



BIZAV INDIA

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WITH GROWTH EMANATING FROM MEGA EVENTS IN THE COUNTRY THIS YEAR, THE BUSINESS AND GENERAL AVIATION INDUSTRY IN INDIA, NEEDS SIGNIFICANT POLICY AND REGULATORY SUPPORT FROM THE NEW LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECTOR

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ON THE COVER:

Opening of a dedicated GA terminal at RGIA, Hyderabad signifies growth in the BA/GA sector in India but a lot more needs to be done, especially by the Government, to support and catalyse sustained growth of this sector.

Cover Photograph:
GMR

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PUBLISHER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jayant Baranwal

DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR

Neetu Dhulia

PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENT

Ayushee Chaudhary

BAOA MANAGEMENT

Harsh Vardhan Sharma
President, BAOA
Group Captain R.K. Bali (Retd),
Managing Director, BAOA

CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Jayant Baranwal

PLANNING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Executive Vice President: Rohit Goel

DESIGN TEAM

Senior Designer: Vimlesh Kumar Yadav,
Designer: Sonu S. Bisht

GROUP DIRECTOR - SALES & MARKETING

Neetu Dhulia

DIRECTOR - SALES

Rajeev Chugh

MANAGER - HR & ADMIN

Bharti Sharma

DEPUTY MANAGER - CIRCULATION

Rimpy Nischal

GROUP RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Survi Massey

SP'S WEBSITES

Sr Web Developer: Shailendra P. Ashish
Web Developer: Ugrashen Vishwakarma

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ADVERTISING

neetu@spguidepublications.com
rajeev.chugh@spguidepublications.com

SP GUIDE PUBLICATIONS PVT LTD

A-133 Arjun Nagar,
(Opposite Defence Colony)
New Delhi 110003, India.
Tel: +91 (11) 24644693,
24644763, 24658322
Fax: +91 (11) 24647093
E-mail: info@spguidepublications.com

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The new leadership team at India's Ministry of Civil Aviation steps in at a pivotal moment for the aviation sector, which is currently experiencing unprecedented growth in business aviation in India. Their primary task will be to sustain this momentum and ensure that the growth remains unimpeded.

Dear Reader,

The Indian business aviation sector is on the cusp of significant growth, and this edition of *BizAvIndia* encapsulates the positive momentum within the industry. Harsh Vardhan Sharma, President of the Business Aircraft Operators Association (BAOA), outlines the association's priorities, which include advocating for a uniform Five per cent GST rate for non-scheduled and helicopter operators, addressing the infrastructure needs for smaller aircraft and helicopters, and ensuring that safety regulations are practical and conducive to growth. A letter from him elaborating on BAOA's efforts to bolster the industry's growth in India is featured in this edition.

In a detailed analysis, Swaati Ketkar highlights the surge in India's business aviation industry, with the growth rate of the business jet fleet increasing from a modest 1-2 per cent between 2010 and 2021 to an impressive 10-12 per cent from 2022 onwards. The report sets the stage for what the industry anticipates from the new Minister of Civil Aviation, particularly the need for a supportive environment that fosters private charter sector growth through regulatory ease, infrastructure development, and proactive policy measures. Rohit Goel's report on the newly inaugurated General Aviation Terminal at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, offers insights into how this state-of-the-art facility is set to redefine luxury and convenience in private aviation. Hyderabad GA terminal joins the ranks of similar facilities at Delhi, Mumbai, and Kochi airports, reflecting the growing demand for luxury and efficiency in private aviation across India.

This edition also delves into the global business aviation scene, spotlighting leading players such as Gulfstream and Pilatus. The all-new Gulfstream G400 successfully completed its first flight recently, officially launching the flight test programme and further expanding Gulfstream's ultramodern, high-technology family of next-generation aircraft. Ayushee Chaudhary gives a holistic view of the aircraft on how G400 defines a new standard with the highest performance and greatest comfort ever experienced in this segment.

Swiss engineering skills and ingenuity are on full display with the new Pilatus PC-24 that was introduced with more range and a higher payload plus a range of new interior options. With these innovations, Pilatus has taken their super versatile jet PC-24 to a new level as the customers will enjoy significantly more flexibility. A detailed look at the aircraft and the possibilities with it, are covered by Ayushee Chaudhary in this issue.

Ayushee Chaudhary's show report on the 2024 Farnborough International Airshow highlights the event's enduring significance as a hub for innovation, partnerships, and cutting-edge aerospace advancements. One of the standout features of this year's airshow was the emphasis on Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), a revolutionary concept poised to reshape the future of aerospace mobility which has been highlighted in this edition.

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

J. Baranwal
Editor-in-Chief



PRESIDENT



BUSINESS AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

Dear Members,

At the Business Aircraft Operators Association (BAOA), we remain dedicated to fostering a fair and supportive environment for non-scheduled and helicopter operators in India. Recently, a key focus has been the rationalisation of the tax structure and ensuring appropriate GST applicability for the sector. With many operators facing disproportionate tax rates, particularly for helicopter shuttle services to pilgrimage sites, BAOA has been actively advocating for a uniform five per cent GST rate across the board. This would help harmonise the tax landscape, making operations more affordable and sustainable. To this end, we have formally written to both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, seeking resolution to the current inconsistencies and the irrational demands being imposed on helicopter operators by some state governments.

Simultaneously, we continue to emphasise the need for infrastructure development for smaller aircraft and helicopters. India's vast and diverse geography requires robust infrastructure, and we are collaborating with the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) to ensure the development and maintenance of heliports and smaller airstrips. Adequate infrastructure is crucial to enhancing connectivity and driving economic growth in underserved and remote regions. We have also advocated for distinct and appropriate ground-handling safeguards at heliports to help operators control costs.

While safety and security regulations are paramount, they must be proportional and aligned with the realities of operating smaller aircraft. BAOA is actively engaging with authorities to ensure that such regulations are pragmatic, promoting growth without imposing unnecessary restrictions. In particular, we continue to work toward further rationalising the new Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) for NSOP operations.

Moreover, the recent guidelines for seaplane operations under the UDAN scheme offer exciting opportunities for the expansion of non-scheduled operations. Seaplane services will enhance connectivity to water-locked and remote areas, and BAOA is committed to representing the interests of our members as they explore these opportunities. We encourage members keen on seaplane operations under the RCS-UDAN Regional Connectivity Scheme to share their insights and inputs with us.

As always, BAOA remains steadfast in advocating for policy changes that drive the sustainable growth of the industry while prioritising safety, efficiency, and affordability.

Happy Landings!
Jai Hind!


Harsh Vardhan Sharma
President, BAOA.





K. RAMMOHAN NAIDU TAKING CHARGE AS THE NEW UNION MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION. ON HIS RIGHT IS MURLIDHAR MOHOL, THE NEW MINISTER OF STATE FOR CIVIL AVIATION.

New Minister Poised to Lead Growth

BY SWAATI KETKAR

New Minister of Civil Aviation, Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, takes charge at the time when Business Aviation sector in India is soaring high

BUSINESS AVIATION IN INDIA is witnessing not just a sunshine period, but a period of glamour, glitz and gaze (from all over the world). The recently held, 'wedding of the century' – The Ambani wedding saw a flurry of jets zooming all over Mumbai for almost a week. Reports suggest that Mukesh Ambani had arranged a fleet of 100 planes, including three Falcon 2000 Jets from Club One Air for the elite guests. The guests had come from all over the world and naturally each aircraft had to make multiple trips across the country. The above number shows the sheer demand of business aviation in India, and it is only set to grow from here.

Now with the upcoming elections across various states in India, it is little surprise if you don't see a charter flight zooming from your window ledge. All said and done, the business is booming, clients are happy and the private charter companies are happier.

Business aviation has always been a cornerstone of India's aviation sector. While often synonymous with luxury, it serves as an indispensable tool for economic leaders, playing a crucial role in driving the country's growth. Time could not have been more right for the New Minister of Civil Aviation to take charge and address the concerns of business aviation fraternity. The new Civil Aviation Minister under the Modi 3.0 governance took to office on June 10,

PHOTOGRAPH: MoCA_Goi / X



THE NEW CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER IS EXPECTED TO CATALYSE MONUMENTAL GROWTH AND SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATE THE FORMIDABLE CHALLENGES AND COMPLEXITIES THAT HAVE CHARACTERISED INDIAN BUSINESS AVIATION IN THE PAST DECADE

2024. Experts are of the opinion that the sooner or later the business aviation sector is bound to attract the minister's keen eye.

