"**

**— FAIZ AHMED KIDWAI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE DGCA INDIA**

of sole ownership. However, several factors have hindered the widespread adoption of fractional ownership in India. The lack of adequate regulatory frameworks, the absence of clear tax policies, and the complexity involved in structuring fractional deals have all contributed to its slow uptake. Additionally, high operating costs and the limited availability of suitable aircraft have made it challenging for companies to make the model economically viable.

Asangba Chuba Ao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) highlighted the issue and said, "The Ministry is actively working on improving the fractional ownership model, particularly in addressing challenges within the current tax regime. While fractional ownership exists in other countries, we are working to tailor a system that works for India's unique market and regulatory environment."

At the same time, fractional ownership does have potential, especially for companies with fluctuating or seasonal needs for private air travel. The model could offer cost-effective solutions for businesses looking to expand their operations or improve the mobility of their executives, especially if it is paired with more flexible policies and a more favourable market environment.

As Group Captain Rajesh K. Bali, Managing Director BAOA, also emphasised that fractional ownership models need more flexibility and simplification to reach a broader customer base. "Despite the challenges, business aviation remains indispensable. With the right policies, industry collaboration, and technological advancements, we can create a more efficient, sustainable, and accessible aviation sector that will remain relevant for decades to come."

While fractional ownership may not be the dominant model in India today, there is still room for innovation in this area. The panellists at the BizAvIndia Conference agreed that fractional ownership needs reform and restructuring to better align with the current economic and regulatory environment.

### A SECTOR POISED FOR GROWTH DESPITE CHALLENGES

Despite the challenges, the Indian business aviation sector is poised for significant growth. As the country's economy continues to expand, the demand for private air travel is set to increase, driven by the growing number of affluent individuals, multinational corporations, and government officials who see the value in efficiency and convenience. Moreover, as India's domestic and international markets continue to integrate, business aviation will be key to meeting the connectivity demands of a rapidly changing economy.

Advancements in aircraft technology, such as the development of smaller, more fuel-efficient aircraft and the rise of electric aviation, will also play a pivotal role in the growth of the sector. With greater accessibility to regional airports and improved



(TOP) NAVEEN JINDAL SHARING HIS VIEWS WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE BA/GA COMMUNITY; (ABOVE) K. NARAYANA RAO, DIRECTOR AT DIAL.

aviation infrastructure, the expansion of business aviation is likely to extend beyond the major metropolitan hubs like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, opening up new opportunities for regional business travel.

### BUSINESS AVIATION: A VITAL PLAYER IN GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY

On this Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Director General of the DGCA India, said, "India's aviation potential is at least two to three times its current capacity, especially in the fields of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. The question remains: Why haven't we realised this potential yet? What barriers are we facing? We have the right people in place, and now is the time to set ambitious goals to grow this sector—not just for business owners but for all Indians who stand to benefit."



**"WHILE FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP EXISTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, WE ARE WORKING TO TAILOR A SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR INDIA'S UNIQUE MARKET AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT"**

**— ASANGBA CHUBA AO, JOINT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION**



(TOP) MANEESH KUMAR, JOINT DIRECTOR GENERAL, DGCA;  
(ABOVE) SERDAR TAMER, DIRECTOR, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, JSSI.

Aviation is about connectivity and safety, DGCA is taking a comprehensive review of its regulatory frameworks. "Once the right regulatory environment is in place, the market will naturally drive the sector forward, and that's when we will see the true transformation," he said.

Asangba Chuba Ao also addressed the sector's growth potential, "We are actively working to align India's aviation sector with natural growth patterns. To achieve this, we need a significant increase in aircraft numbers. India is already the third-largest domestic aviation market, but we want to see the General and Business Aviation (GABA) sector grow both in size and quality."

He also pointed out the introduction of the Cape Town Convention Bill in the Rajya Sabha. The introduction of the

Bharatiya Viman Adhiniyam 2024, will further boost the growth of the sector.

Leasing and financing are critical for expanding India's business aviation fleet. High capital costs for aircraft acquisition make leasing a valuable option, allowing companies to access private jets without the financial strain of ownership. Financing mechanisms, such as leaseback agreements and structured loans, offer flexibility to businesses seeking to scale their aviation needs while preserving liquidity.

### BUSINESS AVIATION IN INDIA: PROGRESS AND POTENTIAL

K. Narayana Rao, Director at DIAL, spoke about the dramatic growth in business aviation since 2006. "When we began in 2006, there were fewer than 100 business aircraft in India. Today, that number has surpassed 300. We've also seen a surge in general aviation movements at Delhi Airport, growing from 6-9 daily flights to over 30-40. This sector will continue to grow, potentially reaching nearly 1,000 aircraft in the next 25 years," he said.

### THE PATH FORWARD: POLICY REFORMS AND INNOVATION

So, what is the way forward to achieve the potential growth opportunity? Group Captain R.K. Bali (Retd) concluded with, "Business aviation must evolve to meet the demands of a changing market, a shifting regulatory environment, and the growing need for sustainability. Advances in electric and hybrid aircraft, better air traffic management, and digital technologies will shape the future of the industry."

The BizAvIndia Conference 2025 was held at a crucial moment for India's business aviation industry. It offers a unique platform for industry leaders, policymakers, and aviation stakeholders to come together, share insights, and chart a roadmap for the sector's future. The theme of transforming business aviation for a "Viksit Bharat" encapsulates the collective vision of a more sustainable, innovative, and policy-driven aviation sector that can meet the demands of a rapidly developing economy.

As we look to the future, the conference highlights the opportunities for a sector that, while still facing challenges, is undeniably on the cusp of significant growth and transformation. Whether fractional ownership becomes a dominant model or evolves into a new framework altogether, the business aviation industry in India is set to soar to new heights in the years ahead. 

*Manish Kumar Jha is a Consulting & Contributing Editor for SP's Aviation, SP's Land Forces and SP's Naval Forces and a security expert. He writes on national security, military technology, strategic affairs & policies.*

### EXCLUSIVE

ALI AHMED ALNAQBI,  
FOUNDING AND EXECUTIVE  
CHAIRMAN, MEBAA - A FIRM  
AND DYNAMIC CRUSADER  
COMMITTED TO THE CONSISTENT  
GROWTH OF BUSINESS AVIATION  
INDUSTRY ACROSS THE MIDDLE  
EAST. HAS BEEN SELECTED  
AS CHAIR OF IBAC BOARD FOR  
SECOND CONSECUTIVE TENURE.



