A SUPPLEMENT TO SP'S AVIATION

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Differential Pricing on ATF:

Quiet Tax

That Brands an Entire Sector a Luxury

PAGE 4

ON THE COVER:
Business aviation is not a luxury but a joining rope between the India that has scheduled connectivity and the India that does not. Taxing ATF for Business jets differentially is just not fair.

Cover Photograph:
Sarthak Baranwal

A SUPPLEMENT TO SP'S AVIATION
VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 2

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REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

BAOA Awards 2017 SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO BUSINESS AVIATION

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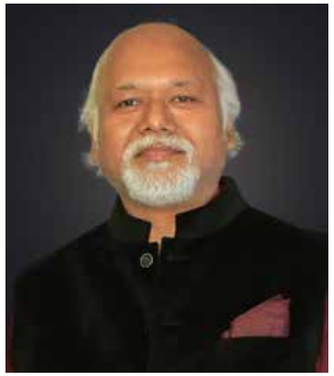
FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Business Aviation is truly evolving beyond transportation into an integrated mobility ecosystem. As the industry embrace change with confidence and purpose, the sector is busy balancing immediate challenges while preparing for the opportunities of tomorrow. Regulatory and Policy support from the Government will help define and shape the future of this industry.



Dear Reader,
In his regular note, the President of BAOA outlines the Association's ongoing engagement with policymakers to improve financing, infrastructure and regulatory support for General and Business Aviation. He highlights progress on GIFT City initiatives, Navi Mumbai Airport policy reforms and DGCA consultations, while urging operators to prepare for fuel cost volatility amid evolving geopolitical uncertainties.

The recent differential pricing on Aviation Turbine Fuel has created quite a stir. In his article, Sanjay Julka argues that differential pricing of ATF unfairly penalises business aviation by treating it as a luxury rather than a productivity enabler. It contends that the policy discourages regional connectivity, emergency services and economic development, while advocating a uniform ATF pricing regime with only limited congestion-based exceptions.

Moving past the current debates over taxation and regulatory bottlenecks, Jayant Nadkarni fast-forwards nine years into the future. Set in 2035, through two ordinary mornings in 2035, he illustrates how fractional aircraft ownership has transformed healthcare, business and regional connectivity across India. It demonstrates how policy reforms and shared aircraft access makes aviation an everyday enabler of economic growth, emergency response and national development rather than an exclusive luxury.

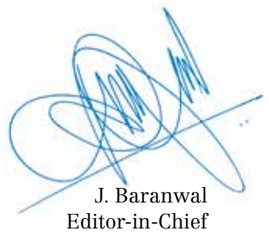
The 2026 FIFA World Cup has transformed business aviation operations across North America. Sarthak Baranwal analyses how beyond increased aircraft movements, the tournament has highlighted the industry's growing reliance on predictive scheduling, and operational resilience, reshaping how business aviation supports large-scale global events.

Dassault Aviation's Falcon 10X successfully completed its maiden flight, marking a major milestone towards certification and entry into service. Combining ultra-long-range capability, exceptional speed, advanced Rolls-Royce engines and the widest cabin in business aviation, the aircraft is poised to redefine performance, comfort and technology in the flagship business jet segment. A report by SP's International Correspondent in included.

Gulfstream continues to set records in Business Aviation. Rohit Goel writes on how barely a year after entering service, the Gulfstream G700 has achieved 100 deliveries and 100 recognised city-pair speed records, underscoring its rapid market acceptance and exceptional performance. The twin milestones reinforce Gulfstream's leadership in ultra-long-range business aviation and highlight the G700's blend of speed, range, technological sophistication and operational maturity.

Flexjet's acquisition of The Jet Business marks a strategic expansion beyond aircraft brokerage into a comprehensive aviation services ecosystem. Strengthening its European footprint and leadership, Flexjet aims to deliver seamless, end-to-end support throughout the entire business aircraft ownership lifecycle. Sarthak Baranwal brings you a detailed report on this transformational merger.

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

BAOA

BUSINESS AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

Dear Members,

Over the past few months, BAOA has continued to engage proactively with key stakeholders across government, regulatory and financial institutions to strengthen the long-term growth prospects of General and Business Aviation (GA/BA) in India.

A major area of focus has been our ongoing interaction with the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) at GIFT City. We are advocating measures that can facilitate affordable, long-term aircraft financing and leasing through Indian Rupee-denominated funding structures. Equally important is the recognition of aviation infrastructure as a strategic 'infrastructure sector', enabling access to more competitive financing avenues. These initiatives are essential to unlocking sustainable growth and expanding access to aviation services across the country.

In our discussions with policymakers, we continue to highlight the vital contribution of GA/BA to the national economy and public service. Beyond business connectivity, our sector plays a critical role in disaster relief, emergency response, pilgrimage operations, medical evacuation, and connectivity to remote and inaccessible regions where conventional transport options remain limited.

We also welcome the recent AERA Multi-Year Tariff Proposal (MYTP) Order for Navi Mumbai International Airport. The Order is path breaking in its treatment of aircraft parking, the definition of Usual Parking Station, and its approach to bundled non-aeronautical General Aviation Terminal (GAT) charges. We believe this establishes important policy principles that can serve as a benchmark for future PPP airports across India and contribute to a more balanced and equitable operating environment for GA/BA operators.

BAOA is also preparing for its next engagement with DGCA, expected in the coming weeks. The meeting will focus on advancing the various issues discussed during previous quarterly interactions and ensuring timely progress on pending matters. I encourage all members to actively participate and share their inputs so that BAOA can effectively represent the collective interests of the industry.

On the issue of ATF pricing, BAOA strongly represented the concerns of the GA/BA community following the sharp increase in fuel prices arising from developments in the Middle East. While certain relief measures were extended to scheduled domestic operators, similar support was unfortunately not made available to GABA operators. Even the recently announced stabilisation mechanisms are presently focused on scheduled airline operations. Accordingly, notwithstanding the welcome easing of geopolitical tensions in recent days, operators are advised to prudently incorporate appropriate ATF escalation and fuel-surcharge clauses in future contracts, particularly for pilgrimage, government, defence, and other long-term operational commitments.

As always, BAOA remains fully committed to working with all stakeholders to create an enabling, sustainable, and growth-oriented ecosystem for General and Business Aviation in India.

I wish all our members safe flying and successful operations in the months ahead.

Harsh Vardhan Sharma
President, BAOA.

Differential Pricing on ATF: The Quiet Tax That Brands an Entire Sector a Luxury

BY **SANJAY JULKA,**
CEO (TECHNICAL), AR AIRWAYS PVT LTD

The imposition of an extra ATF tariff on business aviation is, in principle, in morality and in ethics, just wrong

WHY CHARGING BUSINESS AVIATION a premium on Aviation Turbine Fuel — even in a crisis — is principally, morally and ethically wrong, and how it will scuttle the very growth story India is trying to build.

A TAX THAT IS REALLY A VERDICT

There is a particular kind of fiscal decision that does not look like a value judgment, but is one. Differential pricing on Aviation Turbine Fuel — where scheduled airlines pay one rate and non-scheduled operators, business jets and private owners pay another, higher rate — is exactly such a decision. On the surface it is a pricing structure. Underneath, it is a verdict.

The verdict says: a passenger on a scheduled flight is an economic citizen worth subsidising; a passenger on a business jet is a luxury consumer worth penalising. That single assumption, embedded in the fuel bowser, drives policy across taxation, infrastructure access and public perception. Once you accept the premise, every subsequent levy becomes defensible. Reject it, and the entire scaffolding of differential pricing begins to look like what it is — an unexamined inheritance from an era when a Cessna at a tier-3 airstrip was a rarity, not a productivity tool.

It must be said plainly: across most of the world, additional ATF tariffs for private and business aviation are the exception, not the rule. The United States, the European Union, the UAE,

Representative image by AI

Singapore and Brazil treat ATF as ATF — the molecule does not become more expensive because of who is flying. Where surcharges exist, they are narrow and tied to a specific operational logic such as congestion or noise, not a blanket moral position on who deserves to fly. India, by contrast, has built a structural penalty into the fuel itself.

THE 'LUXURY' LABEL IS DOING THE HEAVY LIFTING

The defence offered for the higher rate is almost always the same: 'These aircraft are flown by HNIs. They can afford it.' It is emotionally satisfying and analytically empty.

Consider what a business jet actually does in a typical week in India. It carries a founder from Mumbai to Pune to Bengaluru in a single working day. It moves an industrialist to Raigarh, to Jharsuguda, to Belgaum — towns whose entire economic trajectory has been altered by the arrival of an airstrip. It evacuates a cardiac patient from a district hospital to a tertiary centre in three hours instead of fourteen. It carries a survey crew over forest cover for a mining lease. It moves a Cabinet Minister to a flood-affected constituency overnight.

If saving one hour of Mukesh Ambani's time, or Gautam Adani's time, or for that matter the Home Minister's or the Prime Minister's time, results in a decision taken faster, a project unblocked earlier, a relief operation launched sooner — is that not nation-building? It unambiguously is. The hour saved does not vanish into leisure; it is reinvested into the next decision, the next investment commitment, that creates jobs and GST collections far in excess of any ATF surcharge the government extracts.

To call this luxury is to confuse the vehicle with the purpose. A scheduled airline carrying 180 passengers from Delhi to Mumbai every thirty minutes is a commodity service. A business jet carrying a decision-maker to a town where no scheduled service exists is a productivity asset. You cannot tax them differentially and claim the outcome is fair.