"With the new Minister of Civil Aviation at the helm, there are heightened expectations for the new government council to catalyse monumental growth and to successfully navigate the formidable challenges and complexities that have characterised the past decade," anticipates Sadaf Herekar, Executive Director, Plexus Aviation.

Echoing Herekar's thoughts, Atiesh Mishra, Founder and Director of AJM Jet Management goes on to add "The Indian business aviation industry is finally taking off which was much awaited," he further goes on to explain the growth rate with some statistics. "Since 2010 to 2021 the growth rate was only a marginal 1-2 per cent business jet fleet between 140-142 Jets. From 2022 we have seen an increase in growth rate to 10-12 per cent in terms of business jet fleet size it is currently at 164 Jets," Mishra states. To add to this, Arun Kashyap, Founder and Promoter of newly launched Sirius Aviation says, "General aviation and private business jets constitute a smaller portion about, less than five per cent of the overall commercial aviation activity in India."

REGULATORY REFORMS AND SIMPLIFICATION

According to Kashyap, government policies and regulations primarily focus on the mass consumer market and scheduled commercial airlines. "However, the private business jet segment has been thriving, driven by demand from high-net-worth individuals (HNIs), NRIs, and corporate leaders," Kashyap adds.

One of first and foremost expectation of the business aviation fraternity in India from the new MoCA is streamlining the taxes and various policies and reforms that are stuck in red-tape. Herekar

urges the new minister to implement tax incentives and reduce duties on aircraft imports and maintenance, making it more financially viable to operate and maintain private charters in India. Further adding on to this point Mishra states "The Minister should consider reduction in GST applicable on business aircraft charter. This is required to create a level playing field with international charter operators."

Another one of the most crucial aspects of business aviation is the approval and licensing process that takes days, dragging into weeks and sometimes even months leading to frustration among both private charter companies as well as clients. Herekar further hopes that the new minister will soon simplify



THE INDIAN BUSINESS AVIATION INDUSTRY IS FINALLY TAKING OFF, WITH GROWTH IN BUSINESS JET FLEET SIZE INCREASING FROM 1-2 PER CENT BETWEEN 2010 TO 2021, TO 10-12 PER CENT FROM 2022 ONWARDS

ILLUSTRATION: SP's Team

INDUSTRY REFORMS

and expediate the approval and licencing processes for private charter operations to reduce bureaucratic delays and enhance operational efficiency. She further elaborates on providing clear and consistent regulations for private charter services, ensuring that rules are transparent and easy to navigate.

Interestingly Rajan Mehra, Chief Executive, Club One Air expects the Minister to look into a matter that's not entirely in his control. "If the new minister can put enough pressure on the Oil minister, Finance minister and States (because the States are a stakeholder) to bring fuel under GST, that would be his biggest achievement."

Lovejeet Singh, Partner, Corporate & Aviation at Chandhiok & Mahajan has urged the Minister to consider full implementation of Cape Town Convention. Although October 3, 2023 notification was issued to give comfort to lessors when it comes to re-possession and it has also been tested in Go First case by the Delhi High Court, the lessors still want to see full implementation of Cape Town Convention. Singh also wants the new MoCA to speed up the implementation of fractional ownership policy. "The draft guidelines were issued a while back but the DGCA is yet to issue the final version," Singh says. "The implementation of fractional ownership policy will be a boom for the private aviation," Singh further adds. Supporting Singh's statement Herekar also feels that the government should encourage ownership of aircraft and streamline management and operations.

Kashyap's expectations are in the form of four-point plan for the ministry. They are:

- **Increased Slot Availability:** Ensuring a minimum of five slots per hour during peak traffic times would enhance operational flexibility.
- **Streamlined Clearances:** Implementing single-window time-bound clearances for non-scheduled permit services at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Airport Authority of India (AAI) would expedite processes.
- **Addressing Monopolistic Practices:** Removing monopolistic practices at airports (such as Ground Handling Agencies and maintenance agencies) would promote fair competition.
- **Alignment with International Standards:** Streamlining policies in line with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules would enhance efficiency and safety.

Looking at the above four-points Kashyap feels that implementing thoughtful policy changes can further boost this sector and contribute to India's emergence as a global leader in aviation.

Summing up the policy reforms, Herekar states that the minister should focus on policies that encourage the growth of the private charter sector, such as subsidies or grants for new operators and startups.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Business Aviation is one of strong pillars of aviation and can actively lead to promoting the economy as well as employment

generation. Hence as India's largest general aviation operator, Mehra would like the minister to comprehend the crucial role played by business aviation. "Since GA is considered to be something for the rich and famous, several governments in power have hesitated to support our industry," Mehra adds. This has led to high taxes for import of aircraft and MRO activity, least priority in assignment of slots, fuel and high charges of parking.

Echoing Mehra's words, Herekar stresses the need to develop and improve dedicated infrastructure for private charters at major airports, including exclusive terminals, hangars, and parking spaces. She strongly urges the minister to actively promote the benefits of private charters as a viable and efficient mode of transport for business and leisure, encouraging both domestic and international demand.

Mehra further goes on to urge the ministry to promote the infrastructure in the country as a whole. "Currently the focus currently seems to be on the larger cities," Mehra says. "Small business jets need to go to some very small

towns where industrialists propose to build plants, factories etc and therefore Tier II and Tier III and even some remote locations must be given same priority as the large or medium sized towns," Mehra urges.

Herekar also points out at the need of enhanced regional airport infrastructure to support private charter operations in underserved and remote areas, promoting connectivity and economic development.

TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITISATION

Meanwhile technology, digitisation and artificial intelligence have made its way into every aspect of our lives. Herekar further tries to draw the minister's attention to the fact that many Indian airports are still lacking basic and essential amenities like automation in booking and ground handling to further streamline

the operations. He feels that the overall air traffic management system must be enhanced to address the growing congestion, as it is urgently needed.

The current eGCA platform instituted for digitisation of processes at DGCA is limited to technical support by platform provider. Kumar goes on to explain this in details. "The platform does not offer required accountability or transparency of procedures to operators/personnel at DGCA," Kumar adds. To further simply and stress his point, Kumar explains with the help of an example. "There's no forum to raise concerns about approval delays against specified timelines, rejection of applications on differently interpreted reasons, or accountability on regressive regulations encountered in field," Kumar adds. The processes like application for services, approvals, renewals thus remain as in yesteryears era of license raj. This leads to reasonable cost and efforts dragging both operators and personnel with adverse impact on national growth plan of aviation sector.

Kumar urges the minister to come up with an electronic platform that enables addressing concerns on process procrastination,



STREAMLINING TAXES, POLICIES, AND REGULATORY PROCESSES, INCLUDING SIMPLIFYING APPROVAL AND LICENSING, IS A KEY EXPECTATION FROM THE BUSINESS AVIATION FRATERNITY FOR THE NEW MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION

application(s) rejection without sufficiently supported clauses, inordinate delay of entitled services and accountability for continuance of outdated regulations is very strongly recommended. "Since AAI functions closely with DGCA, the e-platform must include both DGCA and AAI matters," Kumar suggests. He further wants the MoCA to consider audits at DGCA and AAI to include scrutiny of timelines, rejected applications and a review of representations made from field about regulations.

HELICOPTER SECTOR

Helicopters are one of the most essential parts of Business Aviation but unfortunately in India, it is a slightly neglected. However, towards the turn of the century, helicopters in India are seeing better days with both the government and stakeholders realising the importance of helicopters not just in transportation but overall business and economic growth of the country. Captain Peeush Kumar, Executive Pilot at Chip-san Aviation Private Limited, shares his perspective of the helicopter industry as a whole and places his demands before the new MoCA.

Kumar also throws light on development of an inclusive helicopter network for Regional Connectivity (RCS- UDAN) scheme. "sub-400 km sector of RCS UDAN has less than three per cent sustainability post- VGF period as reflected in CAG report," Kumar states. "This sector length is the core competency of helicopter operations owing to their typical characteristics. Paradoxically, nationwide inclusivity of helicopter services to support RCS UDAN scheme is negligible. Enabling technology, though already available at Indian airports has eluded helipads. A national interest opportunity thus finds impediment due to an apprehensive approach for helicopter sector," Kumar adds.

Kumar further goes on to explain that elaborate runways and associated paraphernalia necessitating large real estate and investments are not required for helipads. "For cost prudence and fruitful scheme implementation, RCS UDAN scheme must comprehensively deploy 'helicopter' specific sub-400 km segments under PBN (Performance Based Navigation) based helicopter operations. These operations can facilitate all weather/day-night operations and a robust feeder network for regional connectivity intended under the scheme. It must be known that said PBN based procedures have found extensive helicopter deployment especially in hilly terrain in the west," Kumar explains.