# “The Perception is What We Have to Change”

In an exclusive chat with **Jayant Baranwal**, Chairman and Managing Director, SP Guide Publications at the recently concluded MEBAA 2024, **Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi**, Chairman of the IBAC Governing Board, and Founding and Executive Chairman, Middle East and North Africa Business Aviation Association (MEBAA) shared his insights and vision on Business Aviation's Role, Challenges and a Sustainable Future

**Jayant Baranwal (Baranwal): What are the key roles business aviation play in the interest of world countries and society?**

**Ali Ahmed Alnaqbi (Alnaqbi):** Well, business aviation, you know, plays so many roles and the most important is, contribute in the growth of economies. The people who actually make the investment are our clients, so we carry them safely from one place to another place. Our role as business aviation is very important, taking the investors safely from one place to another place. Sometimes, we also take them to a new area where airline cannot reach and that's the leverage of having a business aircraft. The business aircraft can land not only in a big airport, it can land anywhere, with special permission. Airlines cannot go except to a hub, which we have seen. And then we are, as you know, part of economy development. We are part of the process of creation of jobs. We create jobs for thousands and millions of people around the world.

Business aviation is vital, when it comes to support, you know, like charities, and supporting those companies who needed help. We transfer sick people, who cannot be mingled with others on an airline, from one area to another area. We, in certain area, transfer organs of human to another hospital. It doesn't go by the airline for various reasons. So, we play so many roles, in addition to our existing set of roles. And one of the main things is, we help in making company profitable. So basically, we work with the companies. And most of the bigger companies in the world, are actually using private and business aircraft. The reason - they save time, and they don't have to wait so long with the airlines. They also are able to avoid long queues in the airport. And, you know, they want to do business and come back. So, it is a factor of business tool for profitability and creativity and making the company a success.

**Baranwal: Can you list down some of the major challenges the industry is still facing?**

**Alnaqbi:** Again, a lot of issues that the business aviation facing mainly come from the understanding and the

perception of business aviation. Now, people know what is the airline, but they think we are an airline, too. And when they realise that we are not like an airline, you know, we become an enemy again for them. But actually, the way we work, we contribute and we complement each other. Airline does a certain job, the cargo does certain work and we do certain work for certain people as well. So, the challenge is to change the perception. We are also under, I would say, attack, by protesters in Europe, different regions, because they think that we contribute in the CO<sub>2</sub>, the carbon emission. And that is absolutely fake, not true. Because if you look at all aviation, they contribute two per cent on CO<sub>2</sub>. Business aviation is 0.002 per cent of that percentage. So, we are less than two per cent of that two per cent. We are basically contributing nothing in the CO<sub>2</sub> emission, but we are still under attack, because we don't talk loudly and we don't speak too much. That's why we change the perception by doing shows. And we ask everybody to come and see this is what we are actually doing. Other things like the grey market and everywhere, it's always a problem. And we really work very hard to eliminate that. Have we succeeded? No. But we are working on it. So many people have to work together in order to get results.

**Baranwal: How do you find the journey of MEBAA and the industry in the Middle East?**

**Alnaqbi:** Well, we started MEBAA in 2006. There were a few companies in the whole region doing business aviation. There was one company in Jordan, three companies in UAE, four companies in Saudi, and so on and so forth. It was a very shy business. MEBAA came and started promoting the business, started talking to everybody. It is not luxury services only, but it's a business tool. So, business aviation is there for profitability for the reasonably bigger companies which need to save time, to fly to places where an airline cannot go. So, we started talking about all this, and then things have changed. A lot of companies started joining this region. Now in the region we have more than 370 companies doing charter, doing



**“WHEN WE STARTED  
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MROs, doing FBOs, doing refueling. All this has been done by the companies who serve airlines, but now have a dedicated company for us. So, in UAE, for example, if you look at the 2000s, there were about three companies. Now we have more than 35 companies. More than 10 times in Dubai, in Saudi and in Egypt. So, the market is growing, and MEBAA has paved the road for companies from abroad to come and check the opportunity here. And when they come and see the opportunity, within a few years you see they are opening their branches. Or, they move their headquarters to UAE, or the Middle East in general, for example. So that's a big growth driver.

**Baranwal: You will agree that the US still remains the biggest business aviation market. Why is it then visible that NBAA (their in-country body for business aviation industry) continues to fight for their rights?**

**Alnaqbi:** Well, as I mentioned, the perception is what we have to change. The perception of business aviation is a lot of VIPs own aircraft, a lot of decision-makers own aircraft. A lot of people who are very rich, high net worth, own aircraft. The people don't see beyond. As that represents maybe 30 per cent of our business. The other 70 per cent is corporate, which is for business. You have other 70 per cent of the market size doing chartering and doing corporate. So, in a market like the US, which has been there for quite a long time, it's saturated. And now it's come to the point that we have to fight with somebody. So, this is existing. When you become a success, like the NBAA, like the US market which is huge and very successful, there is a price you have to pay. And that's what we are seeing now. You see my point? Again, it's one country, it's controllable. The problem is here, in our region, when you have 24 countries. And you have to have an agreement from all the countries when you want to implement rules that help the business aviation or regulations. So, this is where the challenge is. But I think we were all going, at one stage, to convince everybody of our existence. Because our success, business aviation success, we become a threat to others. So, you then expect to be attacked. That's what happened in the United States. But again, more visibility for us, more help from the media, more help of showing our case and showing our stories and telling the world what we are actually doing. I think, all this will change the perception.

**Baranwal: And how do you see the upcoming role of business aviation industry towards a greener future?**

**Alnaqbi:** Of course, this is very important. Sustainability for us is essential. And SAF has been endorsed to be used fully by 2050. And of course, from IBAC perspective, which has an office at ICAO, we are fully committed to this. So, if you look at all aircraft now, all the new aircraft, their efficiency. They always come with a new product, new technology, efficiency therefore less carbon, less fuel. They're all green. They're all



ALI AHMED ALNAQBI BELIEVES THAT BUSINESS AVIATION PLAYS MANY ROLES IN ADDITION TO THE EXISTING SET OF ROLES

using SAF fuel. It's all contributing to this. So yes, we are understanding it. And we are working towards making, contributing to have the world reduce CO<sub>2</sub>.

**Baranwal: The cost of SAF is an issue?**

**Alnaqbi:** It's always an issue. What comes first, chicken or egg? Because when you produce something new, it's very expensive. And you only can reduce the cost if there's so much demand or good demand. If you manufacture 10 aircraft versus manufacturing 1,000 aircraft, the cost would be different. And that's what actually happens. So now the debate is about availability. What we are telling the companies is that you need to ask for it so that we can provide it to you. I think eventually this will be our direction, where we're going.