THE WEST ASIA WAR ARGUMENT — AND WHY IT IS THE WRONG REFLEX

The standard rebuttal is the crisis argument: 'What about the US-Iran War? What about a crude spike? The government has to recover the cost from somewhere.' The reasoning sounds responsible. It is NOT.

A national fuel crisis demands real responses, and several legitimate instruments exist. The upper bracket of income tax can be temporarily surcharged. Non-essential government travel can be curtailed; non business events deferred. Strategic petroleum reserves exist for precisely this purpose. Excise on genuine luxury consumption can be sharpened. Each is targeted, time-bound, and carries no ideological signal about an entire sector.

A differential ATF tariff carries that signal whether the policymaker intends it or not. The moment the state says "we will recover the cost of the crisis from business aviation," it has accepted that business aviation is the soft, dispensable category — the one whose pain is socially acceptable. That is a philosophical position, and it is the position I am contesting.

Crises pass. Differential pricing, once installed, does not. It calcifies. It becomes the new baseline against which the next crisis is measured.

The imposition of an extra ATF tariff on business aviation is, in principle, in morality and in ethics, just wrong. It is wrong because it presumes a luxury where productivity exists. It is wrong because it taxes the air ambulance, the survey flight and the law-and-order helicopter under the same hose as a leisure flight.

A BUSINESS JET CARRYING A DECISION-MAKER TO A TOWN WHERE NO SCHEDULED SERVICE EXISTS IS A PRODUCTIVITY ASSET. YOU CANNOT TAX THEM DIFFERENTIALLY AND CLAIM THE OUTCOME IS FAIR

THE ONLY DEFENSIBLE EXCEPTION: METRO CONGESTION

If a differential is to exist at all — and I say this as a concession, not a concurrence — it must be tied to one narrowly defined justification: metro airport congestion.

Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata burn extraordinary quantities of fuel in holding patterns, waiting for landing slots. That waste is real. A pricing instrument used to decongest metro-to-metro sectors, where scheduled connectivity is already dense, is at least

Continued on page 9...

Representative image by AI

India 2035.
Two Flights, Two Ordinary Journeys, One Shared Idea.

BY **JAYANT NADKARNI,** MANAGING DIRECTOR, FLIGHTSHARES PRIVATE LIMITED

Two fictional stories from the same morning in the future. Neither story turns a head anymore, and that is exactly the point.

The first call came at 8:14 a.m. on a Tuesday morning, nine years from today.

"Multi-vehicle collision on NH-48. Two casualties. Child involved."

Inspector Arvind Singh was less than ten kilometres out. Eight minutes later he was standing beside what had been a family car, and one look told him the road was not going to save anyone. The child needed a trauma centre. So did the woman trapped beside him. An ambulance van would never make it in time.

He unclipped his radio. "Control, Activate HEMS."

The other cops around him weren't surprised. If anything, the routine had become a little boring. Their training was robust with periodic refreshers. One constable started holding traffic.

VISION 2025 - INDIA CAN SEE THE BENEFITS OF OPENING THE DOORS TO FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP AND THIRD-PARTY MANAGEMENT OF AIRCRAFT. IN CAPITAL-CONSTRAINED COUNTRIES, SHARING EXPENSIVE ASSETS IS AN EFFICIENT WAY FORWARD.

Representative image by AI

Another opened the orange landing kit that rides in every highway patrol vehicle now. A third walked the shoulder, not looking at the wreck at all but at the things that matter to a pilot: the transmission wires, the lamp posts, the mobile tower up the road. Within two minutes there was a landing site on the edge of the highway. An H panel, a windsock, a few cones, a handheld radio. Nothing elaborate. Just enough.

The engine noise was heard first. The helicopter came in five minutes later and made a slow overhead pass.

"Ground One, HEMS one. Confirm western approach clear?"

"Affirm HEMS One. No wires. All clear and safe."

No rush. It settled onto the asphalt as if it had done this a hundred times, which it had. Two flight paramedics were out before the rotors had spun down. The child went aboard first. One of the paramedics glanced back at the wreckage before keying his radio. "We'll need a second HEMS. "There was a third crash victim now, who in Inspector Singh's initial assessment had seemed fine and conscious. He had just collapsed and was spewing blood. Must have taken internal injuries, the Paramedic concluded.

Everyone worried. If it didn't come extremely fast, they would lose the third. Everyone tried to hear any approaching turbine whine. Suddenly, almost magically, a white machine emerged over nearby trees. You could be forgiven for missing it. For this time there was no turbine whine, just a soft electric hum and prop wash.

"Ground One, HEMS two. Confirm eastern approach clear?"

Affirmation followed and the pilot put it down gently and safely beside HEMS one.

Someone in the crowd asked if it was American.

"No," the constable said. "Indian, Bengaluru."

Nobody asked anything after that. Electric air ambulances were becoming ordinary over Indian towns. The first aircraft lifted away, the second followed a few minutes later, the traffic began to move, and Singh was back in his vehicle by 8:41 with most of his shift still ahead of him.

FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP MAY HAVE FOUND ITS TRUE CALLING NOT IN THE WEALTHY ECONOMIES THAT INVENTED IT, BUT IN CAPITAL-CONSTRAINED COUNTRIES WHERE SHARING EXPENSIVE ASSETS WASN'T MERELY EFFICIENT, IT WAS OFTEN THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE THEM POSSIBLE

Fifteen hundred kilometres away, about the same moment, a much quieter conversation was going badly.

"How does it look?"

"Not good. They can't come to us. They can give us a few hours, only if we go to meet them in Delhi. They need to fly out to Singapore tonight."

The people who ran Setu AI had spent six years building what many considered to be one of the world's most intuitive voice-first AI platforms. It already ran over a hundred languages and dialects, English underneath as the spine and the regional tongues layered over it, and it was built for the people the keyboard had left behind. It had found its first users in small-town India and then spread out through Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and into Africa. Voice first, typing second. It turned out that millions of people would rather talk to a machine than learn to type at one.

Growth in Setu AI's first years was good. Annual revenues had crossed ₹500 crores. The product really worked. But the company needed capital to scale globally against rivals in America, Europe and China, whose research budgets were many times larger. The investors had arrived expecting to recommend an investment of around $300 million. Nobody expected that figure to change.

The investors were interested. That was not the problem. The problem was that they had squeezed India into an impossible schedule, Delhi in the morning and Singapore by night, and nobody was going to burn a whole day getting out to a small town campus near Hubballi and back for a company they weren't yet sure about.

The founder listened to the room tie itself in a knot. He had seen this before. Their small-town clothes, their broken English, lack of polish in pitch-articulation. It had cost them more than once. Everyone feared this would turn out the same way.

"Is there anyway at all they could come?"

"Airlines won't work. Charter planes aren't available, it is election season."

That's when the founder quietly changed the conversation.

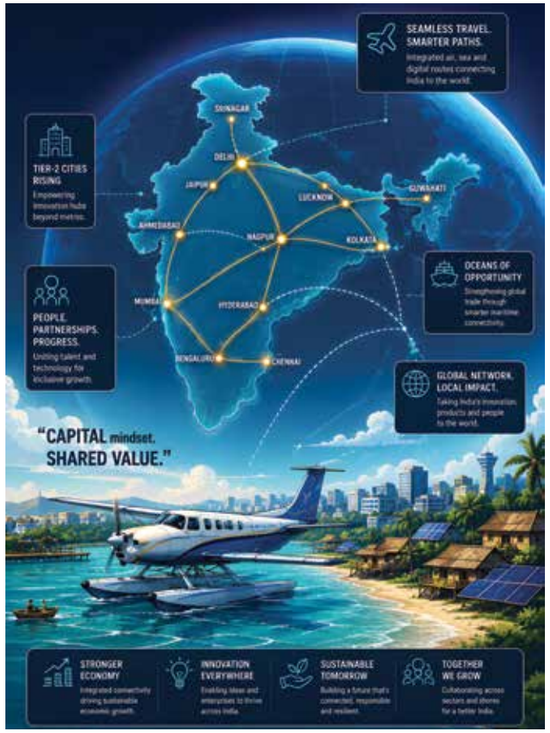
Two months earlier, when the board had approved buying into a fractional aircraft programme, nobody had been sure about it. It was a whole lot cheaper than a whole ownership. But as one director said, they could always charter. Another thought an airline ticket did the job. But they trusted the founder's instinct.

He had said he wasn't buying a fast toy. He was buying certainty. Charter had its value but it depended on what was free that day, while airlines depended on their timetable. Neither would do to capture "fleeting opportunities". He wanted an aircraft that would simply wait for him. If a meeting ran long, it waited. If the visitors wanted to see one more lab, it waited. If they decided on the way back that they wanted an hour in Hyderabad, it waited. A one-eighth share on a five-year term, the whole cost fixed and known in advance, so it never frightened the board, was what it took to own that kind of certainty. The founder was also planning to fly their teams together across India and capture productive time together instead of being lost in lines at the terminal. Invaluable. The Board had signed off.

The investors landed in Delhi a little after eight. Setu AI's fractional aircraft was already booked and waiting on the tarmac.

By half past ten they were walking through the campus, and nothing about it impressed them. Modest buildings, an ordinary reception and then they were shown into the testing room.