Uninspiring footprint of Indian helicopter operations in relation to its land mass and population highlights an enormous scope of expansion. However, Kumar feels that the sector has remained straightjacketed in absence of facilities that can only be extended by AAI. Given perpetual priority to airline sector with much larger revenue statistics, helicopter sector has maintained status quo of past 25 years.

He urges AAI that with technological advancements enabling all weather day-night operations fruitfully deployed in the west, AAI must consider a separate sec-



THE BUSINESS AND GENERAL AVIATION SECTOR NEEDS THE SUPPORT OF FAVOURABLE GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND REGULATIONS TO ENSURE CONTINUED GROWTH. BUSINESS AVIATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CORNERSTONE OF INDIA'S AVIATION SECTOR AND SERVES AS AN INDISPENSABLE TOOL FOR ECONOMIC LEADERS, PLAYING A CRUCIAL ROLE IN DRIVING THE COUNTRY'S GROWTH.

tion/directorate for helicopter growth as at DGCA. "This step would invite dedicated participation from AAI towards helicopter sector and an accountability in favour of national interest," Kumar concludes.

CONCLUSION

And last but not the least comes Safety and Training. Herekar wants the MoCA to promote safety standards and provide support for training programmes to ensure that the sector maintains high levels of safety and service quality.

India is rapidly emerging as a global powerhouse, experiencing extraordinary economic growth. The nation's recent economic achievements and promising future prospects are significantly enhancing its influence on both regional and international stages. As the economy flourishes, the aviation industry is also witnessing unprecedented growth, attracting significant international interest in the Indian market. Notably, there has been a trend where passengers who previously traveled in first-class cabins are now opting for private business jets. Airlines are adjusting by reducing first-class capacity and expanding business and premium economy offerings.

Considering all of the above, the expectations from the New Minister of Civil Aviation focus on fostering a supportive environment for the private charter sector to thrive, ensuring regulatory ease, infrastructural support, and policy initiatives that drive growth and development. **BAI**

ILLUSTRATION: SP's Team



RAJIV GANDHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RGIA) LAUNCHES EXCLUSIVE GENERAL AVIATION TERMINAL FOR PRIVATE AIRCRAFT USERS

Hyderabad Unveils General Aviation Terminal

BY ROHIT GOEL

ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad, operated by the GMR group, unveiled a new General Aviation (GA) Terminal specifically designed for private jet owners and users. This state-of-the-art facility aims to redefine luxury and convenience in private aviation, catering to passengers traveling on chartered flights for both business and personal purposes.

SETTING NEW STANDARDS FOR LUXURY AND CONVENIENCE

The new GA terminal, covering 11,234 square feet, is strategically situated adjacent to the main RGIA terminal. It features an impressive architectural design that combines classical,

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad unveils a state-of-the-art General Aviation Terminal

Indo-Saracenic, and Indo-Gothic styles, creating an ambiance of both elegance and comfort. This distinctive blend of traditional and modern design elements sets a new benchmark for luxury in private aviation facilities.

The terminal includes a private entrance and dedicated parking area, providing maximum convenience from the moment passengers arrive. This exclusive access streamlines the travel process, allowing for a smooth transition from the car park to the aircraft.

Pradeep Panicker, CEO of GMR Hyderabad International Airport, emphasised the significance of the new facility. “We are thrilled to unveil our latest offering, a premium General Aviation Terminal at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

Hyderabad is one of the thriving economic powerhouses with the second highest concentration of ultra-high-net-worth individuals and thriving pharmaceutical and IT industries. Development of Global Capability Centers in the region by MNCs has boosted private jet movements. Redefining the flying experience, this new facility will set a new standard for an extraordinary travel experience. The terminal will serve as an extension of luxury for many of our frequent HNI travelers, offering unparalleled comfort, convenience, and bespoke services. With our commitment to providing a world-class experience for our travelers, we are committed to enhancing excellence in the years to come.”

PREMIUM AMENITIES AND BESPOKE SERVICES

The GA terminal is equipped with a range of high-end amenities and services tailored to both domestic and international general aviation passengers. The facility features a luxurious lounge and a private lounge area, allowing passengers to relax in comfort before their flight. The design of these lounges emphasises tranquility and privacy, providing a refined environment for high-profile travelers.

A key feature of the terminal is its dedicated arrival and departure corridors, which ensure that passengers move through the facility with minimal delays. The check-in process is streamlined for efficiency, complemented by seamless emigration and immigration facilities. Customs checks and hand baggage processing are integrated into the experience, ensuring that all security protocols are met without compromising convenience.

For added security and compliance, the terminal includes a breath analyzer test facility for crew members. The staff lounge offers a comfortable space for airline personnel, while duty-free shopping options provide additional luxury and convenience. High-speed, dedicated Wi-Fi is available throughout the terminal, ensuring that passengers remain connected throughout their stay. One of the most notable aspects of the GA terminal is the chauffeur-driven service that transports passengers directly to and from their aircraft. This personalised service eliminates the need for queuing and minimises delays, enhancing the overall travel experience.

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport’s new General Aviation Terminal is poised to further elevate the standards for private aviation facilities. It is set to transform the travel experience for private aircraft users and setting a benchmark for excellence by offering unparalleled comfort, efficiency, and luxury. As Hyderabad continues to strengthen its position as a key economic center, this facility is poised to cater to the needs of the city’s affluent travelers, ensuring a premium and seamless journey.

GENERAL AVIATION TERMINALS ACROSS INDIA

The new GA terminal at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport joins premier facilities of Delhi, Mumbai and Kochi airports for

private aviation in India, each designed to cater to the specific needs of private jet users with a focus on luxury and efficiency.

Delhi. India’s first General Aviation terminal facility for Private Jets was started in October 2020 when GMR led Delhi Airport launched India’s first exclusive General Aviation terminal facility for private jets. The terminal was built with an aim to support the movement and processing of passengers flying through chartered flights from the airport. This facility offers exclusive city side car parking and convenient access from and to the city. The terminal caters to 150 Private Jet movements on a daily basis, including Code C type aircraft.

This GA terminal at Delhi Airport is a modern and striking space with an enjoyable range of facilities like spacious passenger lounges, retail and F&B sections, 24x7 personal concierge services common processing area with Customs and Immigration and immediate access to private jet aircraft stands from the Terminal. Besides, it also has an access control system, Wi-Fi enabled services, IT system integrated with overall Delhi Airport’s platform, perimeter security control system, etc to provide a rich and personalised experience to the passengers.

The Terminal can handle over 50 passengers every hour, thus ensuring that passengers board their flights on time, every time. With the GA Terminal and the newly developed General Aviation Aircraft Parking stands being co-located, passengers find it more convenient to travel to and from the aircraft for boarding or de-boarding in no time. The newly developed Apron is spread over 8 lakhs sq ft area with 57 dedicated bays for parking of General Aviation Aircraft.

Mumbai. Starting November, 2022, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), Mumbai introduced its all-new, revamped General Aviation (GA) terminal for private jets, offering luxury and convenience at its best to its travellers. Guests are warmly welcomed at the resplendent reception area by attentive and friendly staff

on call 24x7, the terminal offers expansive lounges with butler service all complemented with a curated menu of super-food lite bites, a stylish bar to global cuisine served via a buffet and as per an a la carté menu.

Guests can reserve the meeting and conference room facilities with state-of-the-art audio and video aids in advance. From essential business requests to indulging when on leisure travel, CSMIA’s GA terminal, spread over 753.26 sq. mt redefines luxury. The terminal has been built with an aim to support the movement and processing of passengers flying through chartered flights from the airport. The all-new GA terminal at Mumbai Airport is a modern and stellar space that prioritises the safety, security and well-being of passengers at all times. The terminal offers efficient processing area with Customs and Immigration and immediate access to private jet aircraft stands from the Terminal. Besides, having access control system, Wi-Fi enabled services, IT system integrated systems, passengers are efficiently processed through all interaction points such as enabling the



THIS NEW TERMINAL IN HYDERABAD CATERS TO THE GROWING DEMAND FOR LUXURY AND EFFICIENCY IN PRIVATE AVIATION ACROSS INDIA AND JOINS SIMILAR HIGH-END FACILITIES AT DELHI, MUMBAI, AND KOCHI AIRPORTS



RAJIV GANDHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S NEW GENERAL AVIATION TERMINAL WILL FURTHER ELEVATE THE STANDARDS FOR PRIVATE AVIATION FACILITIES FOR PRIVATE AIRCRAFT USERS AND SET A BENCHMARK FOR EXCELLENCE BY OFFERING UNPARALLELED COMFORT, EFFICIENCY, AND LUXURY

boarding pass, dedicated porter service, check in and hand baggage processing, with minimum waiting period. In addition, the terminal is fully accessible to passengers with special needs and passengers with reduced mobility.