**Baranwal: And is the goal for 2050 achievable?**

**Alnaqbi:** Well, it's a goal. I hope it's not movable and it's a fixed goal. But everybody is working towards 2050. 

***This Exclusive interview was first published in SP's Aviation issue 1/2025***



EQUIPPED WITH ROLLS-ROYCE PEARL 700 ENGINES AND A GULFSTREAM-DESIGNED AERODYNAMIC WING, THE G800 DELIVERS ULTRALONG-RANGE, HIGH-SPEED PERFORMANCE WITH ENHANCED FUEL EFFICIENCY

# Gulfstream G800 Earns FAA and EASA Certifications

PHOTOGRAPHS: Gulfstream

BY SP'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

World's Longest-Range Business Aircraft  
Certified with Enhanced Performance  
Capabilities



**"THE G800 MARKS THE LATEST EVOLUTION OF BUSINESS AVIATION AS WE CONTINUE TO BUILD THE NEXT-GENERATION FLEET AND BRING INDUSTRY-LEADING PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY TO THE MARKET"**

**— MARK BURNS, PRESIDENT, GULFSTREAM**

**G**ULFSTREAM AEROSPACE ANNOUNCED THE all-new Gulfstream G800, the world's longest-range business aircraft, has earned type certification from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) along with certification from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and has done so with even greater performance capabilities than originally anticipated.

### CERTIFICATIONS WITH ENHANCED CAPABILITIES

The certifications confirm enhanced performance for the aircraft, including a range of 8,200 nautical miles/15,186 kilometres at the long-range cruise speed of Mach 0.85, an increase of 200 nm/370 km over original projections. The G800 also can travel 7,000 nm/12,964 km at its high-speed cruise of Mach 0.90 or an unprecedented 8,000 nm/14,816 km at Mach 0.87. The aircraft's maximum operating speed has increased to Mach 0.935 from Mach 0.925.

In addition, the G800 was certified with a balanced field length take-off distance of 5,812 feet/1,771 meters and a landing distance of 3,105 ft/946 m (standard ISA day, sea level), both shorter than initially announced, giving customers access to more airports.

"With the certification of the G800, Gulfstream has again exceeded expectations thanks to the expertise and rigor of our flight test, certification and manufacturing teams," said Mark

Burns, President, Gulfstream. "The G800 marks the latest evolution of business aviation as we continue to build the next-generation fleet and bring industry-leading performance and efficiency to the market. With the capability enhancements we have achieved, Gulfstream customers will greatly benefit from the increased flexibility and range the G800 offers."

### CERTIFICATION MILESTONES

In September 2023, Gulfstream announced that the all-new Gulfstream G800 Rolls-Royce Pearl 700 engines have earned Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification, bringing the aircraft programme another step closer towards entry into service and customer deliveries. "The G800 is introducing new standards for efficiency and performance in the business aviation industry thanks to the combination of Gulfstream aerodynamics and the Pearl 700's efficiencies. We are seeing great demand for the technology, cabin comfort and ultralong-range capabilities the G800 will provide our customers," said Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream.

Earlier in May 2023, Gulfstream's all-new ultralong-range Gulfstream G800 made its Continental debut, arriving in Geneva for the 2023 European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE2023). The aircraft flew from Savannah to Geneva on a blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from Gulfstream's dedicated supply. Till then, all G800 test flights

(LEFT-RIGHT) THE AIRCRAFT FEATURES THE INDUSTRY'S LOWEST CABIN ALTITUDE, 100 PER CENT FRESH AIR, A PLASMA IONIZATION PURIFICATION SYSTEM, AND UP TO FOUR CONFIGURABLE LIVING AREAS





GULFSTREAM IS SEEING GREAT DEMAND FOR THE TECHNOLOGY, CABIN COMFORT AND ULTRALONG-RANGE CAPABILITIES THAT THE G800 WILL PROVIDE

originating from Gulfstream's Savannah headquarters have flown on a SAF blend.

The Gulfstream G800 had made its first international flight on July 15, 2022, just weeks after the aircraft's first flight. The G800 flew from Savannah to Gulfstream Customer Support's Farnborough, England, facility in support of Gulfstream's participation in the Farnborough International Airshow. The G800 made its first flight on June 28 and shortly thereafter, the Gulfstream flight test team completed additional testing requirements, including a long duration flight of more than eight hours.

### UNMATCHED COMFORT AND INNOVATIONS

The G800 is a marvel of performance and efficiency as it cruises for a globe-sweeping 8,200 nm/15,186 km at Mach 0.85. Extend your reach to more people and places around the world in a single flight. The G800 links you nonstop to more destinations around the world than any other business aircraft. As you fly greater distances at top speeds, you gain time, the most precious commodity of all. Gulfstream's high-speed range advantage can save you up to 1.5 hours on flights longer than 6,500 nm/12,038 km.

Enjoy the freedom of a cabin that accommodates all your moments, from focused work to relaxation and sleep. An elegantly appointed interior outfitted with the finest materials surrounds you in comfort and convenience. Stay connected with high-speed Wi-Fi coverage and breathe easy in an environment of 100 per cent fresh air, renewed every two to three minutes and purified by our plasma ionization system. High-definition LED lighting allows you to finetune your interior environment and ease into new time zones, or choose our ultrahigh-definition upgrade featuring circadian rhythm technology to further enhance your cabin experience.

### NEXT-GENERATION ADVANCEMENTS

Rolls-Royce Pearl 700 engines team up with Gulfstream's aerodynamic fuselage, clean wing and all-new winglets to power you farther faster while delivering impressive fuel-efficiency. Gulfstream's next-generation fleet leads the industry, with fuel-efficiency gains as much as 33 per cent over predecessor models. "The Gulfstream team never ceases to test the boundaries of what is possible while ensuring the highest standards of safety, quality and customer commitment we are known for," said Burns. "We have been preparing for this accomplishment and are poised for a seamless G800 entry into service as US and European customer deliveries begin."

Gulfstream's award-winning Symmetry Flight Deck has revolutionised business aviation with vast improvements in safety and efficiency. Active control sidesticks—an industry first—increase nonverbal communication between pilots through tactile cues. Ten touch-screen displays—the most extensive use in business aviation—work in sync with Phase-of-Flight intelligence to reduce pilot workload and aircraft startup time. Plus, flight deck commonalities across our large cabin aircraft streamline pilot certification and fleet management. The dual head-up display features Gulfstream's new Combined Vision System (CVS) that unites Enhanced Flight Vision System (EFVS) and Synthetic Vision System (SVS) in a single image, helping increase pilot situational awareness and access to more airports.

The G800 presents a compelling combination of high-speed aerodynamics and fuel-efficient engines to decrease emissions and save flying time for the customers. Equipped with latest advancements in technology and innovation, the G800 adds the industry's longest range to Gulfstream's aircraft portfolio. 



GLIMPSES OF DISPLAY AT AERO 2025: THE 2025 EDITION OF AERO, HELD IN FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, REAFFIRMED ITS STATUS AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING TRADE FAIRS FOR GENERAL AVIATION, AIR SPORTS, AND BUSINESS AVIATION

# AERO 2025 – A Landmark for Global General Aviation

PHOTOGRAPHS: aero-expo.com

BY SP'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

This year's edition made headlines by featuring the largest number of business jets ever displayed at a European trade fair, underscoring the growing importance of Business Aviation within the event

**A**ERO 2025 ONCE AGAIN demonstrated its unique position as Europe's most comprehensive General Aviation trade fair. From air sports aircraft to helicopters and business jets, the show reflected the full spectrum of aviation at Lake Constance, attracting strong international participation and visitor numbers.