A seventy-year-old farmer from Raichur was using the



CONNECTED FUTURE OF INDIA - ALLOWING FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP HAS RESULTED IN (LEFT) PROLIFERATION OF HELICOPTERS FOR HEMS, SURVEILLANCE AND RESCUE; AND (RIGHT) OPENING OF SEA ROUTES, FACILITATED BY SEA PLANES CONNECTING TIER-2 AND TIER-3 CITIES THROUGH WATER WAYS.

software. Next to him a shopkeeper from Kabul, a community nurse from Kisumu, Kenya, a schoolteacher from Malawi, all doing the same. None of them were typing. They were just talking, and the machine was keeping up, giving answers in different languages. The back and forth went on, all ending with smiles.

One of the investors stopped taking notes.

"You guys built this for emerging markets?"

"Not really. Initially just for my mother. Then for everyone who never liked keyboards."

Three weeks later, the Investment Committee approved an immediate investment of $500 million with a commitment to increase it to $1 billion as they met agreed technical and commercial milestones. All because Setu AI never had to go, hat in hand. The founders even kept control of their own company. The papers called it a triumph of small-town Indian innovation. They weren't wrong, but they missed the smaller truth of it. Sure, the aircraft hadn't won the investment. The product did that. But the aircraft had taken away the easiest reason to say no. It simply ensured that the opportunity was not lost. By then, stories like this had quietly become common place across India. Investors, customers, regulators, partners, technical teams were routinely being flown into Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities by companies who had discovered that fractional ownership was not a luxury, but an effective and justifiable business tool.

Representative images by AI

Back on NH-48, within the golden hour, all three patients were inside a hospital with its own small stripped-down helipad beside the building. The doctors said later that another fifteen minutes might have cost them fatalities. Nobody made a thing of it. It was simply another mission.

And it was happening everywhere. In urban towns, in the hill districts of Uttarakhand, on a ridge in Nagaland, over the flood plains of Assam, on the long empty highways where trauma centres sit a hundred kilometres apart. One HEMS base covers a circle of about 150 kilometres. The helicopters are jointly owned by the hospitals they serve, while licensed operators remain responsible for flights, maintenance, compliances, constantly training and sharpening their skills. Operational control is with them, not with the hospitals. Insurance companies and the government stand behind the prompt payments, so no one hesitates at the moment of dispatch. And the machines never sit idle: trauma in the morning, an organ run in the afternoon, disaster relief when the state calls, training in between, with every hour flown bringing down the cost of the next.

Both mornings, the accident and the boardroom, trace back to a single period in 2026-27, when India finally opened the door to fractional ownership and third-party management of aircraft and cleared away the tax fog around it, so that nobody had to put money down against a question the taxman hadn't answered. Once the legal and tax uncertainties were resolved, the model could finally scale.

The West had run fractional ownership for business jets for the better part of forty years. That part we imported. What India did differently was to recognise that the same financing model could solve problems far beyond corporate aviation. Hospitals were the first. Seaplanes followed. The aircraft changed. The idea didn't.

A resort in the Andamans, another in Lakshadweep, a tour operator in Kerala, a logistics firm in Assam, a UDAN regional airline - small cohesive groups had come together to own seaplanes that none of them could have justified alone, with community jetties springing up to serve them.

Underneath it all sat one simple insight. Programmes such as UDAN had already shown that governments could help operators meet their running costs with VGF subsidies. But subsidies for operating costs do little to solve the price of the aircraft itself. It was that capital cost that had constrained business aviation, emergency medicine and regional air connectivity for decades. Fractional ownership addressed that problem directly by spreading the cost of an aircraft across those who genuinely needed it. In hindsight, fractional ownership may have found its true calling not in the wealthy economies that invented it, but in capital-constrained countries where sharing expensive assets wasn't merely efficient, it was often the only way to make them possible.

In the period 2030-35 the ground had shifted in ways nobody had ever put on a slide. A biotech firm in Coimbatore flying European researchers in for the afternoon. A chip supplier in Bhubaneswar closing a joint venture before dinner. A precision shop in Rajkot showing Japanese buyers a factory they would otherwise never have seen, not because these companies were rich but because you no longer had to buy a whole aircraft to have one when you needed it. A small per cent of what those flights earned was allocated from the start, into clean-energy, community and CSR work. The many new tier-2 and 3 terminals built but functioning below capacity, had come alive. Fuel vendors hired, maintenance shops opened, hotels filled, taxi drivers found fares, and young people took aviation jobs an hour from home instead of an ocean away.

Which is perhaps the real story. Aviation changes more lives on the ground than in the air: the worker whose company wins the contract, the family that reaches a hospital in time, the mechanic servicing an aircraft in a town that had almost forgotten it had an airport.

None of it feels remarkable now. Inspector Singh finished his shift. The founders in Hubballi are hiring in nine languages. People simply use what has become part of the country, without a thought for the financing trick running underneath it. This, in the end, is how the best ideas tend to arrive. Not with applause, but with quiet acceptance. People stop noticing them because they have simply become part of everyday life. BAI

Jayant Nadkarni is a former Indian Air Force pilot, former President of BAOA, and Managing Director of Flightshares. He writes at the intersection of aviation, entrepreneurship and public policy, and believes aviation's greatest impact lies far beyond the runway.

Differential Pricing on ATF... *continued from page 5*

operationally honest. But that is the entire scope of the legitimate case. Any ATF differential must not apply to:

- Flights to tier-2 and tier-3 destinations — Delhi to Jharsuguda, Mumbai to Kolhapur, Kolkata to Jamshedpur — that scheduled airlines do not adequately serve.
- Medical evacuation, air ambulance and organ-transport flights.
- Survey, mapping and geo-physical operations enabling mining, infrastructure and environmental work.
- Flights to unserved or underserved destinations.
- Law-and-order and disaster-response flights discharging sovereign functions.
- Helicopter operations to destinations without a close by airfield.

Anything broader is the luxury philosophy reasserting itself in technical clothing.

THE WRONG EXPECTATION, THE REAL COST

The most damaging consequence is not the rupee on an invoice. It is the expectation the policy embeds. When the state itself prices fuel differently for a Cessna Caravan and an A320, the citizen rationally concludes the Cessna is a luxury good. The political class then loses the room to defend the sector. Business aviation gets taxed harder at every budget. Aircraft are registered in Dubai instead of Delhi — the UAE today hosts dozens of business jets linked to Indian ownership. MRO spend, hangarage, crew employment and component procurement all flow out, and India never recovers the $15 billion in forex savings the Civil Aviation Ministry itself has identified as the prize. Every link in that chain begins with the silent verdict at the fuel bowser.

The natural progression of aviation in any Indian town is well established: airstrip → small aircraft → industrialisation → regional and charter operations → city growth → A320/B737 service → metro status. Raigarh is the textbook case; Jharsuguda is a case in progress; dozens more wait in queue. That entire pipeline runs on the small, non-scheduled, business and charter aircraft at the front end. Tax their fuel punitively, and you slow the first three stages of every town's trajectory — and with it, the GDP contribution of that town for decades.

THE ASK

Treat ATF as ATF. Eliminate the structural differential between scheduled and non-scheduled operators. If a metro congestion surcharge must exist, ring-fence it tightly to metro-to-metro sectors and exclude, by clear notification, every category listed above. Handle fuel crises through instruments that target wealth and consumption, not an entire productivity sector.

Business aviation is not a luxury escapade for the HNIs of India. It is the connective tissue between the India that has scheduled connectivity and the India that does not. The fuel that powers it is not luxury fuel. It is nation-building fuel. The tax code, and the price board at the fuel farm, must finally catch up with that fact. BAI

THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2026 HAS CREATED A CONSTANTLY SHIFTING PATTERN OF BUSINESS AVIATION ACTIVITY ACROSS THREE COUNTRIES, 16 HOST CITIES AND THOUSANDS OF KILOMETRES

Beyond the Final Whistle

How the FIFA World Cup Is Reshaping Business Aviation Across North America

BY **SARTHAK BARANWAL**

THE FIFA WORLD CUP has always been about movement. Teams travel between venues, supporters cross continents to follow their nations, and broadcasters move thousands of personnel and tonnes of equipment from one stadium to the next. Yet while commercial aviation carries the vast majority of those travelling to football's biggest tournament, another network has quietly become just as critical to keeping the event moving.

Away from the packed airline terminals and fan zones, North America's business aviation industry is experiencing one of its busiest and most operationally demanding periods in recent memory.

The increase in private aircraft movements during the 2026 FIFA World Cup was hardly unexpected. What has surprised many within the industry is where that demand has appeared, how operators have adapted, and what the tournament has revealed about the future of business aviation in North America.

Unlike the Super Bowl, where demand builds around a single city over a few days, the World Cup has created a constantly shifting pattern of business aviation activity across three countries, 16 host cities and thousands of kilometres. Every match changes travel plans. Every knockout fixture reshapes aircraft positioning. For operators, flexibility has become just as important as fleet size.

MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER SPORTING EVENT

From an aviation perspective, the 2026 FIFA World Cup represents something the industry has never faced before.

The tournament spans the United States, Canada and Mexico, with matches taking place over more than five weeks. Operators have had to prepare for six consecutive weeks of elevated traffic while managing slot-controlled airports, parking restrictions, permit requirements, hotel shortages and cross-border regulatory complexities. The company has described the tournament as one of the most operationally demanding events business aviation has encountered in North America.