The Terminal can handle over 50 passengers every hour, thus ensuring that passengers board their flights on time, every time. With the GA Terminal and the General Aviation Aircraft Parking stands being co-located, passengers find it more convenient to travel to and from the aircraft for boarding or de-boarding in no time.

Kochi. In just 14 months since its inception in December 2022, the Cochin International Airport's Business Jet Terminal (General Aviation Terminal catering to exclusive chartered flight operations) has achieved the remarkable feat of facilitating 1,000 business jet operations. Spanning over 40,000 square feet, the biggest of its kind in the country, the business jet terminal located at Terminal 2 stands as the archetype of modernity and luxury in the country. Serving both international and domestic chartered flights, the business jet terminal has facilities like conference halls, lounges, restaurant, and personalised luggage handlers. Under the tagline 'Fly Elegantly' facilitating a commuter transfer from Aircraft Door to Car Door in 2 Minutes, the terminal has quickly gained popularity among corporate clients nationwide. Additionally, the terminal boasts separate customs and immigration counters along with a boutique duty-free shop

catering to international passengers. During the G20 meeting held at Lakshadweep in April 2023, the terminal witnessed the arrival of a dozen-chartered planes from various countries. In the first two months of year 2024 alone, the CIAL Business Jet Terminal has handled an impressive 120 services, and the numbers are projected to exceed 1,200 by the end of this year.

NEED FOR GA TERMINALS

The launch of Delhi Airport's General Aviation Terminal in October 2020 marked a significant milestone in fulfilling the long-standing demands of India's elite, providing a dedicated facility for their private jets. Since then, similar terminals have started at major airports like Mumbai, Kochi and now Hyderabad. Offering quicker turnaround times for business jets and chartered planes, these terminals spare private jets the hassle of competing for taxiing slots with commercial flights at general passenger terminals. Each of these terminals highlight the growing emphasis on enhancing the travel experience for private jet users across India. With a strong focus on luxury, efficiency, and exceptional service, they set new standards in the industry and cater to the needs of a discerning clientele. This development has set the stage for the rapid growth of India's general aviation sector and with the support of such high-end infrastructure, the industry is poised to thrive, contributing to the nation's economy. [BAI](#)



GULFSTREAM G400'S FLIGHT LAST MONTH UNDERLINES GULFSTREAM'S COMMITMENT TO EXPANDING ITS ULTRAMODERN FLEET OF NEXT-GENERATION BUSINESS JETS

New Heights of Comfort and Performance

PHOTOGRAPHS: Gulfstream

BY AYUSHEE CHAUDHARY

Gulfstream's latest achievement, the all-new Gulfstream G400, has taken its first flight, signaling the start of a new era in business aviation with unmatched performance, efficiency, and comfort

GULFSTREAM G400

GULFSTREAM AEROSPACE CORP. MARKED a major milestone with the successful first flight of its Gulfstream G400. On August 15, Gulfstream announced that, "the all-new Gulfstream G400 successfully completed its first flight, officially launching the flight test program and further expanding Gulfstream's ultra-modern, high-technology family of next-generation aircraft. The aerospace manufacturer underlines that the G400 defines a new standard with the highest performance and greatest comfort ever experienced in this segment.

For this particular flight, the G400 departed Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport at 9:04 a.m. and returned 2 hours, 55 minutes later, having reached a speed of Mach 0.85 and altitude of 41,000 feet/12,497 meters. The aircraft accomplished this mission using a blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from Gulfstream's Savannah campus.

Gulfstream continues to support development of the world's most transformative SAF and regularly fly their company and test aircraft on SAF blends. By partnering with fuel developers and engine manufacturers to achieve new SAF milestones, Gulfstream constantly demonstrates the power and safety of emerging fuels. Gulfstream also continues to develop new technologies to reduce fuel consumption and environmental impact. The company has also been recognised for sustainability leadership. It has earned four National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) Sustainable Flight Department Accreditations. In December 2022, Gulfstream had also become the industry's first business aircraft original equipment manufacturer to fly on 100 per cent SAF. The manufacturer promises that its next-generation fleet is the most fuel-efficient in the industry, offering fuel burn per cabin size for a

theoretical 3,000 nm/5,556 km NBAA IFR mission at Mach 0.85 with 8 passengers.

The G400's flight last month not only initiated the aircraft's rigorous flight test program but also further cemented Gulfstream's commitment to expanding its ultramodern fleet of next-generation business jets. The G400, a large-cabin twinjet, was introduced alongside the ultra-long-range G800 in 2021, broadening Gulfstream's product lineup to six models and setting a new benchmark for performance and comfort in its class.

The G400 showcases class-leading performance and efficiency with its combination of Gulfstream's aerodynamic clean-wing design, advanced Pratt & Whitney Canada PW812GA engines and next-generation avionics. The advanced Pratt & Whitney engines, the Gulfstream aerodynamic wing and next-generation avionics work together to deliver 30 per cent more fuel-efficiency than previous-generation aircraft.

The aircraft can fly 4,200 nautical miles/7,778 kilometers at Mach 0.85 and is equipped with Gulfstream's award-winning Symmetry Flight Deck and Predictive Landing Performance System to help improve flight safety and pilot situational awareness. Gulfstream's flagship Symmetry Flight Deck features electronically linked active control sidesticks, the most extensive use of touch-screen technology in the industry, and Gulfstream's third-generation Enhanced Flight Vision System. For the advanced technology introduced on its flight deck, the G500 received Aviation Week's 2017 Technology Laureate Award, a 2019 Editor's Choice Award from Flying magazine and Business Intelligence Group's 2019 Innovation Award.

The G400 also features the advanced high-speed Gulfstream-designed wing and winglet, introduced on the Gulfstream G500 and G600, that greatly enhance efficiency. The

ALL-NEW GULFSTREAM G400 COMPLETES FIRST FLIGHT



G400 offers customers a choice of three floorplans and provides the signature Gulfstream Cabin Experience.

“The completion of the first flight marks a significant milestone for the G400,” said Mark Burns, president, Gulfstream. “It demonstrates, yet again, the maturity of Gulfstream’s new aircraft programs and the advantages created by the intentionally designed commonalities shared across our next-generation fleet.”

With the cabin that is as large as that offered by G400 in its class, Gulfstream ensures that productivity will certainly go up for the customers. Optimal floor plans provide up to 2.5 living areas so that there is flexible space for meetings, focused work and relaxation, hence boosting productivity. “Thrive in an environment of 100 per cent fresh air—replenished every two minutes—so you arrive refreshed,” Gulfstream states. In terms of productivity, it further adds:

- **Clarify:** Ten windows—the largest in business aviation—offer abundant natural light and sweeping views of the world.
- **Focus:** An exceptionally quiet cabin and the lowest cabin altitude in the class enhance your productivity.
- **Breathe:** Our clean air system purifies the cabin air using plasma ionisation technology, so you can fly with peace of mind.

Gulfstream’s next-generation business jet lineup also includes the G500, G600, flagship G700, and the ultra-long-range G800. The company assembles the G500 and G600 jets at its Savannah facility, which is now transitioning from G400 development to full production. Gulfstream has been producing the G500 and G600 on two production lines at this site. Following a 1,42,000 sq ft (13,192 sq m) expansion completed last year, a third production line and additional space have been added for the G400, with customer deliveries expected to begin next year.

COMFORT AND CUSTOMISATION

True to Gulfstream’s reputation, the G400 promises an unparalleled cabin experience. Customers can choose from three floor plans, accommodating up to nine, 11, or 12 passengers, each featuring the signature Gulfstream Cabin Experience. This includes 100 per cent fresh, non-recirculated air purified by a plasma ionisation clean air system, the lowest cabin altitude in its class, and natural light from 10 Gulfstream Panoramic Oval Windows.