This year's edition made headlines by featuring the largest number of business jets ever displayed at a European trade fair, underscoring the growing importance of Business Aviation within the event. The exhibition grounds' direct taxiway connection to Bodensee Airport allowed aircraft to taxi from the airport to the static display and into the halls – a distinctive infrastructure feature unique in Europe.

## THE BEST EVER EDITION

The 31st edition of AERO, held in Friedrichshafen in 2025, reaffirmed its status as one of the world's leading trade fairs for general aviation, air sports, and business aviation. This year's event saw huge participation of nearly 760 exhibitors from 38 nations showcasing 328 aircraft – the highest number ever displayed at an AERO – ranging from drones and microlights to gliders, piston aircraft, helicopters, and ultra long-range business jets.

Drawing 32,100 visitors from over 80 countries, the show hosted the largest gathering of business aircraft seen at a European trade fair this year. Business aviation had a strong showing, with the presence of all leading business aircraft. A dedicated Business Aviation Dome, a transparent 2,000 square metre hangar in the static display, formed the centrepiece of this segment and became a focal point for exhibitors and attendees alike.

Organisers declared the show a resounding success. Stefan Reisinger, CEO of fairnamic GmbH, called AERO 2025 a "precision landing," highlighting the event's expanded relevance and the successful introduction of the Business Aviation Show Hub. Show Director Tobias Bretzel noted that the show not only met but exceeded expectations, with exhibitors reporting brisk business and an enthusiastic industry atmosphere. Bretzel described it as "the best AERO ever" and confirmed plans to expand the exhibition area for 2026.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SHOW

AERO 2025 reinforced its reputation as a trade show of innovations. Among several premieres, highlights included the world debut of the Chinese RX4E, the first certified four-seater electric aircraft, shown both in the static display and at the e-Flight Airshow. Pilatus introduced its PC-12 PRO turboprop in a global trade fair premiere, while the Smartflyer hybrid-electric prototype made its public debut after its November 2024 rollout. The event also spotlighted cutting-edge propulsion technologies, from hydrogen fuel cells to hybrid-electric systems, with active participation from startups, research centers, and established manufacturers.

The single- and twin-engine piston aircraft segment, forming the backbone of general aviation and pilot training, was strongly represented, reflecting Germany's active fleet of over 21,000 aircraft, including 7,200 in these classes alone.

The Zeppelin CAT Hall A1 remained the epicenter for sailplane displays, while the ultralight segment impressed with its diversity and technological innovation. The Heli-Hangar in Hall B5 showcased a record 30 helicopters, including models from Airbus Helicopters, Bell, Robinson, and Guimbal.

## SPECIAL FOCUS AREAS AT AERO 2025

- **Ultralight Segment:** A particularly innovative sector at AERO 2025, enhanced by Germany's 600 kg weight limit increase, allowing more advanced aircraft designs.
- **AERO Gliding Expo:** Glider manufacturers return in Hall A1, preceding a two-year participation rhythm.
- **International & Regional Pavilions:** Over 10 dedicated pavilions confirmed, including national and cluster pavilions from the Czech Republic, Netherlands, China (first-time Innovation Pavilion), and several German aerospace regions such as Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, Bremen.
- **e-flight expo (Hall A7):** Featuring sustainable aviation innovations from the Dutch Pavilion and debut Chinese Innovation Pavilion.
- **Sustainable Aviation Trail:** Showcasing forward-thinking companies in hydrogen propulsion, electric aircraft, advanced avionics, and lightweight materials.

Two airshows added further excitement to the programme. On April 10, the e-Flight Airshow returned, showcasing electric aircraft in flight. A historic highlight came with the European flight debut of the RX4E – a certified electric aircraft from China, marking its first public appearance outside its home country. On April 12, the traditional airshow captivated visitors with aerobatics and glider displays, coinciding with AERO's Family Day, where families enjoyed discounted on-site ticket pricing.

The ultralight segment impressed with a wide selection of innovative aircraft, enabled by Germany's 600-kilogram weight limit introduced two years ago. Glider manufacturers also returned in force this year before resuming their biennial participation schedule.

National pavilions remained a strong feature of the event. The Dutch Pavilion, introduced in 2024, made a successful return, while a new Chinese national pavilion debuted, focusing on sustainable aviation solutions.

## AERO DRONES & HELICOPTER HANGAR

The Helicopter Hangar featured leading OEMs including Airbus, Bell, and Leonardo, alongside suppliers and operators. Together with the German Helicopter Association (DHV), a four-day conference programme spotlighted rotorcraft industry developments.

The successful "trade fair within a trade fair" – AERO Drones – continued on its strong course at AERO 2025. This year, it relocated to Hall B4 for the first three days of the show.

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have become an integral part of modern life, with applications ranging from agriculture and emergency services to recreational use and specialised security operations. AERO Drones showcased this broad spectrum from April 9 to 11, 2025, within the main AERO event in Friedrichshafen.

Responding to popular demand, the move to Hall B4 provided more exhibition space and positioned the event closer to the Helicopter Hangar in Hall B5, promoting a stronger exchange between drone and helicopter operators sharing the same airspace.

AERO show director Tobias Bretzel expressed his satisfaction in continuing the partnership with the Baden-Württemberg Police and welcoming a new partner, the Technisches Hilfswerk (THW), both of whom brought extensive UAV operational experience to the event.

Martin Landgraf, Head of the Baden-Württemberg Police Helicopter Squadron, emphasised the value of exchanging expertise



**THE MOST ADVANCED SINGLE:** THE BRAND-NEW PC-12 PRO IS THE MOST TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED, BEST-PERFORMING AND MOST RELIABLE AIRCRAFT IN ITS CLASS

with fellow UAV operators at AERO Drones, highlighting the event's efficiency and importance for operational collaboration.

### AVIATION CAREERS AT AERO 2025

With increasing demand for pilots, engineers, skilled workers, and software specialists, many companies used AERO 2025 as a platform to attract young talent and showcase career opportunities within the aviation industry.

The AERO Conferences featured over 200 topics, covering everything from the AERO Hydrogen & Battery Summit to General Aviation Academy training, fostering international AERO 2025 addressing the industry's pressing need for skilled professionals.

The AERO Career Days on April 11–12 hosted over 30 companies offering career opportunities across pilot training, engineering, maintenance, and aviation services.