That planning began months before the opening match. Unlike traditional business travel, where demand can often be predicted through corporate schedules, World Cup travel evolves almost daily. Sponsors alter hospitality programmes, broadcasters shift production teams, executives attend multiple fixtures, and charter requests change as national teams advance—or are eliminated—from the tournament.

Instead of reacting to bookings as they arrive, operators have increasingly found themselves positioning aircraft in anticipation of where demand is likely to emerge next. That subtle shift says a great deal about how business aviation has evolved.

PHOTOGRAPH: FIFAcom / X

FOR THE WORLD CUP 2026 OPERATORS ARE PREDICTING DEMAND, POSITIONING AIRCRAFT IN ADVANCE AND BUILDING FLEXIBILITY INTO THEIR SCHEDULES

THE NUMBERS TELL ONLY PART OF THE STORY

The first signs of increased activity became visible almost immediately after the tournament began.

Analysis by WINGX, covering business aviation activity across the 16 host cities between 11 and 22 June, found that several markets experienced substantial increases compared with a typical operating day. Interestingly, the strongest percentage increases were not necessarily recorded at North America's largest business aviation hubs.

Seattle, for example, experienced roughly double its normal level of business aviation activity during the USA–Australia fixture, while Mexico City recorded around 1.7 times its typical business aviation traffic during the opening match. According to WINGX analyst Nick Koscinski, the biggest percentage increases have generally occurred in smaller markets, where additional aircraft movements stand out far more than they do in already busy metropolitan areas such as New York or Los Angeles. He also expects the knockout rounds and final to generate even larger spikes in activity.

Those findings challenge a common assumption. It would be easy to assume that New York, Los Angeles or Miami would dominate the tournament's private aviation story simply because they already handle significant business aviation traffic. Instead, the World Cup has highlighted the growing strategic importance of secondary and regional airports, many of which have become critical overflow locations as operators search for available parking and operational flexibility. That may ultimately prove to be one of the tournament's most significant aviation lessons.

ADAPTING TO A MOVING TOURNAMENT

One of the defining characteristics of the World Cup is that demand never stays in one place. As the tournament progresses, aircraft are constantly repositioned to support new fixtures, accommodate changing itineraries and remain close to where demand is expected next. Unlike events that generate a single surge of arrivals and departures, the World Cup creates a moving wave of business aviation activity.

For operators, this has changed the way aircraft are managed. Rather than concentrating fleets around one destination, companies have had to spread aircraft across multiple regions while maintaining the flexibility to redeploy them at short notice. Parking availability has become a strategic consideration rather than a logistical detail, with secondary airports playing an increasingly important role in supporting operations around major host cities.

Signature Aviation has similarly advised operators to prepare for sustained peak demand, constrained parking and increased operational complexity throughout the tournament,

PHOTOGRAPH: Universal Weather and Aviation

reflecting concerns shared across the wider business aviation industry.

The emphasis has shifted from simply having aircraft available to ensuring they are available in the right place, at the right time.

SCALE MATTERS

The tournament has also highlighted another trend already taking shape across North American business aviation. Larger operators appear to be extending their advantage.

According to WINGX market data, overall North American business aviation activity is up 5.0 per cent year-to-date through 21 June, with the US market growing by 5.2 per cent. Yet several of the industry's largest operators have grown considerably faster. NetJets departures have increased by 13.9 per cent, Flexjet by 11.2 per cent, Executive Jet Management by 9.0 per cent and flyExclusive by 6.0 per cent, suggesting that major fleet operators continue to capture an increasing share of the market.

The World Cup has reinforced why. Large fleets provide options. When one airport reaches capacity or demand shifts unexpectedly to another host city, operators managing hundreds of aircraft have greater flexibility to reposition assets than companies working with much smaller fleets. That does not necessarily mean smaller charter providers have struggled—many have also benefited from increased demand—but it does underline the competitive value of operational scale during complex, multi-city events.

The same pattern has emerged among fractional ownership providers. Sentient Jet, for example, reported hundreds of World Cup-related flights already booked, many involving multi-leg itineraries, with expectations of even stronger demand as the tournament progresses into its knockout stages.

The significance of that statement extends beyond a single operator. It reflects a wider shift in customer behaviour. Rather than flying to one event and returning home, many travellers are following the tournament itself, creating longer, more complex itineraries that place greater emphasis on planning, scheduling and aircraft availability than a traditional business trip.

By the time the tournament reaches its latter stages, it will not simply be a question of how many aircraft are flying. It will be a question of how effectively an entire industry has adapted to keeping them moving.

HOW THE WORLD CUP CHANGED THE WAY BUSINESS AVIATION OPERATES

The immediate beneficiaries of the World Cup have been easy to identify. Charter operators have reported stronger demand, fractional ownership providers have seen increased aircraft utilisation, and FBOs across host cities have been handling a noticeably busier mix of domestic and international arrivals.

The wider impact, however, extends well beyond those businesses. Ground handlers have had to coordinate tighter aircraft turnaround schedules. Fuel suppliers have experienced sustained demand over several weeks rather than the short spikes typically associated with major sporting events. Hotels near key business aviation airports have accommodated flight crews for longer periods, while trip support companies have spent months helping operators navigate permits, customs requirements and airport restrictions before the tournament even began.

Perhaps the biggest winner has been the industry's planning capability. The World Cup has demonstrated that modern business aviation is no longer built around simply responding to customer requests. Increasingly, operators are predicting demand, positioning aircraft in advance and building flexibility into their schedules before bookings are even confirmed. That approach has been essential during a tournament where travel demand changes almost every day.

THE 2026 TOURNAMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE SECTOR IS CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING ONE OF THE MOST GEOGRAPHICALLY COMPLEX SPORTING EVENTS EVER STAGED, NOT THROUGH DRAMATIC INCREASES IN FLEET SIZE, BUT THROUGH SMARTER PLANNING, OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY AND CLOSER COORDINATION ACROSS THE INDUSTRY.

Universal Weather & Aviation advised operators months in advance to expect prolonged parking shortages, tighter airport slot availability, increased permit processing requirements in Mexico and unusually high demand for crew accommodation throughout the competition. Rather than treating each match as an individual event, operators have approached the tournament as a six-week operational campaign requiring continuous planning rather than day-to-day scheduling.

VISIBILITY WITHOUT SELLING AIRCRAFT

For aircraft manufacturers, the World Cup has offered something that cannot easily be recreated through marketing campaigns. It has provided a live demonstration of business aviation at work.

Every day, business aircraft have connected executives with clients, sponsors with hospitality events and broadcasters with multiple venues across North America. While manufacturers are unlikely to attribute new aircraft orders directly to the tournament, events of this scale reinforce the practical value of business aviation to exactly the audience most likely to invest in it.

The World Cup has also highlighted the diversity of today's fleet. Long-range aircraft have supported transatlantic arrivals from Europe and the Middle East, while super-midsize and midsize aircraft have formed the backbone of domestic travel between host cities. Rather than any one aircraft type dominating operations, the tournament has demonstrated how different categories complement one another within a single, highly dynamic transport network.

WHY THIS ISN'T ANOTHER SUPER BOWL

Comparisons with the Super Bowl are inevitable, but operationally they are very different events.

The Super Bowl is characterised by an intense, short-lived surge in demand. Aircraft converge on one metropolitan area over a matter of days before dispersing almost immediately after the game. The World Cup has required something entirely different.

Demand has been spread across three countries, multiple international borders and sixteen host cities over several weeks. Aircraft have rarely remained in one location for long, and operators have had to manage changing itineraries as teams progressed through the tournament and corporate schedules evolved.

In many respects, the challenge has not been generating enough capacity but maintaining operational resilience over an extended period. That distinction may ultimately make the World Cup the more valuable case study for business aviation.

WHAT THE WORLD CUP HAS REVEALED ABOUT BUSINESS AVIATION

The tournament has reinforced several trends that were already beginning to emerge across the industry.

First, flexibility has become business aviation's greatest competitive advantage.

The ability to reposition aircraft quickly, adapt to changing customer requirements and operate outside fixed airline schedules has proved more valuable than ever during a tournament where demand is constantly moving.

Second, infrastructure matters just as much as fleet size. The World Cup has highlighted the importance of secondary airports, adequate apron space and efficient ground operations. In several markets, the industry's biggest operational constraint has not been aircraft availability but parking capacity and airport infrastructure.

Third, scale increasingly delivers resilience. Data from WINGX suggests larger operators continue to outperform the wider market, reflecting the advantages of extensive fleets and sophisticated dispatch capabilities. During complex, multi-city events, operational flexibility often becomes the deciding factor rather than simply the number of aircraft available.

Finally, the tournament has demonstrated that business aviation's role extends far beyond luxury travel. Much of the activity generated during the World Cup has been driven by corporate hospitality, media organisations, commercial partners, governing bodies and logistics providers rather than leisure travel alone. The industry has functioned as an extension of the tournament's commercial infrastructure, enabling people and organisations to move efficiently between venues while adapting to constantly changing schedules.

LOOKING BEYOND 2026

Long after the final trophy is lifted and aircraft return to their normal operating patterns, the aviation industry is likely to remember the 2026 FIFA World Cup for reasons that have little to do with football.