For prospective customers, Gulfstream offers a hands-on experience of the G400’s interior. Customers can experience the G400 interior at the Gulfstream Savannah-based showroom, which includes a full-size G400 mock-up alongside immersive multimedia content and interior design display, or the sales and design center in Beverly Hills which also hosts a G400 cabin mock-up. These exclusive, invitation-only opportunities allow clients to explore the safety and wellness-enhancing features of the G400 while gaining insights into Gulfstream’s meticulous design process. Gulfstream also offers a comparison to showcase its large cabin by displaying the competitor average to be about 17 feet in compared to the 24 feet of the G400.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The G400 is part of Gulfstream’s next-generation business jet family, which includes the G500, G600, flagship G700, and the ultra-long-range G800. Gulfstream has already prepared its Savannah facility to transition from G400 development to production, with the company planning to start customer deliver-



G400 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

PERFORMANCE	
Maximum Range	4,200 nm
High-Speed Cruise	Mach 0.88
Long-Range Cruise	Mach 0.85
Maximum Operating Mach Number (Mmo)	Mach 0.90
Takeoff Distance (SL, ISA, MTOW)	5,000 ft
Initial Cruise Altitude	41,000 ft
Maximum Cruise Altitude	51,000 ft
CABIN	
Living Areas	Up to 2.5
Seats	Up to 12
Sleeps	Up to 5
Cabin Altitude	3,255 ft at 41,000 ft
Gulfstream Panoramic Oval Windows	10
Galley	Forward
Vacuum Lavatory	Aft and Optional Forward
WEIGHTS	
Maximum Takeoff	69,850 lb
Maximum Landing	60,000 lb
Maximum Zero Fuel	47,150 lb
Basic Operating (including 3 crew)	43,100 lb
Maximum Payload	4,050 lb
Maximum Payload/Full Fuel	1,800 lb
Maximum Fuel	25,350 lb

Source: Gulfstream

ies next year. The facility, which also assembles G500 and G600 models, underwent a 1,42,000 square-foot expansion last year, adding a third production line specifically for the G400.

With the G400’s first flight successfully completed, Gulfstream is not only expanding its fleet but also redefining the standards of business aviation, ensuring that the sky is just the beginning.

The Gulfstream G400 comes with a promise to let the customer “Step up to the leader in large-cabin business jets” alongside offering the largest cabin in its class as well as setting the standard as the fastest and farthest-reaching aircraft in its category. The G400 ensures to deliver the customers to farther destinations, faster, travelling nonstop from Geneva to New York, or São Paulo to Miami, while accruing significant time savings through the year. **BAI**



SWISS INGENUITY: NUMEROUS INTERIOR OPTIONS AND DESIGNS ALLOW THE USERS TO CREATE A UNIQUE PC-24 TO SATISFY THEIR OWN PERSONAL STYLE

Enhanced Range, Payload and Possibilities

BY **AYUSHEE CHAUDHARY**

With deliveries to its credit across all continents, the Super Versatile Jet, PC-24 comes with enhanced performance and versatility, superior short-field performance, cabin comfort and advanced cockpit for single-pilot operation.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Pilatus

SWISS MANUFACTURER, **PILATUS AIRCRAFT** reported a 10 per cent growth in sales for 2023, with revenues climbing to 1.48 billion Swiss Francs (\$1.68 billion) and earnings up by six per cent at 240 million Swiss Francs. Among the highlights last year for Pilatus, was

the launch in October of the new version of the PC-24, offering increased payload and range.

Known for its versatility and performance in the business jet segment, the new version of PC-24 offers extensive enhancements in range, payload, and interior options. This latest itera-



SWISS CRAFTSMANSHIP: MANY COMPONENTS OF THE AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN INGENUOUSLY OPTIMISED TO GIVE THE PC-24 INCREASED PERFORMANCE AND RANGE

tion of the Super Versatile Jet (SVJ) boasts a significant increase in both range and payload capacity, a feat that has been achieved without compromising the aircraft's core characteristics. The payload has been increased by 272 kilograms (600 pounds), while the maximum range with six passengers on board has been extended by 370 kilometers, bringing the total range to an impressive 3,704 kilometers (2,000 nautical miles). For operations with full fuel and a single pilot, the maximum payload reaches 596 kilograms (1,315 pounds). Even more remarkable is the payload capacity on shorter routes, where the PC-24 can carry up to 1,406 kilograms (3,100 pounds), setting a new benchmark in its class.

Tobias Waeber, Project Leader for the PC-24, highlighted the primary objectives for the newer version, "We did what the project name says – 'Payload Range Increase Program,' and focused on increasing the payload capacity and range of the new PC-24. At the same time, we absolutely wanted to retain the PC-24's aerodynamic characteristics and excellent flight handling, so that meant no major changes to the external shape."

Waeber's team honed in on structural improvements to the wing and fuselage, allowing them to increase the maximum takeoff weight while reducing the empty weight. These advancements have elevated the PC-24's performance to new heights, offering customers increased flexibility.

"It will now be possible to transport more luggage and passengers on shorter routes. And on longer routes, the crew may be able to avoid a refuelling stop," Waeber highlighted. Over 700 modifications were made to the aircraft's structure alone, and the final tally of changes exceeded 1,000. Waeber reflects on this intensive process, "We struggled to shave off every gram wherever we could. It was only at the end, when we were able to verify the sum of over 700 modifications to the structure alone, that we realised we had actually exceeded our initial targets."

These modifications not only enhanced the aircraft's structural integrity but also positioned the PC-24 well ahead of its competitors. Waeber noted, "On short routes, the PC-24 significantly exceeds the maximum payload of its closest competitors by over 15 per cent, and maximum range with four passengers is slightly better as well. Astonishingly, the PC-24 achieves this with a significantly larger cabin and smaller fuel tanks. And we remain the only aircraft in this class able to operate at so many airfields."

A REFINED INTERIOR FOR COMFORT AND INNOVATION

Pilatus didn't stop at improving the PC-24's range and payload; the interior has also been significantly upgraded to enhance passenger comfort and experience. The noise level within the

JEFF BEZOS OWNS THREE PRIVATE JETS WORTH \$140 MILLION IN TOTAL, THE LATEST ADDITION INCLUDING A PILATUS PC-24.

SOURCE:
WWW.BUSINESSINSIDER.IN



ADANI GROUP IS EXPECTED TO BUY SIX PILATUS PC-24 BUSINESS JETS AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF OVER ₹300 CRORE (\$36 MILLION APPROX.) FOR ALL SIX AIRCRAFT. KARNAVATI AVIATION, THE AVIATION ARM OF THE ADANI GROUP, WILL ACQUIRE THE AIRCRAFT FROM THE RESALE MARKET.

SOURCE:
WWW.BUSINESS-STANDARD.COM

cabin has been reduced through various optimisations, including enhancements to the ventilation system and engine intake. The cabin now offers greater flexibility, ergonomic improvements, and additional storage space.

Flavia Vianna, Director of Product Management, elaborated on these changes, “All the features which make the PC-24 a genuine Swiss quality product – the craftsmanship, the premium materials, the precision – are clearly recognisable, but were chosen in such a way that they don’t appear too obtrusive. The end result is more free space and customers who can also bring their own personality and character to the table.”

Pilatus has also introduced a new Inflight Entertainment System in collaboration with Lufthansa Technik. This system includes a ten-inch touchscreen with a 3D map displaying the real-time position of the aircraft, four high-quality cabin loudspeakers including a subwoofer, mood lighting, USB ports, and dedicated media storage.

Among the most notable interior upgrades is the introduction of a large side-facing divan, a first in its class. This nearly two-meter-long divan can be converted into a bed during flight, offering passengers a new level of comfort. Vianna explains that this seating arrangement is the first to be entirely developed in-house by Pilatus.

In keeping with its forward-thinking approach, Pilatus has integrated a new predictive maintenance feature into all PC-24s from serial number 501 onwards. This function enables the aircraft to automatically transmit key data to Pilatus after landing. This data is then analysed, and if necessary, a predictive maintenance recommendation is provided to the operator, ensuring that the aircraft remains in optimal condition and minimising downtime.

Certified for single-pilot operation, the PC-24’s cockpit is designed for efficiency and safety. The Advanced Cockpit Environment (ACE) includes state-of-the-art avionics, such as a Synthetic Vision System, Autothrottle, and Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS II), providing a user-friendly experience for pilots. The PC-24’s ability to operate on various surfaces, including grass, gravel, dirt, and snow, gives it unmatched mobility. This versatility has made it a popular choice for special missions, including air ambulance services in remote areas like the Australian Outback and Alaska’s Arctic Circle. The manufacturer boast that how the PC-24 opens up new travel possibilities with its superior runway performance and short landing capabilities whether for business or leisure.

THE PC-24 HERITAGE

Pilatus began development of the PC-24 as early as 2007. The Swiss company wanted an aircraft that was similar to the suc-

cessful PC-12 turboprop. Because of the required improvements, Pilatus intended to make the PC-24 jet-powered. The aircraft was officially introduced in May 2013, and it took its first flight in May 2015. It received both its European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification and its Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) type certification in December 2017. The first delivery of the PC-24 occurred on February 7, 2018.