### SUSTAINABILITY TAKES CENTER STAGE AT AERO 2025

Friedrichshafen reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable aviation at AERO 2025, held from April 9 to 12. As the industry works towards its climate-neutral-by-2050 target, over 130 exhibitors participated in this year's expanded Sustainable Aviation Trail — the highest number to date — with green balloons marking their stands.

General Aviation continues to play a vital role as a testbed for sustainable technologies, offering a fast, flexible platform for trials before larger-scale applications. Reflecting this, the e-flight-expo, part of AERO since 2009, highlighted electric flight's progress, including two certified all-electric aircraft. The e-Flight Airshow on April 10 showcased a silent airborne display of electric aircraft between 11:45 and 12:45.

The sustainability focus extended to the conference halls, with the 3rd Hydrogen and Battery Summit opening on April 8–9. Leading experts shared projects and debated pathways to climate-neutral aviation, from battery-electric and hydrogen fuel cell systems to hybrid drives and sustainable fuels — a future still being shaped amid both innovation and market challenges.

AERO 2025 also introduced several world premieres in green aviation, reaffirming its role as a launchpad for the future of sustainable flight.

Throughout the event, visitors experienced numerous world, European, and German premieres — particularly in green aviation technology — both on the ground and in the air, reaffirming AERO's role as a launch platform for the industry's sustainable future.

### GENERAL AVIATION OUTLOOK

AERO continues to embody the full spectrum of General Aviation — from air sports to business jets. The sector looks ahead with optimism, with strong private demand for single and twin-engine piston aircraft and consistent global orders for training aircraft driven by rising demand for professional pilots.

AERO remains a vital platform for cross-sectoral exchange, with General Aviation continuing to serve as an innovation incubator — pioneering technologies such as glass cockpits, winglets, and composite structures, which often find applications in commercial aviation. AERO's growing international footprint is highlighted, with upcoming editions announced: AERO South Africa at Lanseria International Airport from June 25–27, 2025, AERO Asia in Zhuhai, China, from November 6–9, 2025, and the next Friedrichshafen edition already scheduled for April 22–25, 2026. **BAI**

## MAJOR ATTRACTIONS: AERO 2025



**Pilatus PC-12 PRO:** Another world premiere at AERO was the unveiling of the PC-12 PRO, hailed by Swiss manufacturer Pilatus Aircraft as the most advanced single-engine turboprop ever built. The aircraft boasts a completely redesigned cockpit, cutting-edge safety systems including Autoland, Smart Glide, and Electronic Stability, along with refreshed interior and livery options. At its core lies the new Pilatus Advanced Cockpit Environment (ACE), built around the Garmin G3000 Prime. Three large 14-inch high-resolution primary displays and two 7-inch touchscreen secondaries, coupled with a custom Pilatus cursor control device, offer an intuitive, seamless pilot interface throughout all phases of flight. [BAI](#)



**Smartflyer SFX1:** Making its debut appearance at an airshow, the Smartflyer SFX1 from Grenchen, Switzerland, was one of the few aircraft designed entirely around electric propulsion. This innovative hybrid-electric aircraft celebrated its rollout on November 6, 2024. Constructed from carbon fiber composite materials, the four-seater reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50 per cent compared to conventional aircraft in its class, operates 60 per cent more quietly, and offers a range of 431 nautical miles (800 km). Its electric drive system promises improved efficiency, simplified maintenance, and operating costs 50 per cent lower than those of comparable piston-powered aircraft. [BAI](#)



**Oskar Ursinus Vereinigung (OUV):** Celebrating grassroots aviation, Germany's OUV — a decentralised community of over 1,200 members — showcased self-built aircraft reflecting pure aviation passion. This year's exhibits include the ultralight flying wing Schneewittchen, the Weller Rebell UL kitplane, aerobatic two-seater Van's Aircraft RV-7A, Cherry BX2, CAP 232 aerobatic aircraft, and the CriCri, the world's smallest twin-engine aircraft. Also on display was the first-generation Skywalker ultralight aircraft, part of the OUV youth project "Students Build an Airplane". [BAI](#)



**Dovetail Electric Aviation:** Headquartered in Australia and Spain, Dovetail Electric Aviation presented its pioneering Dovepower drive system and Dovepack energy storage solution for the first time in Europe. Specialising in the conversion of existing aircraft to electric and hydrogen-electric propulsion systems, Dovetail's Dovepower engine is tailored for CS-23 certified aircraft, replacing traditional turboprops with a highly efficient, low-noise electric motor. The company is currently integrating Dovepower into a Cessna Caravan, seeking STC (Supplemental Type Certificate) approval. Once certified, this will convert the world's best-selling single-engine turboprop into a fully zero-emission platform with up to 40 per cent lower operating costs. Dovetail has already secured 70 pre-orders for these conversions. [BAI](#)



**MT-Propeller Innovations:** From Straubing-Wallmühle airfield, Bavaria, MT-Propeller brought forward a landmark conversion at AERO 2025: the transformation of a Piper Meridian with a PT6A-135 engine and five-blade propeller. The upgrade reduces both maintenance and operational costs. The conversion lowers propeller speed from 2000 to 1900 RPM, achieving a substantial reduction in noise levels — from 74.9 dB(A) to 66.9 dB(A) at a takeoff weight of 1,999 kg. [BAI](#)



**Turbotech:** French propulsion specialist Turbotech continues to revolutionise aviation propulsion systems as the first company worldwide to develop regenerative turbines for aviation. Partnered with Le Guellec, a microtube heat exchanger pioneer, Turbotech's systems drastically cut turbine environmental impact. Its flagship TP-R90 turboprop offers a compact, reliable, and vibration-free solution for light aircraft, helicopters and drones, combining gas turbine advantages with exceptional fuel economy and poly-fuel capability for extended missions. Turbotech also leads the BeauHyFuel research project — a collaboration with Elixir Aircraft, Safran, Air Liquide, and Daher — developing a hydrogen propulsion chain for light aviation. By September 2024, the project successfully completed test bench runs of a hydrogen-powered regenerative turboprop fed from a liquid hydrogen tank. [BAI](#)



BUSINESS AVIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS EXPERIENCING REMARKABLE GROWTH, DRIVEN BY STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS, ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION, AND INCREASING DEMAND FOR PRIVATE TRAVEL

# A Spectacular Showcase of Aircraft & Collaborations

BY SP'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MEBA 2024 was marked by a series of groundbreaking announcements and collaborations, reflecting the sector's innovation, growth, and adaptability to emerging trends

**T**HE MEBA SHOW 2024 concluded on a high note, cementing its status as a transformative platform for the business aviation industry. Over its duration, the event was marked by a series of groundbreaking announcements and collaborations, reflecting the sector's innovation, growth, and adaptability to emerging trends.