It has tested airport infrastructure, challenged dispatch teams, rewarded operators with the flexibility to adapt quickly and reinforced the growing importance of regional airport networks. Many of the operational lessons learned this summer are likely to influence planning for future global events, including the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games and other international sporting competitions.

Just as importantly, the tournament has shown that business aviation continues to evolve. It is becoming more data-driven, more predictive and more operationally sophisticated. The industry's success is no longer measured simply by how many aircraft it operates, but by how efficiently those aircraft can be deployed when circumstances change.

MANY TRAVELLERS ARE FOLLOWING THE TOURNAMENT ITSELF, CREATING LONGER, MORE COMPLEX ITINERARIES PLACING GREATER EMPHASIS ON PLANNING, SCHEDULING AND AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY

PHOTOGRAPH: Signature Aviation

CONCLUSION

Every World Cup leaves a legacy. For football, that legacy is measured in unforgettable matches and new champions. For business aviation, it is measured differently.

The 2026 tournament has demonstrated that the sector is capable of supporting one of the most geographically complex sporting events ever staged, not through dramatic increases in fleet size, but through smarter planning, operational flexibility and closer coordination across the industry. The additional aircraft movements will eventually fade, and airport ramps will return to their normal rhythm. The lessons, however, are likely to remain.

If there is one conclusion to draw from the past several weeks, it is that the World Cup has not simply generated more business aviation traffic—it has accelerated the industry's evolution. Operators have adapted their planning, airports have tested the limits of their infrastructure and service providers have shown they can support sustained demand over a prolonged period. In doing so, the tournament has revealed something perhaps more significant than any traffic statistic. Business aviation's greatest strength is no longer the aircraft themselves. It is the industry's ability to adapt. BAI

Falcon 10X - First Test Flight

BY **SP'S INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT**

Dassault's Falcon 10X Completes its Maiden Test Flight, Opening a New Chapter in Ultra-Long-Range Business Aviation

THE FIRST TEST FLIGHT OF FALCON 10X, THE LAUNCH INTO A NEW PHASE FOR THE AIRCRAFT AND DASSAULT AVIATION

PHOTOGRAPHS: Dassault Aviation

THE MOST AMBITIOUS AIRCRAFT in Dassault Aviation's 110-year history lifted off from Bordeaux-Mérignac on June 19, 2026 for a two-and-a-half-hour debut flight — and the programme's sights are firmly set on entry into service by late 2027.

At 11:10 on June 19, 2026, test pilot Sébastien Dupont de Dinechin and co-pilot Fabrice Dougnac rolled the Dassault Falcon 10X down runway 23 at Bordeaux-Mérignac Airport and lifted it into French skies for the very first time. What followed over the next two hours and thirty minutes was not merely a test flight. It was the culmination of years of engineering ambition by thousands of men and women across Dassault Aviation and its global network of partners — the moment at which the largest, fastest, heaviest, and most technologically advanced business jet ever produced by a French manufacturer stopped being a project and became an aircraft. The 10X touched back down at Bordeaux-Mérignac at 1:40 p.m. The crew reported a smooth landing. The aircraft had performed as planned from start to finish.

"Today's flight was the culmination of years of work by thousands of Dassault employees and partners," said de Dinechin after stepping off the jet. "It paid off in a flight that went as planned and was a delight to fly."

Dassault Aviation Chairman and CEO Eric Trappier was equally direct in marking the significance of the day. "This inaugural flight is another milestone for Dassault," he said in the company's official announcement issued from Saint-Cloud. "It is a reflection of the dedication and high skill of our engineering, production, and flight teams, and also the quality of our global network of partners. All of us are excited to see this day as we launch into a new phase for the 10X."

THE FLIGHT, STEP BY STEP

The first flight of any new aircraft is a carefully structured progression through the lower reaches of the performance envelope — and the Falcon 10X's debut was no exception. The crew began by evaluating handling qualities and systems at 15,000 feet, methodically checking the aircraft's responses before committing to the next phase. With that evaluation complete, they retracted the landing gear and all movable surfaces, confirming the clean aerodynamic configuration that defines the aircraft at cruise. They then climbed to 40,000 feet and accelerated to Mach 0.82 — well into the high-speed regime where the 10X will spend much of its commercial life.

The disciplined sequence communicated something important: the team's confidence in the aircraft they had built. You do not climb to 40,000 feet and push to Mach 0.82 on a first flight unless the data from years of simulation, wind tunnel work, ground testing, and bench verification has given you good reason to do so.

BIGGER THAN ANYTHING THAT CAME BEFORE

The Falcon 10X is Dassault Aviation's largest aircraft to date by virtually every measure. It stretches 109 feet 7 inches in length, with a wingspan of 110 feet 3 inches. Its maximum takeoff weight is 1,15,000 pounds — substantially heavier than the Falcon 8X that currently anchors the top of the Falcon family — and it carries 51,700 pounds of fuel at maximum fuel weight, enabling the range performance that sits at the heart of its commercial proposition.

That proposition is built on a single headline number: 7,500 nautical miles at Mach 0.85. Dassault frames this in terms of the city pairs it unlocks — nonstop from New York to Shanghai, Los Angeles to Sydney, Hong Kong to New York, or Paris to Santiago. These are connections that currently require a fuel stop, either adding hours to a journey or constraining the airports available. The 10X eliminates those constraints on connections that span a significant portion of the globe.

Speed, however, is where Dassault believes the 10X sets itself most clearly apart. Its Maximum Mach Operating number is 0.925 — the highest in the Falcon family's history, and a figure that places it firmly at the frontier of what is achievable in civil business aviation aerodynamics. The maximum certified altitude is 51,000 feet.

The aircraft was designed from first principles around this performance target. Its wing is constructed from carbon fibre composites for maximum strength and minimum weight, with a very high aspect ratio, high leading-edge sweep, and low section thickness to minimise drag at high Mach numbers. Retractable high-lift devices on the wing's trailing edge ensure that the speed machine can still operate from shorter runways — Dassault specifies a landing distance of less than 2,500 feet and a takeoff distance of less than 6,000 feet at maximum takeoff weight. This balance of capability is a signature Falcon characteristic: extraordinary performance at the top end of the envelope, combined with the field accessibility that Falcons have always offered their operators.

"THIS INAUGURAL FLIGHT IS ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR DASSAULT. IT IS A REFLECTION OF THE DEDICATION AND HIGH SKILL OF OUR ENGINEERING, PRODUCTION, AND FLIGHT TEAMS, AND ALSO THE QUALITY OF OUR GLOBAL NETWORK OF PARTNERS."
–ERIC TRAPPIER, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, DASSAULT AVIATION

THE ENGINE PARTNERSHIP: A FIRST FOR TWO ICONIC NAMES

The Falcon 10X is powered by a pair of Rolls-Royce Pearl 10X turbofan engines, each producing more than 18,000 pounds of thrust. The partnership is historically significant in its own right: this is the first Rolls-Royce engine to power a Dassault Aviation business jet — a collaboration between two of Europe's most storied engineering institutions, one French and one British.

The Pearl 10X is the most powerful member of the Pearl family. It is built around the Advance2 engine core — the most efficient core available across the business aviation sector, according to Rolls-Royce. A new ultra-low-emissions combustor, produced using Additive Layer Manufacturing (ALM), is fully compatible with 100 per cent Sustainable Aviation Fuel. A new accessory gearbox allows for higher power extraction by the aircraft's systems. The airborne phase included a six-month campaign on Rolls-Royce's Boeing 747 flying testbed that encompassed more than 25 flights and covered 36,000 nautical miles — a distance equivalent to one and a half circumnavigations of the earth — validating the engine's performance and reliability in real flight conditions before it ever turned a blade in the aircraft it was designed to power.

A CABIN THAT REDEFINES THE CATEGORY

Inside the aircraft, the case for the Falcon 10X is made in different terms. The four-zone cabin is 53 feet 10 inches long, 9 feet 1 inch wide, and 6 feet 8 inches tall. The width figure is the one Dassault most prominently highlights — it makes the 10X's cabin approximately 8 inches wider than the widest purpose-built business jet cabin currently in service, a difference that is immediately tangible to anyone standing inside it.

The 38 windows that line the cabin are designed to deliver what Dassault describes as the brightest interior in business aviation. The cabin maintains an altitude of just 3,000 feet when the aircraft is cruising at 41,000 feet — a level of pressurisation that meaningfully reduces the fatigue associated with long flights. The NeXus Flight Deck, which manages both flight operations and cabin systems through advanced touchscreen interfaces, carries technology that draws directly on Dassault's parallel expertise in military aviation, including the FalconEye® combined vision system — the first in business aviation to offer both enhanced and synthetic vision capabilities simultaneously. A single Smart Throttle controls both engines. The total cabin volume is 2,780 cubic feet. Baggage volume stands at 198 cubic feet.

Customer aircraft will all be finished at Dassault's completion centre in Little Rock, Arkansas — an operation the company describes as its centre of excellence for interior work — before delivery to their owners. Entry into service of the Falcon 10X is expected by late 2027. BAI

THE TWIN MILESTONES BY GULFSTREAM G700 DEMONSTRATE THAT THE BUSINESS JET HAS RAPIDLY TRANSITIONED INTO A MATURE PRODUCT THAT IS MEETING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

One Hundred and Counting

Gulfstream G700 Reaches Dual Milestone with 100 Deliveries and 100 City-Pair Speed Records

BY **ROHIT GOEL**

BARELY A YEAR AFTER entering service, the Gulfstream G700 has reached a landmark that underscores both the aircraft's commercial success and its operational capability. Gulfstream Aerospace has announced the delivery of its 100th G700 while simultaneously achieving the aircraft's 100th city-pair speed record—an accomplishment that highlights the flagship business jet's rapid acceptance among customers and its growing reputation as one of the fastest and most capable aircraft in the ultra-long-range segment.