Less than three years after the first delivery, as the 100th PC-24 was handed over to its new owner, the PC-24 reached every continent, covering medevac flights in Australia and the USA, business travel for a German automobile manufacturer, and transport for government officials in South Africa and Switzerland. Beyond the base model of the PC-24, Pilatus also introduced an air ambulance version of the business jet. This aircraft was introduced in November 2019. This variant comes with three beds, an electrical stretcher loader, and supplemental power systems within the aircraft.

Pilatus Aircraft showcased its upgraded PC-24 at EBACE in May 2024. Deliveries of the upgraded model began earlier in the year, and the jet made its debut at the Aero Friedrichshafen general aviation show in Germany in April. According to Ursula Widmer, Pilatus’ marketing manager, most of the upgrades had already received certification. In 2023, notable deliveries for Pilatus included those to the charter operators, PlaneSense (USA) and JetFly (Europe). Both companies reported continued strong demand from passengers.

PILATUS AIRCRAFT: A LEGACY OF INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE

Since its founding in 1939, Pilatus Aircraft Ltd has established itself as a pioneer in aviation, producing some of the world’s most distinctive aircraft. From the iconic PC-12, the best-selling single-engine turboprop in its class, to the advanced PC-7 MKX and PC-21 trainer aircraft, Pilatus has consistently led the market in pilot training systems. The recently introduced PC-24, the world’s first business jet designed for short, unprepared runways, stands a testament to Pilatus’ ongoing commitment to innovation.

Pilatus also continues to ensure its focus on sustainability. The manufacturer operates a massive solar power plant onsite at its Stans headquarters – generating clean, renewable electricity. The entire solar installation is connected to the local power grid. In a typical year, Pilatus returns approximately 80 per cent of the clean, renewable solar energy it harvests to the power grid for others to use. 80 per cent of the energy used to heat factory buildings is produced from renewable, local & sustainable sources such as the local wood-fired power plant. In addition, all Pilatus aircraft are certified to operate using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). [BAI](#)



WISK AERO, DEVELOPER OF THE FIRST ALL-ELECTRIC, SELF-FLYING AIR TAXI IN THE US, AND SKYPORTS, THE LEADER IN VERTIPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE AAM INDUSTRY, ARE EXPANDING THEIR PARTNERSHIP FOR WISK'S AUTONOMOUS GENERATION 6 AIRCRAFT ENTRY IN AUSTRALIA

Pioneering the Future with Advanced Air Mobility

BY AYUSHEE CHAUDHARY

The latest Farnborough International Airshow showcased cutting-edge innovations and collaborations that are set to redefine the future of advanced air mobility

THE FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW has long been a prestigious platform for showcasing the most significant advancements in the aerospace industry. Since its inception, Farnborough has witnessed countless historic milestones, driving the evolution of aviation through technological breakthroughs and engineering marvels. The 2024 edition of the event, held from July 22 to 26 in Hampshire, UK, was no exception, as it marked a new chapter in the airshow's rich legacy. Celebrating its 75th anniversary, Farnborough 2024 was a testament to its enduring

influence as a hub for innovation, partnerships, and the pursuit of cutting-edge goals in aerospace.

Among the many highlights, one of the most captivating features of this year's airshow was the focus on Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), a revolutionary concept poised to redefine the future of aerospace mobility. The airshow featured a wide array of innovative displays, from hybrid-electric propulsion systems and AI-driven maintenance solutions to next-generation turbofan engines, underscoring the aerospace sector's commitment to creating a more sustainable and technologically advanced future.

PHOTOGRAPH: Wisk Aero

PEEKING INTO THE FUTURE

The 2024 Farnborough International Airshow showcased an exciting array of futuristic technology, concepts and advanced air mobility feats.

Joby Aviation's electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) air taxi made its first European appearance, offering a vision of urban air mobility. With six tilting rotors for lift and thrust, Joby's air taxi has accumulated over 33,000 test miles and conducted more than 100 flights with pilots on board, signaling a promising future for urban transportation.

Supernal's four-passenger **S-A2** eVTOL aircraft made its international debut, showcasing a new mode of public transportation designed to alleviate urban traffic congestion. The engineering team is progressing towards a full-scale technology demonstrator, with the first prototype expected to fly in 2025.

VoltAero exhibited the **Cassio 330**, a hybrid-electric aircraft designed to provide sustainable regional air transportation. The Cassio 330 represents a significant step towards greener aviation solutions.

Airbus and Diehl Defence presented mockups of their remote carrier designs, featuring advanced aerodynamics, low-observable shapes, and internal weapon and sensor payload bays. **Airbus's Wingman concept** and **Diehl's Feanix model** demonstrated the potential for network-enabled, long-range unmanned systems capable of conducting swarming missions.

Digital reality solutions provider **Hexagon** unveiled its latest automated quality inspection system at this year's Farnborough Airshow. The newly launched **PRESTO XL inspection cell** is a significant addition to Hexagon's modular series of turn-key systems. Designed to meet the rising demand for increased aerospace production, the fully automated PRESTO XL system can be deployed globally on manufacturing lines within just 16 weeks. This system is suitable for inspecting over 50 per cent of major aerospace components, including fuselage panels, doors, and wing ribs.

UK-based **Magnet Schultz** made waves at the Farnborough Airshow by unveiling its first EN9100-certified hydrogen power product. The company showcased its state-of-the-art solenoid valve designed for hydrogen gas flow control in aerospace applications. This high-tech proportional solenoid valve adheres to the EN9100 quality management standards set by the International Standards Organisation (ISO 9001), marking a significant milestone in hydrogen power technology for the aerospace sector.

GKN Aerospace revealed the **H2FlyGHT initiative**, an ambitious project to develop a 2-megawatt (MW) cryogenic hydrogen-electric propulsion system. This cutting-edge system aims to set new standards for the next generation of larger, sustainable aircraft. By leveraging hydrogen-electric technology, GKN Aerospace is paving the way for more environmentally friendly aviation solutions.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) emphasised the integration of AI and alternative fuels to drive the industry towards a greener and more efficient future.

DEALS

FIA2024 also witnessed some key announcements and strategic partnerships, strengthening the fact that the future of aviation is not far from reality.

GKN Aerospace will use **Vaeridion's** all-electric, nine-passenger regional airliner as a testbed for developing new elec-



(TOP) LILLIUM, SEA MILAN AIRPORTS AND SKYPORTS TO LAUNCH REGIONAL AIR MOBILITY NETWORK IN NORTHERN ITALY; (MIDDLE) VOLTAERO EXPANDS WITH GLOBAL SKY'S PRE-ORDER FOR 15 CASSIO ELECTRIC-HYBRID AIRCRAFT; (ABOVE) JOBY AVIATION'S eVTOL AIR TAXI MADE ITS FIRST EUROPEAN APPEARANCE.

trical wiring interconnection systems (EWIS) technology. The company announced the collaboration, along with a similar partnership with electric propulsion system developer H55. German startup Vaeridion is developing what it calls a Micro-liner to operate on routes of up to 272 nm, operating in IFR conditions. The company aims to achieve type certification before



(TOP) SUPERNAL DEBUTS S-A2 EVTOL AT FIA2024;
(MIDDLE) GKN AEROSPACE AND VERIDION SIGN TECHNOLOGY COLLABORATION
ON ALL-ELECTRIC MICROLINER AIRCRAFT;
(ABOVE) JEKTA AND ZEROAVIA TO PARTNER ON HYDROGEN-ELECTRIC
AMPHIBIOUS AIRCRAFT.

2030 and said it will serve smaller cities.

Electra's nine-passenger hybrid-electric eSTOL (electric short takeoff and landing) aircraft will incorporate **Honeywell Aerospace's** flight control computers and electromechanical actuation systems. Honeywell confirmed its role as a programme partner and disclosed an investment from its venture

capital business unit in the US startup. Electra's innovative aircraft, combining blown lift technology with distributed electric propulsion, is designed to take off and land in under 150 feet, potentially enabling operations from unconventional locations like converted parking lots and short fields.

Global Sky has committed to purchasing 15 Cassio hybrid-electric aircraft from **VoltAero**, becoming the launch customer for the French startup's innovative vehicle. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) highlights the Cassio family's potential for regional air services, freight deliveries, and emergency medical support. The aircraft, powered by a Safran EngineUs 100 electric motor and an internal combustion engine, offers a range of around 82 nm in all-electric mode, which extends significantly when using the engine to recharge the batteries.