The MEBA show also highlighted the growing role of sustainability and technology in aviation. The show also spotlighted regional and global business expansions. Gama Aviation secured its first post-Brexit EASA air operator certificate (AOC) in Malta, allowing its managed fleet, including Gulfstream G650 and Bombardier Global aircraft, full access to the

EU charter market. Similarly, Aero-Dienst received certification from the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) as an approved maintenance organisation, enhancing its MRO capabilities in the Gulf region.

The MEBA Show 2024's dynamic array of announcements and partnerships reaffirmed its reputation as a cornerstone event for the global business aviation community. From technological advancements to sustainability initiatives, the event provided a glimpse into the future of the industry, highlighting its resilience and capacity for innovation amidst evolving challenges. Some of the key announcements and deals from the show are highlighted here.

- Honeywell signed a pivotal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sino Jet, focusing on advancing aviation services and developing cutting-edge technologies.
- Ayla Aviation LLC revealed a strategic partnership with Satpelda Satellite Imagery to integrate satellite technology into aerial operations, enhancing both safety and efficiency.
- MD ONBOARD, in collaboration with Laerdal, introduced advanced inflight medical advisory solutions, redefining passenger safety and operational standards in the skies.
- Qatar Executive announced significant enhancements to its fleet. Its Gulfstream G650ER jets are set to feature Starlink connectivity, ensuring superior onboard internet access, while its Gulfstream G700 aircraft integrated the MedAire360 system. This advanced solution provides real-time medical diagnostics and security intelligence, prioritising passenger and crew safety during flights.
- Victor, a private charter platform, launched the first Arabic-language jet charter app, catering to the rapidly growing MENA market. The app reflects the region's increasing demand for private aviation, with Victor reporting a 166 per cent surge in UAE-based bookings over the past seven months. This innovative platform also allows users to select sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for flights, underscoring a commitment to eco-conscious travel.
- Saudi Arabia's General Authority for Civil Aviation (GACA) introduced annual permits for private aircraft owners, streamlining processes and reducing bureaucratic hurdles for non-commercial flights. The initiative complements Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 by facilitating private air travel and supporting the country's growing aviation ambitions.
- Airbus Corporate Jets celebrated a standout year, with eight orders and three commitments for its aircraft, marking one of its strongest performances in 17 years. In a fireside chat, Chadi Saade, President of Airbus Corporate Jets, celebrated a record year with eight orders and three commitments, crediting post-COVID momentum for boosting business aviation as a vital tool for diplomacy, business, and cooperation. He highlighted the ACJ TwoTwenty's unique positioning in terms of space, pricing, and operational efficiency.
- Pilatus appointed Jet Aviation at Dubai International Airport as an authorised service center for its PC-24 jets, expanding support for operators in the region.
- AMAC Aerospace diversified its offerings by introducing Starlink satellite communication systems and advanced missile defence technology for aircraft upgrades.
- UAS International Trip Support ventured into business aircraft sales and management, launching a managed fleet anchored by a Bombardier Global Express based in Sharjah. This move reflects the booming demand for private aviation in the Middle East.
- Essential Jet Solutions (EJS) partnered with MySky to leverage AI-powered spend management in procurement, streamlining processes for business aviation operators. MedAire expanded its offerings with AI-driven security updates and enhanced crew training programmes tailored for operators in the Middle East.

### AN ARRAY OF DISPLAY AND UNVEILING MOMENTS

The MEBA Show 2024 brought together an extraordinary array of aircraft, state-of-the-art technologies, and pioneering solutions, solidifying its status as the premier platform for business aviation in the Middle East and North Africa. The static display, one of the most highly anticipated highlights of the event, featured 30 aircraft from industry leaders, including Airbus Corporate Jets, Boeing Business Jets, Bombardier, Dassault Aviation, Embraer, Gulfstream, Textron, RoyalJet, Qatar Executive, VISTA, Falcon, Comlux, and Aloula Aviation.

Notably, 12 exhibitors showcased their aircraft for the first time at the event, adding a fresh dimension to the static display.

Among the star attractions, Boeing Business Jets returned to the MEBA Show with three VIP Bizliners on display: two BBJ1s and the larger BBJ2, based on the Boeing 737-700 and -800 platforms, respectively. Dubai-based Action Aviation partnered with Boeing to showcase its BBJ1 (tail number P4-999), while Abu Dhabi-based Royal Jet displayed another BBJ1. As the world's largest BBJ operator, Royal Jet emphasised its leadership in executive aviation. Meanwhile, Monaco-based Opus Aero exhibited the BBJ2, which boasts 25 per cent more cabin space, double the cargo volume of the BBJ1, and luxurious features like a private stateroom with an ensuite shower, a dining area, and a lounge.

Greenpoint Technologies, a leader in VVIP interior design, highlighted its innovative concepts for large aircraft such as the BBJ 777-9 and 787-9. The company presented its "Oasis" interior for the BBJ 777-9 and announced that its "AeroSuite" design for the BBJ 787-9 is slated for certification next year.

First-time exhibitor Green Power Turbine Systems unveiled its compact TPE200 turboprop engine, which delivers 260 shp and features a fully digital electronic control. Expected to receive EASA certification within a year, the TPE200 drew significant interest for its advanced capabilities and compact design.

Austria-based VOO Flights demonstrated its software solution, which integrates seamlessly with charter operators' workflows, enabling "tech brokers" to access a wide range of aircraft options with ease.

This year's MEBA Show was not just about showcasing aircraft—it was a celebration of innovation and progress in business aviation. From advanced aircraft interiors to groundbreaking propulsion systems and digital solutions, the event



### THE MEBA SHOW 2024 SHOWCASED THE MIDDLE EAST'S GROWING INFLUENCE IN BUSINESS AVIATION, WITH GROUNDBREAKING ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY, SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES, AND A DYNAMIC ARRAY OF AIRCRAFT, SOLIDIFYING THE REGION'S ROLE AS A GLOBAL HUB



**STAR ATTRACTIONS AT MEBAA 2024:**

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) BOEING BUSINESS JET; GULFSTREAM'S MARKET LEADING AIRCRAFT; EMBRAER PHENOM 300E AND DASSAULT'S RANGE OF AIRCRAFT.

highlighted the industry's dynamic future while reinforcing the Middle East's role as a global hub for business aviation.

**LANDMARK DEALS LAID**

The MEBAA Show 2024 in Dubai concluded with a series of groundbreaking partnerships and announcements that underscored its role as the Middle East's premier platform for business aviation. Collaboration took center stage, with industry leaders forging alliances and unveiling initiatives to drive the sector forward.

RoyalJet made headlines by signing a MoU with Airbus Corporate Jets, committing to purchase three ACJ320neo VVIP jets with options for six additional aircraft. The deal, valued between \$330 million and \$1 billion, represents a decade of negotiations between the two companies. Delivery of the jets is scheduled for 2026, with outfitting expected to take 10 to 14 months. RoyalJet's CEO, Shafiu Syed, emphasised the significance of the agreement, calling it a milestone in the company's charter fleet diversification.