For Gulfstream, the dual milestone represents more than a numerical achievement. It reflects the maturity of a programme that progressed from an ambitious concept unveiled in 2019 to becoming one of the company's fastest-growing flagship aircraft. The combination of strong customer demand, impressive operational performance and an expanding portfolio of record-setting flights has reinforced the G700's position at the very top of the business aviation market.

The aircraft has become the latest example of Gulfstream's long-standing strategy of pairing high-speed performance with ultra-long-range capability, a philosophy that has produced some of the most successful business jets over the past two decades.

PHOTOGRAPH: Gulfstream

A LANDMARK FOR THE G700 PROGRAMME

According to Gulfstream, the aircraft's 100th delivery coincided with the establishment of its 100th city-pair speed record recognised by the US National Aeronautic Association (NAA), marking a rare convergence of commercial and operational milestones.

The latest record flight was completed between Taipei and Miami, covering approximately 7,740 nautical miles (14,334 kilometres) in just 14 hours and 38 minutes at an average cruise speed of Mach 0.87. The achievement further expands the growing list of routes on which the G700 has demonstrated its ability to combine long range with high-speed performance.

"The G700 has once again set a new benchmark, firmly establishing itself as the business aviation industry flagship," said Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream. Burns added that reaching both milestones simultaneously reflects not only the aircraft's technical capability but also the confidence customers have placed in the G700 since its entry into service.

CERTIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO SERVICE

Following an extensive flight-test campaign involving multiple prototype aircraft and thousands of flight hours, the G700 received certification from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in early 2024, followed shortly thereafter by certification from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

Deliveries commenced soon afterwards, marking the beginning of the aircraft's commercial service with customers around the world. Since then, the G700 fleet has expanded rapidly, reaching the 100-delivery milestone in a comparatively short period—a reflection of sustained demand within the ultra-long-range business aviation market.

The pace of deliveries also illustrates Gulfstream's manufacturing maturity. Introducing a new flagship aircraft while simultaneously ramping up production is among the most challenging phases of any aircraft programme. Achieving 100 customer deliveries within such a short period demonstrates that Gulfstream has successfully transitioned from development into stable serial production while maintaining the high levels of quality expected in the business aviation sector.

THE CENTURY OF SPEED RECORDS

Long before customer deliveries began, the G700 had already established itself as an aircraft capable of rewriting performance benchmarks.

Its record-setting journey started during the flight-test programme in 2021, when Gulfstream announced the aircraft's first series of officially recognised city-pair speed records. Flying under the supervision of the US National Aeronautic Association, the G700 demonstrated its ability to connect major international cities significantly faster than previous business aircraft.

These early records served a dual purpose. Beyond demonstrating raw performance, they validated the aircraft's aerodynamic efficiency, propulsion system and flight management technologies under real-world operating conditions, well before certification was completed.

By the time the aircraft entered service, the number of certified city-pair records had continued to climb steadily, reinforcing Gulfstream's confidence that operational experience would match the results achieved during flight testing. As deliveries gathered pace, so too did the G700's growing catalogue of speed records. Rather than concentrating on a handful of headline-grabbing flights, Gulfstream systematically demonstrated the aircraft's capability across a wide variety of routes linking North America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia. The steadily expanding list reflected the aircraft's versatility in connecting business centres separated by vastly different distances and operating environments. Over the course of its record campaign, the aircraft has established recognised city-pair records across multiple continents. Collectively, these records have reinforced Gulfstream's long-standing reputation for developing aircraft capable of setting performance benchmarks in the ultra-long-range business jet category.

For Gulfstream, speed records have historically served as an important measure of technological progress. Previous flagship aircraft, including the G650 and G650ER, accumulated hundreds of recognised city-pair records during their operational lives, helping establish Gulfstream as one of the industry's leading manufacturers of high-performance business aircraft. The G700 appears well on course to continue that tradition.

MEETING A GROWING MARKET

The rapid achievement of 100 customer deliveries reflects strong global demand for ultra-long-range business aircraft capable of connecting major financial centres without intermediate stops. Corporate flight departments, charter operators and high-net-worth individuals continue to place increasing value on aircraft that can reduce travel time while offering the flexibility to reach destinations beyond the limits of commercial airline schedules.

"THE G700 HAS ONCE AGAIN SET A NEW BENCHMARK, FIRMLY ESTABLISHING ITSELF AS THE BUSINESS AVIATION INDUSTRY FLAGSHIP," — MARK BURNS, PRESIDENT, GULFSTREAM

For Gulfstream, the G700 has strengthened an already dominant position in the long-range business jet market. The aircraft complements the company's broader portfolio, which includes the G500, G600, G650ER and the recently introduced G800, allowing operators to select aircraft tailored to different mission profiles while retaining common cockpit philosophy and operational efficiencies.

The pace of production also signals confidence in the programme's long-term prospects. Delivering 100 aircraft within little more than a year of entry into service is a notable achievement for a newly certified flagship, particularly in a segment where aircraft are highly customised and completion work is among the most complex in business aviation manufacturing.

LOOKING AHEAD

The twin milestones of 100 deliveries and 100 city-pair speed records represent more than symbolic achievements for Gulfstream. They demonstrate that the G700 has rapidly transitioned from a developmental programme into a mature product that is meeting customer expectations while validating the performance targets established during its design phase.

For operators, the aircraft offers a compelling combination of speed, range, comfort and technological sophistication. For Gulfstream, it reinforces the company's long-standing reputation for building business aircraft capable of setting industry benchmarks.

With the global fleet continuing to expand and new aircraft entering service each month, the number of recognised speed records is also expected to grow. For an aircraft that only recently entered commercial service, reaching a century of deliveries and a century of recognised speed records is a remarkable beginning. More importantly, it suggests that the G700's story is still in its early chapters, with its greatest achievements likely to lie ahead as the fleet grows and the aircraft continues to redefine the standards of ultra-long-range business aviation. BAI

WITH MANUFACTURER INDEPENDENCE AND A WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF LOCAL TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVES, JSSI SUPPORTS OVER 30 PER CENT OF THE GLOBAL BUSINESS JET FLEET

India's Business Aviation Moment Is Now. **Is Your Maintenance Programme Ready?**

BY **SERDAR TAMER,**
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT,
JSSI – MIDDLE EAST AND INDIA

The age profile of India's business aviation fleet requires a partner who understands what is needed going forward, to optimise maintenance planning and maximise the value of the asset

PHOTOGRAPHS: JSSI

INDIA'S BUSINESS AVIATION MARKET has hit its stride. The fleet has grown, the operator community has matured, and the questions being asked at the top of the market have changed. For maintenance programmes and services, the conversation has moved beyond price and coverage. Operators are asking harder questions now, focused on what local support infrastructure actually looks like in practice - who shows up when it matters, and how?

Fifteen years ago, business aviation in India was a niche within a niche. A small fleet, a limited operator community, and an infrastructure environment that made every flight a logistical exercise. Today, that picture has fundamentally changed. India's business jet fleet has grown to over 200 aircraft, up approximately 40 per cent over just the last five years, and the operator community is more sophisticated, experienced, and internationally connected than at any point in the market's history.

A MARKET UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Operating a business jet in India presents a unique set of challenges. The market spans an extraordinary range of languages, regions, and business cultures, and what works in Mumbai could look different from operations in Delhi or Chennai. For operators, this is simply the reality of doing business in India.

There is also a broader reality of operating in a market that is still evolving. Regulatory processes, infrastructure, and logistics all require careful navigation and routinely demand time and attention that operators manage as part of daily operations. For a maintenance partner, this complexity sets the baseline of what genuine and locally structured support needs to account for.

CRITICAL MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

The fleet tells its own story. Much of India's growth has come through pre-owned aircraft, many entering Indian service mid-life after years of operation elsewhere. The age profile of India's fleet shapes how sophisticated operators think about asset management and maintenance.

This requires a partner who understands what those aircraft have been through and what they need going forward to optimise maintenance planning and maximise the value of the asset.

For more than 35 years, JSSI has been exclusively focused on business aviation. Our maintenance programmes cover engines, airframes, and APUs across virtually any make and model. Over the last 10 years, JSSI has grown into a full suite of connected services: parts and engines, maintenance tracking software, and financing through JSSI Aviation Capital. Today, we support over 30 per cent of the global business jet fleet. With manufacturer independence and a worldwide network of local technical representatives, our only priority is the client in front of us.

What we've learned from working closely with operators across India is straightforward - the right maintenance partner earns trust over time by adapting to how each operator works and showing up fully in the moments that count.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME AND SUPPORT TEAM IS A MEANINGFUL DECISION. JSSI HAS MORE THAN THREE DECADES OF EXPERIENCE AND SUPPORTS OVER 6,500 AIRCRAFT.