Luxaviation Group's **Sigma Air Mobility** is also partnering with **VoltAero** to introduce a family of hybrid-electric aircraft. During the airshow, VoltAero announced that Sigma will assist in developing use cases and testing the aircraft in various operational environments, with plans for a route demonstration project at an undisclosed location. VoltAero's lineup includes the five-seat Cassio 330, the six-seat Cassio 480, and the larger Cassio 600, which can accommodate 10 to 12 passengers. The Cassio 330 model is slated to begin flight-testing a full-scale technology demonstrator in 2025, with EASA type certification expected by 2026.

Honeywell and **Odys Aviation** have signed an MoU to co-develop ground control stations for Odys Aviation's hybrid-electric VTOL aircraft, Laila. Designed for cargo delivery over distances up to 230 miles, Laila is poised for applications like pipeline inspections, geological surveys, and logistics services. The ground control stations, scalable to various VTOL platforms, will allow remote pilots to manage multiple vehicles simultaneously, including beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) operations.

Australian startup airline **Wilbur Air** has entered into an agreement with Spain's **Crisalion Mobility** to operate 100 Integrity eVTOL aircraft. These five-passenger, battery-electric vehicles, capable of flying up to 71 nautical miles, will connect a network of vertiports planned across Australian cities. The Integrity eVTOL, featuring Crisalion's patented FlyFree propulsion and stability system, aims for certification and service entry by 2030, with a maximum speed of 136 knots.

German electric aircraft manufacturer **Lilium**, in collaboration with **SEA Milan Airports** and **Skyports Infrastructure**, has initiated a project to establish a network of eVTOL air taxi services in Milan. The partnership will develop vertiports with the first route connecting Malpensa Airport to the city center. Operations with the Lilium Jet, which can carry four to six passengers over a range of approximately 95 nm, are expected to start in 2027, following EASA type certification by the end of 2025 and initial deliveries in 2026. Also, Saudi Arabian airline **Saudia** has entered into a binding sales agreement with **Lilium** for 50 six-passenger eVTOL aircraft, with options for an additional 50 units. The agreement includes Saudia's support in securing type certification with the General Authority of Civil Aviation in Saudi Arabia, with initial certification to be obtained through EASA. Lilium has also expanded its Power-On aftermarket services portfolio, offering a suite of digital solutions for the efficient operation of the Lilium Jet eVTOL. This includes flight planning, data monitoring, ground operations, and MRO services, ensuring seamless daily operations.



EMBRAER PRESENTS THE FUTURE AT THE FARNBOROUGH AIRSHOW WITH EVE AIR MOBILITY'S EVTOL CABIN MOCK-UP, PROVIDING A PREVIEW OF THE AIR MOBILITY OF TOMORROW

Eve Air Mobility, an Embraer spin-off, has secured additional funding from **Space Florida**, bringing its latest funding round to \$95.6 million. This capital injection ensures financial support for its eVTOL programme through 2027. Eve also announced new partnerships with Diehl Aviation and ASE to develop cabin interiors and power distribution systems, respectively.

In a bid to develop a network of eVTOL air taxi services, **Wisk Aero** has partnered with **Skyports Infrastructure** to identify potential vertiport locations in Australia's South East Queensland (SEQ) region. This collaboration will leverage the capabilities of Wisk's Generation 6 eVTOL aircraft to establish early use cases for urban air mobility.

Boom Supersonic announced progress with its Overture aircraft, revealing a partnership with StandardAero to test and assemble the Symphony engines and unveiling the aircraft's Honeywell Anthem avionics suite.

Jekta chose **ZeroAvia's** fuel cell power generation system for its planned PHA-ZE 100 hydrogen-electric

amphibious aircraft, with a full-scale prototype expected by 2027 and EASA type certification by 2029.

Farnborough Airshow was a powerful reminder of the aerospace industry's relentless pursuit of innovation and technological advancement.

As the world grapples with the challenges of sustainability and the need for more efficient transportation solutions, the spotlight on Advanced Air Mobility this year was particularly significant. Through groundbreaking technologies and strategic collaborations, the airshow demonstrated how the aerospace sector is not only embracing the future but actively shaping it. From the debut of hybrid-electric propulsion systems to the unveiling of AI-driven maintenance solutions, Farnborough 2024 underscored the industry's collective drive toward a sustainable, efficient, and technologically advanced future. As the aerospace industry continues to evolve, the advancements showcased at Farnborough serve as a beacon of what lies ahead—a future where innovation and sustainability are at the heart of aerospace mobility. **BAI**



ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY (AAM) WAS A KEY FOCUS AT THIS YEAR'S EVENT, FEATURING REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPTS LIKE HYBRID-ELECTRIC PROPULSION SYSTEMS, AI-DRIVEN MAINTENANCE SOLUTIONS, AND NEXT-GENERATION TURBOFAN ENGINES

PHOTOGRAPH: embraer / X



Will the AI Revolution Include Business Aviation?

COURTESY NBAA

The use of artificial intelligence to control passenger aircraft is a long way off, but experts believe AI has near-term potential to offer significant economic benefits and efficiencies in business aviation

MANY PROPONENTS OF THE rapidly developing software technology known as artificial intelligence have already christened AI as a kind of magic bullet that promises to improve just about every segment of our lives. The precise roles this emerging technology might ultimately play in the business aviation sector remain largely unclear, but experts point to enhanced drone operations, optimised routes, supercharged documentation and maintenance as some of the initial areas where AI might be useful.

First, however, it may be helpful to quickly discuss what AI is and what it is not. At its most basic level, AI is a term that

broadly covers rapid advancements in computer processing performance. It enables systems to crunch larger amounts of data faster and compare statistical information in real-time. Data processors can do it all so fast that they can virtually mirror human abilities such as pattern recognition, basic reasoning and problem-solving.

“In developing our autonomous piloting systems, Daedlean deploys a subfield of AI called machine learning,” explained the Switzerland-based company’s Director of Communications John Mora. “We use it for interpreting visual information, which creates capabilities for our system such as visual traffic detection and visual landing guidance.”

ILLUSTRATION: SP's Team

For example, with traffic avoidance, while a person can immediately identify if there is an airplane in the picture, your typical AI can't. Well, not without plenty of training. Mora explained that Daedalean uses machine learning technology and vast amounts of samples of right and wrong to teach its system how to accurately identify the "aircraft in the picture." The process is called "training the model." When the resulting model is capable of consistently answering the question with accuracy equivalent to a human in the model, it can be implemented as a software application.

What AI isn't, Mora said, is an intellect making decisions. "It does not possess opinions and does not have any free will. It's just a piece of software capable of exactly one function for which it was created. For example, analysing some specific flow of data – pixel images from cameras – and then giving the answer it was trained for: There's an airplane out there."

PUTTING THE AI IN UAS

As you might guess, while AI's introduction into piloted aircraft will be more of an "if-AI-complements-the-application" basis, the technology's range of enhanced situational awareness capabilities will be required for unmanned aerial systems.

"Initial AI routines will generally be focused on increasing automation including elements like 1-Click or otherwise simple/automated launch routines, deployment, mission planning, prepackaged response routines, behind-the-scenes AI enablement of improved data ingestion and analysis, and so on," explained Don Mathis, CEO at Virginia-based Echelon AI. "AI enables greater situational awareness, and this, in turn, will work with other capabilities like radar to better enable beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) operations."

While the ability of sophisticated drones to operate autonomously BVLOS is the industry's "Holy Grail," Mathis says achieving it means solving multiple challenges. "Beyond the regulatory/certification challenges, there is also the form factor and aerodynamic challenges of drones themselves," he explained. "In the tech world, stakeholders expect exponential growth; in aerospace, we are more limited by physics. So, for example, there are trade-offs in payload capacity."

"This, in turn, means that processor size (and capability) is relatively limited in a drone if one wants the drone to have sufficient battery power/aloft time and/or have the ability to carry the right kind of payloads (e.g., sensors, or first aid materials) for the mission," Mathis added. "This means the AI has to be capable of operating on the edge, and this is definitely a more challenging problem to solve than simply writing a generative AI routine in many other contexts."

AUTONOMY ISN'T AI

Another popular misconception related to autonomous aircraft is that they will all rely on AI. That's not always the case. In fact, California-based Wisk Aero isn't currently making AI an element in its family of autonomous passenger eVTOLs, which are currently under development.

"What we are doing is autonomy, and autonomy is not AI," explained Jon Lovegren, chief of autonomy and airspace integration at Wisk Aero. "There's a lot of understandable confusion about it. For us, autonomy is about the aircraft's capability to aviate and navigate safely. We're doing the same things that a pilot does today, but without having the pilot on board."