Honeywell also announced an MoU with Sino Jet, focusing on advanced aviation services and next-generation connectivity technologies. Central to this collaboration is the JetWave X Satcom system, which promises enhanced data speeds exceeding 30 Mbps, with the potential for 100 Mbps in high-traffic corridors. This partnership aligns with Honeywell's strategic focus on aviation megatrends and future technology development.

Further expanding its fleet, Dubai-based IC Leasing inked a deal for its second Dassault Falcon 2000LXS. The aircraft, set for

delivery in the second quarter of 2025, will be operated by DC Aviation from Stuttgart, Germany. The lease-to-purchase program offered by IC Leasing highlights its innovative approach to making jet acquisition more accessible.

UAS International Trip Support and Leon Software announced a partnership to integrate their trip management and flight planning platforms. This collaboration aims to streamline operations for business aircraft operators, enabling seamless data management and operational efficiency. Customers will benefit from a unified system that simplifies tasks ranging from trip creation to flight scheduling.

Jetex and Joby Aviation revealed plans to install electric aircraft charging infrastructure at Jetex's FBOs in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. This initiative supports Joby's vision of launching eVTOL air taxi services in the UAE by 2025, with the chargers being compatible with other electric aircraft, promoting sustainable aviation solutions.

European FBO operator AviaVIP unveiled the AviaVIP Club in collaboration with Egypt's Aviary and the UAE's Falcon Elite, enhancing VIP services across 13 Egyptian airports and beyond. Meanwhile, AMAC Aerospace announced its diversification into advanced technologies, offering installations for Starlink satellite communications and Elbit's missile defense systems.

As the MEBAA Show continues to foster innovation and collaboration, these deals and initiatives underline the region's growing influence in the global business aviation landscape. **BAI**



AIRCRAFT ARE INCREASINGLY FACING INCIDENTS OF GPS SPOOFING AND PILOTS SHOULD NOTIFY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OF THESE EVENTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

## Best Practices to Fight GPS Spoofing Attacks

ILLUSTRATION: SP's Team

COURTESY NBAA

As their experience dealing with GPS interference increases, Pilots and OEMs are becoming much more aware of the threat and what they can do to stay ahead of the problem

**B**USINESS AIRCRAFT FLIGHT CREWS and mission planning specialists are reporting frequent incidents of GPS jamming or spoofing interference during international trips, especially in the Middle East. Mitigating these incidents first means being able to identify them as soon as they occur.

“Spoofing or jamming simply refers to the GPS receiving counterfeit signals, and, because they look like real signals, the equipment is going to accept them,” said Simon Innocent, Senior Director of offering management for Honeywell’s commercial navigation systems. “GPS signals are relatively weak, so it’s rather easy to overpower them with stronger, ground-based signals.”

Captain Daniel Galvin, Senior Captain and Safety and Standards Captain for MP Air, a Part 91 operator that frequently flies missions to the Middle East, said he’s been spoofed six or eight times during recent trips to the region. “What was unusual, was that I went there and back early in February and didn’t get spoofed. That was probably the first time in the last 18 months that it didn’t happen.”

As their experience dealing with GPS interference increases, Galvin said his colleagues are becoming much more aware of the threat and what they can do to stay ahead of the problem. “We always follow our OEM recommended procedures, and we recommend having the RMI [radio magnetic indicator] pulled up with a ground-based navigation source, just for checking,” said Galvin. “We can start to see things happening on the displays.”

#### SIGNS OF POSSIBLE GPS INTERFERENCE

Honeywell’s Innocent explained that pilots can see several things to alert them that GPS has been compromised. He said the most likely clue is a quick position shift.

“We’ve seen jumps of 50 miles to several hundred miles in a GPS location,” Galvin said. “Also, depending on how the aircraft is equipped, you can also have CAS messages pop up to show discrepancies between the GPS and other NAV sources like the IRS [inertial reference system],” he said. “And since modern avionics are all integrated, GPS spoofing can impact the performance of anything that gets data from the receiver.”

“Some modern avionics are going to have greater resistance to spoofing, however, it will still have some impact on the system’s performance,” Innocent said. “We have some additional software updates coming that will further help increase the GPS system’s ability to better detect and mitigate spoofing.”

“We tell our pilots not to totally focus on what they expect to see but look at other ways spoofing can manifest in ways you are not expecting,” Galvin said. “If you go in with the mindset that ‘this or that’ will happen, you may miss something else that can impact your flight.”



**“SPOOFING OR JAMMING SIMPLY REFERS TO THE GPS RECEIVING COUNTERFEIT SIGNALS, AND, BECAUSE THEY LOOK LIKE REAL SIGNALS, THE EQUIPMENT IS GOING TO ACCEPT THEM”**

#### USING HANDHELD GPS UNITS

Flight crews in Galvin’s fleet use simple handheld GPS units on the glareshield to provide input to the iPads they use for oceanic navigation. So far, spoofing has had no impact on the handheld units’ performance.

“The aircraft’s GPS made a sudden big jump in our position, but the iPad stayed dead on track through it all,” Galvin said. “I have no idea why the handheld didn’t get spoofed.”

More than the 200-mile changes of location associated with GPS interference, what worries Galvin are much smaller, incremental shifts.

“If you have an instance where it moved a half mile, and then 10 minutes later, it moved another half mile or so,

it’s easy to miss small changes,” said Galvin. “That’s the insidious aspect of the problem because you could easily overlook it if you’re focused on another part of the flight. A mile is a substantial error during an approach.”

Experts also advise operators to include GPS interference incidents in their SMS. “If you do run into a GPS spoofing situation, make sure that once you’ve completed your flight, you actually record it and log it so that the rest of the operation will find out how you dealt with it,” said Clément Meersseman, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships at Nimbl, during an expert panel at February’s 2025 NBAA International Operators Conference.

#### POWER-CYCLE AND RESET YOUR SYSTEMS

Another common misconception is that systems affected by GPS spoofing or jamming will return to normal once the aircraft exits the zone of interference. “In many cases with older units, the GPS failure will remain active even when the aircraft leaves the area of spoofing and remains ‘stuck’ and unusable until it can be power-cycled and reset,” said Innocent. “We’ve heard that some OEMs have created specific recommendations for those situations. But we don’t see that issue with modern GPS receivers.”

Either way, Galvin said his company’s standard operating procedure in any post-spoofing situation is to use only non-GPS navigational aids until they can confirm that the aircraft’s systems are “spoof free.”

As soon as possible, pilots should notify air traffic control that they’ve “been spoofed,” said Galvin, so controllers can pay closer attention to the aircraft’s exact location and tracking. “Communications is especially critical in the Middle East, but also when flying east to west over the North Atlantic,” he said.