WHAT INDIAN OPERATORS NEED AND HOW JSSI DELIVERS

Aircraft maintenance beyond scheduled inspections is not predictable. When the unexpected happens or when scope and cost increase, what matters most is who picks up the phone, and who can help solve problems fast. Choosing the right maintenance programme and support team is a meaningful decision. It requires confidence that the provider will honour its commitments, show up when the situation is difficult, and remain a consistent, trusted, and local partner over the long term. At JSSI, that confidence is built on more than three decades of experience and supporting over 6,500 aircraft on maintenance programmes and tracking software worldwide.

But trust is only the beginning. Flexibility means something different to every operator, and in India that is especially true. Coverage needs to fit the aircraft, the usage, and the circumstances, not the other way around. It is what a genuine maintenance partnership actually looks like.

And then there is service, which in the Indian context goes beyond technical capability. Business here runs on relationships. Knowing that the person you call understands your world and will be there when you need them. That means being present not just during standard business hours, but across the full rhythm of Indian life. Diwali. Eid. Holi. The regional observances that vary from state to state, and that drive travel and community. JSSI's team members based in India understand the calendar, speak the languages, and are available in the moments that matter most.

"For Indian operators, keeping aircraft serviceable at all times is paramount. As downtime directly impacts operations, revenue, and customer trust, JSSI's local presence in India becomes a critical advantage. In AOG or critical situations, immediate local support provides operators with confidence that urgent needs will be addressed without delay", says Ranjith Kumar, Technical Services Advisor, JSSI – India

INDIA'S BUSINESS AVIATION FUTURE AND WHO WILL BE THERE FOR IT

The growth India's business aviation community has built over the last decade is only the beginning. The fleet will continue to expand. The operator community will become even more sophisticated. And the expectations placed on service partners will rise with it.

JSSI is committed to being part of that future as a partner that remains invested in this market, understands its complexity, and has the people, the experience, and the flexibility to grow alongside it. For operators asking who will actually be there when it matters, the answer has not changed in more than 35 years. We are here.

To learn more about how JSSI supports operators across India and around the world, go to our website - jetsupport.com.

THE JET BUSINESS SHOWROOM DISPLAYS LIFE SIZE SCHEMATICS OF AIRCRAFT AND ALLOWS YOU TO COMPARE THEM IN REAL TIME

Flexjet's Acquisition of The Jet Business Signals a Bigger Ambition for Global Business Aviation

BY **SARTHAK BARANWAL**

Flexjet is steadily constructing what could be described as a business aviation ecosystem

PHOTOGRAPHS: The Jet Business

THE ACQUISITION OF LONDON-BASED aircraft brokerage and advisory firm The Jet Business by Flexjet is, on paper, a relatively straightforward transaction. A major private aviation company has purchased a well-known brokerage, and its founder, Steve Varsano, has been appointed President of the acquiring company. Yet the significance of the deal extends far beyond aircraft sales.

In an industry where acquisitions are often driven by fleet expansion, geographical reach, or operational efficiencies, this transaction stands out because it touches multiple areas at once. It strengthens Flexjet's presence in Europe, expands its advisory and brokerage capabilities, enhances its visibility among prospective customers, and brings one of the most influential figures in modern business aviation into a senior leadership role.

Viewed through that lens, the acquisition appears less like a conventional corporate purchase and more like a strategic move designed to accelerate Flexjet's evolution into a broader aviation services platform.

STEVE VARSANO,
FOUNDER OF THE JET BUSINESS

A UNIQUE BUSINESS IN A TRADITIONAL INDUSTRY

When Steve Varsano founded The Jet Business in London in 2011, he introduced a concept that was largely unheard of in corporate aviation. Aircraft brokerage had traditionally been a relationship-driven business conducted through private meetings, industry networks, and confidential negotiations. The Jet Business took a different approach. Operating from a street-level showroom in London's Mayfair district, the company sought to make aircraft acquisition more accessible, transparent, and visible.

The showroom itself became a talking point. Clients could compare aircraft, evaluate cabin layouts, and discuss transactions in an environment that felt closer to a luxury automotive dealership than a conventional brokerage office. The model worked.

Over time, The Jet Business developed a reputation not only for facilitating aircraft transactions but also for providing independent advice to buyers navigating a complex market. The company became particularly well known among high-net-worth individuals, entrepreneurs, family offices, and corporate flight departments seeking guidance on aircraft acquisitions and disposals.

What began as an unconventional brokerage gradually evolved into something more influential. The company became a recognised voice within business aviation, and its founder became one of the industry's most visible personalities.

THE STEVE VARSANO FACTOR

Much of the attention surrounding the acquisition has focused on Steve Varsano's appointment as President of Flexjet. That attention is justified. Few individuals in business aviation have built a personal brand comparable to Varsano's. Through social media, digital content, industry appearances, and a highly public-facing approach to aircraft sales, he helped introduce private aviation to audiences far beyond the industry's traditional circles.

Historically, aircraft brokers operated behind the scenes. Varsano did the opposite. His aircraft walkthroughs, market insights, and educational content attracted millions of views and helped demystify an industry that many people viewed as inaccessible. In doing so, he positioned himself as one of the most recognisable figures in global business aviation.

For Flexjet, acquiring The Jet Business means acquiring that influence as well. In luxury industries, visibility increasingly matters. Customer acquisition often begins years before a purchasing decision is made. Brand awareness, trust, and engagement have become strategic assets. Varsano brings all three. While his expertise in aircraft transactions undoubtedly adds value, his ability to communicate with current and future customers may prove equally important in the years ahead.

THE ACQUISITION APPEARS LESS LIKE A CONVENTIONAL CORPORATE PURCHASE AND MORE LIKE A STRATEGIC MOVE DESIGNED TO ACCELERATE FLEXJET'S EVOLUTION INTO A BROADER AVIATION SERVICES PLATFORM

MORE THAN A BROKERAGE ACQUISITION

The immediate assumption is that Flexjet acquired The Jet Business to strengthen its brokerage operations. There is certainly truth in that. Aircraft acquisition and disposition are critical components of the aviation value chain, and The Jet Business has established itself as a respected participant in both areas. However, focusing solely on brokerage misses the broader strategic picture.

Over the past several years, Flexjet has steadily expanded beyond its traditional role as a provider of fractional ownership and private jet services. The company has invested heavily in infrastructure, maintenance capabilities, training facilities, private terminals, fleet expansion, and customer experience initiatives. At the same time, it has sought to position itself not simply as an aviation operator, but as a premium lifestyle and mobility brand.

The acquisition of The Jet Business fits neatly into that trajectory. It allows Flexjet to participate more directly in the earliest stages of the customer journey—often before an aircraft is purchased—and remain involved through eventual resale or replacement. That continuity creates opportunities that extend beyond individual transactions. Instead of serving customers during a single phase of aircraft ownership, Flexjet can now engage them across a much broader spectrum of services. The result is a more integrated offering and, potentially, stronger long-term customer relationships.

BUILDING AN AVIATION ECOSYSTEM

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the deal is what it says about the future direction of Flexjet. Business aviation is becoming increasingly competitive. Operators are no longer competing solely on fleet size or geographic coverage. Customers are demanding comprehensive

solutions, personalised experiences, and seamless service. In response, many aviation companies are expanding their capabilities across multiple segments. The acquisition of The Jet Business reflects this broader industry trend.

By combining aircraft brokerage, acquisition advisory, fleet planning, aircraft management, operational support, maintenance services, and fractional ownership under a single umbrella, Flexjet is steadily constructing what could be described as an aviation ecosystem. The significance of this should not be underestimated.

Aircraft ownership is a complex process involving financing, inspections, management, maintenance, crew oversight, regulatory compliance, and eventual resale. Traditionally, owners relied on multiple providers to manage these responsibilities. A more integrated approach simplifies that experience. For customers, the benefits include convenience and continuity. For Flexjet, it creates recurring engagement opportunities throughout the aircraft lifecycle. In many respects, this may represent one of the most strategically important outcomes of the acquisition.

STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN POSITION

Another major factor behind the transaction is geography. While Flexjet has long been a dominant force in North America, Europe has become an increasingly important market for the company. The region presents significant opportunities, but it is also highly competitive. Established players such as NetJets and VistaJet maintain strong positions, and customer relationships often play an outsized role in purchasing decisions. This is where The Jet Business becomes particularly valuable.

Its London headquarters, extensive network of industry contacts, and deep understanding of European market dynamics provide Flexjet with immediate advantages. The acquisition also complements Flexjet's broader investments across the region, including the continued development of its operations at Farnborough Airport and the expansion of its European fleet and infrastructure.

Importantly, the deal delivers more than physical presence. It provides local knowledge. In business aviation, especially at the ultra-high-net-worth end of the market, trust remains one of the industry's most valuable currencies. Building that trust takes time. The Jet Business already possesses it. By bringing the company into its organisation, Flexjet gains access to relationships that might otherwise take years to develop.

A NEW ROLE FOR VARSANO

As President of Flexjet, Steve Varsano will be involved in areas extending well beyond aircraft brokerage. His responsibilities include supporting international growth initiatives, product development, fleet strategy, and broader business expansion efforts. The appointment suggests that Flexjet views him not simply as the founder of an acquired company but as a strategic contributor to its future direction. That distinction matters.

The aviation sector is entering a period of transformation. New technologies, evolving customer expectations, sustainability initiatives, and changing ownership models are reshaping the industry landscape. Companies capable of adapting quickly are likely to gain a competitive advantage.