If Galvin encounters interference while leaving the Middle East enroute to New York, for example, he reports the incident to oceanic during his initial call because it may affect required navigational performance. “We may not get the altitude and routing we need, and we will possibly get stuck at a lower altitude and range may be compromised,” Galvin said. “You need to plan that well in advance.” 



**“WE’VE SEEN JUMPS OF 50 MILES TO SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES IN A GPS LOCATION”**

## BAOA APPOINTS DR SUMEET SUSEELAN AS HEAD OF SKILLS



**THE BUSINESS AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (BAOA)** has announced the appointment of Dr Sumeet Suseelan as its new Head of Skills, marking a strategic move to strengthen India's aviation talent pipeline.

With Indian aviation on a rapid growth trajectory—spurred by large aircraft orders, and upcoming world-class airports in Jewar and Navi Mumbai—the need for skilled professionals has never been greater. The general aviation sector alone is expected to witness 2X growth in the coming years.

Dr Suseelan, often hailed as the Aviation Guru, is a distinguished member of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. A world record-holder as the youngest aviation author, he has penned over 20 aviation books, several of which are global bestsellers. His portfolio includes leadership roles across aviation education, drone policy, and skill development. He also serves as Chairman of ASSOCHAM Skills and founder of Divine Air.

His appointment signals BAOA's focus on building a robust, future-ready workforce to support the dynamic needs of Indian aviation. [BAI](#)

## Embraer's Phenom 300 Series Named World's Best-Selling, Most Delivered, Light Jet for 13th Consecutive Year



Embraer's Phenom 300 series is once again the world's best-selling, most delivered light jet for the 13th consecutive year, according to data released by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA). The data also confirmed the light jet as the most delivered twin-engine jet for the fifth year in a row. To achieve this distinction, the company delivered 65 Phenom 300 series aircraft throughout 2024, ending the year with the industry's highest book-to-bill.

With more than 830 deliveries worldwide, operations in 40 countries and over 2.5 million flight hours, the Phenom 300 series, certified for single-pilot operation, is known for its best-in-class capabilities, delivering the most value, reliability and utilisation to its loyal customers globally. Maintaining the highest residual value in the industry, the platform is a testament to Embraer's commitment to efficiency, innovation and engineering excellence. [BAI](#)

## Falcon 10X Development on Course

**M**anufacturing, development and assembly continue apace for the Falcon 10X, the largest, fastest Falcon yet. Engineers are working with its mechanical testbed to stress test the airframe's load and fatigue limits, which will help validate its actual lifespan. Rolls-Royce completed a successful test campaign of the Pearl 10X engine on its testbed aircraft. First deliveries are scheduled for the end of 2027. [BAI](#)



## Cessna Citation CJ4 Gen3 Ushers in 15 years of Cutting-edge Aviation

**T**he Cessna Citation CJ4 business jet family achieved a milestone anniversary – the 15-year anniversary of certification, entry into service and first delivery of the aircraft. The latest product investment unveiled for the CJ4, the CJ4 Gen3, is expected to enter into service in 2026.

The CJ4 Gen3 incorporates the next-generation Garmin G3000 PRIME avionics for intuitive, seamless control for pilots. The aircraft brings greater peace of mind for both pilots and passengers through the revolutionary Garmin Emergency Autoland technology and includes Garmin Autothrottles to provide protection and effortless precision at every stage of flight. With more than 450 Citation CJ4 series aircraft delivered across the world, the aircraft continues to standout in the market due to its combination of high performance, operating costs over 10 per cent lower than its closest competitors and class-leading cabin amenities. [BAI](#)

## Eve Air Mobility and UI Helicopter Collaborate

Eve Air Mobility (Eve), and UI Helicopter, South Korea's leading helicopter operator and maintenance provider, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cultivate the industry's ecosystem in South Korea. Through their combined expertise, Eve and UI Helicopter will collaborate to introduce eVTOL technical, operational and ecosystem requirements to the local government and industry in South Korea.

The South Korean government has taken significant steps to advance Urban



Air Mobility through various initiatives, including the K-UAM Grand Challenge. In addition to Seoul, there exists considerable potential for AAM in rural regions of South Korea, serving as a vital means of enhancing connectivity and stimulating local economies. Leveraging Eve's knowledge, UI will harness its local expertise to ensure collaboration and open dialogue with policy leaders as the two parties develop an AAM ecosystem that rigorously incorporates technical best practices and South Korea's distinct regulatory standards. **BAI**

## Vertiport Concept Design for Abu Dhabi AAM Network



LODD, an Abu Dhabi based company specialising in AI-powered drone technology and autonomous aerial logistics, with Skyports Infrastructure have unveiled vertiport designs to be developed across three strategic locations. The project aims to enhance air mobility solutions, integrating new infrastructure into Abu Dhabi's transportation network to accelerate cargo and passenger movement and improve logistical efficiency in the United Arab Emirates' capital.

The announcement was made during the ICAO Global Implementation Support Symposium (GISS) 2025, held in Abu Dhabi from 10 to 12 February. During the event, LODD and Skyports signed an MoU for the development of vertiport infrastructure which will connect key sites within Abu Dhabi, with potential for enabling connectivity between other Emirates. The development of a vertiport network will enable the launch and scale up of electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) operations and autonomous aerial logistics.

The UAE continues to strengthen its global leadership in adopting cutting-edge technologies and artificial intelligence applications, while launching initiatives to support the development of a knowledge-based and sustainable economy. With the support of companies like LODD and Skyports Infrastructure, the UAE is solidifying its position as an innovation hub for business in the region and beyond. **BAI**

PHOTOGRAPHS: Eve Air Mobility, Gulfstream, Skyports

## Final Gulfstream G650 Completes Production

Gulfstream Aerospace announced the final Gulfstream G650 has officially completed production. This aircraft will move to the next phase of the completions process before making its official delivery to a customer later this year.

"Since their inception, the G650 and G650ER have become the industry standard that all others have followed, recently surpassing a staggering 1 million flight hours," said Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream. "Beyond the programme's innumerable accolades and 125+ world speed records, innovations introduced with the form, fit and precision manufacturing process of the G650 laid the groundwork for today's next-generation Gulfstream fleet."

Gulfstream was awarded the prestigious Robert J. Collier Trophy in 2014 for the development of the G650 business jet family, which ushered in a new era



of performance, safety and efficiency advancements in business aviation. The aircraft family has achieved numerous record-breaking feats, such as a 2015 world circumnavigation accomplished with just one stop; completing the farthest fastest business jet flight in history when the G650ER flew from Singapore to Tucson, Arizona, in 2019; as well as serving as the aircraft of choice in the 2019 "One More Orbit" mission, recognised by the Guinness World Records for achieving the fastest-ever circumnavigation of Earth around both the north and south poles. The all-new, ultralong-range Gulfstream G800 was designed to succeed the iconic G650 family, delivering increased performance, efficiency and cabin comfort. **BAI**

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