Varsano's experience at the intersection of aircraft sales, customer engagement, and market intelligence positions him to contribute meaningfully to those efforts. His appointment may ultimately become one of the most consequential elements of the acquisition.

WHAT THE DEAL MEANS FOR THE JET BUSINESS

For The Jet Business, the transaction offers opportunities that would have been difficult to achieve independently. The aircraft brokerage market is cyclical by nature. Demand can fluctuate significantly depending on economic conditions, interest rates, geopolitical developments, and aircraft availability. Operating within a larger organisation provides stability and access to additional resources.

The company will now benefit from Flexjet's operational infrastructure, global customer base, technical expertise, and broader service offerings. At the same time, Flexjet has indicated that The Jet Business brand will continue operating within the wider organisation. That decision is important.

The Jet Business has built considerable brand recognition and credibility over the past decade. Preserving that identity allows Flexjet to benefit from the company's established reputation while integrating its capabilities into a larger strategic framework.

AT ITS CORE, THIS DEAL IS NOT SIMPLY ABOUT BUYING AND SELLING AIRCRAFT. IT IS ABOUT BUILDING A PLATFORM CAPABLE OF SERVING CUSTOMERS THROUGHOUT EVERY STAGE OF THE OWNERSHIP JOURNEY

LOOKING BEYOND THE HEADLINES

There appears to be a strong degree of alignment between the two organisations. Both companies operate at the premium end of the market. Both place significant emphasis on customer experience. Both understand the importance of brand value and long-term relationships. And both recognise that modern business aviation is increasingly moving beyond simple transportation solutions.

The acquisition of The Jet Business therefore represents more than an expansion of brokerage capabilities. It strengthens Flexjet's position in Europe, broadens its service portfolio, enhances its visibility among prospective customers, and brings one of the industry's most influential voices into senior leadership.

The true impact of the transaction will become clearer over the coming years. If Flexjet successfully integrates The Jet Business while preserving the entrepreneurial culture and market visibility that made it successful.

At its core, this deal is not simply about buying and selling aircraft. It is about building a platform capable of serving customers throughout every stage of the ownership journey. In an increasingly competitive and interconnected business aviation market, that may prove to be the acquisition's most valuable outcome. BAI

Gogo Galileo Approved for Dassault Falcon 7X and 8X

June 15, 2026 — Gogo has received Supplemental Type Certificates (STCs) from both the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), enabling installation of its Gogo Galileo high-performance connectivity system on the Dassault Falcon 7X and Falcon 8X. The approvals, secured through Dassault Falcon Jet's MRO organisation, provide operators of two of the industry's most widely used ultra-long-range business jets with access to global broadband connectivity powered by the Eutelsat OneWeb low-Earth orbit satellite network.

The system employs Gogo's HDX electronically steered antenna, offering a compact, lightweight and low-power solution capable of delivering download speeds of up to 60 Mbps while maintaining reliable worldwide coverage. Designed for aircraft ranging from light to large cabins, the solution supports uninterrupted connectivity for passengers and crew throughout long-range missions.

In addition to high-speed inflight internet, operators benefit from Gogo's cybersecurity and privacy solutions, crew training programmes and round-the-clock global customer support. The certification further strengthens connectivity options available to Falcon operators while reflecting growing demand for secure, high-performance communications that complement the aircraft's operational efficiency and long-range capabilities. BAI

Embraer Praetor 500E Receives Triple Certification

June 30, 2026 — Embraer has achieved a significant milestone with the Praetor 500E receiving simultaneous certification from Brazil's National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC), the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The approval clears the aircraft for operation across major global markets and follows certification of the larger Praetor 600E earlier this year, further strengthening Embraer's next-generation business jet portfolio.

The super-midsize aircraft combines a transcontinental range of 3,340 nautical miles with enhanced payload capability, allowing nonstop missions such as Miami-Seattle and Los Angeles-New York under NBAA IFR reserves. Complementing its performance is a redesigned cabin featuring Embraer-developed seating, an upgraded Cabin Management System and enhanced connectivity aimed at improving passenger comfort and productivity.

The Praetor 500E also incorporates Embraer's advanced avionics suite, including full fly-by-wire technology with active turbulence reduction, the Enhanced Vision System (E2VS) and the Runway Overrun Awareness and Alerting System (ROAAS). Together, these technologies improve situational awareness, reduce pilot workload and expand operational flexibility, positioning the aircraft as a strong contender in the increasingly competitive super-midsize business jet market. BAI

Gulfstream G300 and G400 Make European Debut

June 9, 2026 — Gulfstream Aerospace has introduced its next-generation G300 and G400 business jets to the European market, showcasing both aircraft at its exclusive Discover the Difference event in Farnborough, England. The event featured a full-scale mock-up of the G300 alongside one of the three G400 flight-test aircraft, providing customers with a detailed look at the latest additions to Gulfstream's product portfolio.

The super-midsize G300, launched in September 2025, combines a range of 3,600 nautical miles with high-speed cruise performance, short-field capability and access to airports that are often challenging for aircraft in its class. The spacious cabin accommodates up to 10 passengers across two living areas while benefiting from improved fuel efficiency through Gulfstream's advanced wing design and Honeywell HTF7250G engines.

The larger G400 demonstrated its long-range capability by setting its first city-pair speed record on its delivery flight to Farnborough, completing the journey from Washington, D.C. using sustainable aviation fuel. Equipped with Pratt & Whitney PW812GA engines, the aircraft combines enhanced performance, reduced emissions and multiple cabin configurations, reinforcing Gulfstream's focus on efficiency, passenger comfort and operational flexibility. BAI

PHOTOGRAPHS: Dassault Falcon, Gulfstream, Embraer

Gulfstream Demonstrates Emissions Reductions with SAF at 50,000 Feet

July 7, 2026 — Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. has become the first business aviation company to successfully complete a high-altitude flight test campaign demonstrating the potential for 100 per cent neat sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) to reduce contrail-forming particle emissions at altitudes up to 50,000 feet.

The campaign marks the first 100 per cent SAF flight for the Gulfstream G800 and Pearl 700 engine. The aircraft was paired with a specially modified Gulfstream G700, transformed into a flying emissions measurement laboratory. Operating in close formation, the aircraft enabled researchers to capture precise, real-world measurements of particulate matter and contrail-forming atmospheric characteristics at higher altitudes than flown by most commercial airliners, yet typical for business aviation.

"Gulfstream is focused on advancing solutions that deliver measurable impact today while shaping a more sustainable future for flight," said Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream. Delivering these results required months of preparation by Gulfstream's engineering and flight test teams. Pilots trained extensively in simulators to execute complex formation profiles needed to capture both near-field emissions and contrail evolution several miles in-trail.

This work builds on Gulfstream's longstanding leadership in building a strong sustainable aviation future, including the industry's first trans-Atlantic flight using SAF in one engine in 2011 and the industry's first trans-Atlantic flight powered by 100 per cent SAF in 2023. To date, Gulfstream aircraft have flown more than 3.5 million nautical miles on SAF blends. BAI

Pilatus Introduces Gogo Galileo Connectivity for PC-24

July 1, 2026 — Pilatus has introduced Gogo Galileo as a factory-installed connectivity option for the PC-24 Super Versatile Jet, providing operators with global high-speed broadband through the OneWeb low-Earth orbit satellite network. Certified by both the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the system will also be available as a retrofit for aircraft already in service.

Developed as an integrated OEM solution, the installation has been carefully engineered to minimise aerodynamic drag, weight penalties and cabin noise while preserving the PC-24's renowned short-field performance, climb capability and cruise efficiency. The low-latency system supports bandwidth-intensive applications including video conferencing, cloud-based services and streaming, allowing passengers to remain connected and productive throughout their journey.

Pilatus has also enhanced the cabin experience through a new in-flight entertainment system developed in partnership with Lufthansa Technik. The package includes a 10-inch touchscreen interface with a real-time 3D moving map, upgraded audio system, mood lighting, USB charging ports, onboard media storage and Wi-Fi connectivity. Operators can also specify a new side-facing divan that converts into a full-length bed, further enhancing comfort on longer flights while reinforcing the PC-24's reputation for versatility. BAI

Cessna Citation M2 Gen3 Completes First Flight

June 2, 2026 — Textron Aviation has successfully completed the maiden flight of the Cessna Citation M2 Gen3, marking an important milestone in the certification programme for the latest generation of its light business jet. The aircraft builds on the proven Citation M2 platform while introducing upgraded avionics, enhanced cabin technology and improved passenger comfort.

A key feature of the M2 Gen3 is the Garmin G3000 PRIME integrated flight deck, which delivers faster processing capability, intuitive touchscreen controls and improved situational awareness for pilots. The cabin has also been redesigned with wireless charging, USB-C charging ports, refreshed seating and upgraded connectivity to enhance the passenger experience.

The successful first flight validates the aircraft's design and systems as the programme moves into the next phase of flight testing. Once certified, the Citation M2 Gen3 will continue to serve owner-pilots, charter operators and corporate flight departments seeking a modern, efficient and versatile light business jet. BAI

PHOTOGRAPHS: Gulfstream, Textron Aviation, Pilatus

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Faster: Mach 0.925[2]

[1]NBAA IFR theoretical maximum range at Mach 0.85 with 8 passengers, 4 crew and NBAA IFR reserves. Actual range will be affected by ATC routing, operating speed, weather, outfitting options and other factors. [2]Maximum Operating Mach Number.

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