"Autonomy is the capability you can build through rigorous design, redundant architecture, and leveraging existing technologies in aviation (autopilots, TCAS, weather radar, GPS, etc) and taking them to the next level of self-operation," Lovegren said. "AI is a technology that's used as a tool to enable certain applications, and we don't rely on this tool to achieve our level of autonomy. The challenge with AI is proving it will do the right thing every time in a safety-critical scenario – which is required for FAA certification."

Lovegren said Wisk Aero is "increasing the automation to the point where the operator – who is still part of our system – doesn't actually have to be in the aircraft. To enable that, we have a much higher level of automation to handle those safety-critical operations. We also have contingencies so if something were to go wrong, the aircraft will be self-monitoring and automatically take the correct actions to ensure passenger safety."

POTENTIAL GAME-CHANGERS

While the promise of AI's abilities to lessen pilot workloads is still a work in progress, implementing advanced technologies to help optimise day-to-day flight, ground, manufacturing and maintenance operations seems to be much more readily achievable.

"There are massive economic benefits. We will see highly optimized routes and schedules resulting in greater fuel consumption efficiencies," explained Yemaya Bordain, Ph.D., Daedalean's President of the Americas. "Operators will be able to optimize fleet management, making maintenance scheduling more efficient. And many menial operations will be completed automatically, which will reduce workforce costs."

"Broadly speaking, from an operational and maintenance perspective, it's going to automate mundane tasks and give us the ability to make sense of enormous data sets and run them through natural language processing to generate logbook entry timelines and work-performed summaries in ways that didn't exist before," said Roberto Guerrieri, CEO and co-founder of Arizona-based Bluetail. "For example, things like completing all the paperwork necessary to return an aircraft to service. It's going to take hundreds of boxes and filing cabinets full of an aircraft's back-to-birth records and funnel them down to presenting its operational history in a quick and meaningful way."

"AI could even help combine maintenance schedules and logbooks to quickly identify any discrepancies or what's coming up on the next task list," Guerrieri said. "Shifting from manually searching for information to quickly understanding the requirements of the aircraft's next maintenance phase in a fraction of a second is going to be a real game-changer."

A MATTER OF TRUST

With all this being said, will AI ever live up to the hype and be welcomed as a valued member of business aviation flight operations?

Experts say we won't know that for a long time. "We expect to see a slow and careful adoption," predicted Daedalean CEO Luuk van Dijk, Ph.D. "Pilots may not trust that the new technologies will be safer. They may expect these technologies to add to their informational overload instead of simplifying flying. And, of course, they may fear being replaced by AI." 

Volocopter Conducts First eVTOL Flight

Volocopter, the pioneer of sustainable air mobility, conducted the world's first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) flight test within the premises of the World Heritage Palace of Versailles.



This unprecedented flight marks the conclusion of this summer's multi-day operational validation test campaign at the Aerodrome of Saint-Cyr-l'Ecole and Versailles. Volocopter and its partners aspire to return to Paris later in the year to fly our eVTOL aircraft in central Paris.

As dawn broke over Versailles, Volocopter's aircraft took flight in front of the iconic backdrop of the Grand Trianon and its surrounding gardens. The flight was celebrated onsite with the company's longstanding Parisian partners Groupe ADP and the French Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC), who worked relentlessly to orchestrate this successful flight. The successful execution of this flight reinforces the ultimate attestation of trust in the safety of the aircraft and the Volocopter brand from the French and European aviation authorities, partners, and guests who have witnessed our countless flights around the world. [BAI](#)

Lilium to Expand Infrastructure Network

Groupe ADP and Lilium N.V. announced a partnership to collaborate on infrastructures for the Lilium Jet in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Groupe ADP, which operates and develops 23 airports around the globe with its two major partners TAV Airports and GMR Airports, will work with Lilium to make its vertiports accessible to Lilium's customers.



Groupe ADP strongly believes in the future of AAM and is developing comprehensive vertiports at two prominent airports in the Paris region - Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Paris-Le Bourget (home of The Paris Airshow), as well as a temporary site in the heart of Paris in 2024. Groupe ADP's vertiports will significantly bolster the Lilium network in France and establish Paris as an important regional hub for Lilium Jet operators. In addition to their flagship locations in France, Groupe ADP operate an extensive network of international airports around the world including key sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and India. These sites will be crucial for operators of the Lilium Jet as they work to bring regional electric aviation to passengers starting in 2026. [BAI](#)

Pilatus Receives Living Legends of Aviation Award

Together with other members of the management representing the Pilatus Team, Markus Bucher, CEO of Pilatus, accepted an award for notable achievement in aviation at the "Living Legends of Aviation Europe Awards".



For the fourth time, the "Oscars of Aviation" were presented as part of the "Living Legends of Aviation Europe Awards" at the spectacular Scalaria Event Resort on Lake Wolfgang, Austria. The event honors companies and personalities who have made a significant contribution to aviation and aerospace. In this special setting, Markus Bucher and the Pilatus Team accepted the "Sam B. Williams Technology Award" for the company's untiring efforts to produce unique, world-class aircraft. The award was presented by Gregg G. Williams - the owner, Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Williams International: a leading developer and manufacturer of gas turbine engines.

Markus Bucher, CEO of Pilatus, said "The award is an important recognition for our years of commitment, and for the work we do as a team every day - it also spurs us on to achieve further heights of success!" [BAI](#)

Gulfstream G700 Marks 100 Days Certified

Gulfstream Aerospace marked 100 days since the all-new Gulfstream G700 received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) type certification on March 29 and subsequently entered into service. Additional certifications, steadily increasing flight hours and deliveries around the world along with continued city-pair speed records demonstrate unparalleled program maturity for the G700.



To date, the G700 has also earned European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) type certification along with type certificate validations from eight nations, including Mexico, and the growing fleet has exceeded 700 flight hours. "We planned for a seamless entry into service for the G700, and this incredible start is a testament to both the maturity of the program and the dedication of the Gulfstream team," said Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream.

The G700 also recently achieved new city-pair speed records, linking Paris to Montreal in 6 hours and 16 minutes and São Paulo to White Plains, New York, in 8 hours and 46 minutes, both at an average speed of Mach 0.90 or greater. The flights are pending approval by the US National Aeronautic Association and Fédération Aéronautique Internationale in Switzerland for official recognition as world records. [BAI](#)

PHOTOGRAPHS: Volocopter, Lilium, Gulfstream, Pilatus

JEKTA Signs First Lessor Deal with Solyu for 30 PHA-ZE 100 Aircraft

JEKTA, the Switzerland-based developer of the PHA-ZE 100 aircraft, has signed an agreement with Solyu for 30 of its zero-emissions amphibious aircraft. The deal, which represents JEKTA's first lessor agreement, brings advanced commitments for JEKTA's amphibious aircraft to more than \$1 billion in value.

Solyu, based in Seoul, South Korea, is committed to supporting a low-carbon future for aviation and will offer financial and leasing solutions to its operator customers seeking to harness the sustainable qualities of the PHA-ZE 100. The inclusion of the PHA-ZE 100 represents the first amphibious aircraft in Solyu's regional advanced air mobility portfolio.

The agreement with Solyu represents a significant milestone for JEKTA, which only launched in December 2022 and already has a strong order book. Seamlessly transitioning between land and water without additional hardware, the PHA-ZE 100 is optimized to serve coastal and island communities, regional routes currently limited by operational costs, and to support new low-cost, sustainable services between cities without the need to install expensive land infrastruc-



ture. The amphibious flying boat will be certified to EASA CS-23 and US FAA FAR-23 standards for fixed-wing passenger aircraft. Flexible configurations, including 19-seat, mixed economy/freight, VIP, corporate shuttle, and air ambulance options, make the most of the PHA-ZE 100's spacious, contemporary cabin. **BAI**

Joby Applies for Aircraft Certification in Australia

Joby Aviation announced it has formally applied for its revolutionary aircraft to be certified for use in Australia. Joby's application to Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority ("CASA") for the validation of an FAA ("Federal Aviation Administration") type certification builds on a bi-lateral agreement between the U.S. regulator and CASA, and it lays the groundwork for the introduction of quiet, emissions-free air taxis in Australia.



Joby's electric air taxi is designed to carry a pilot and four passengers at speeds of up to 200 mph, offering high-speed mobility with a fraction of the noise produced by helicopters and zero operating emissions. To date, Joby has completed more than 33,000 miles of all-electric flight with full-scale prototype aircraft and, in November 2023, Joby became the first electric air taxi company to fly in a major US city, taking off from the Downtown Manhattan Heliport in New York and demonstrating its aircraft's quiet acoustics. Joby has also applied to have its FAA type certificate, once received, validated by the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau ("JCAB") and the United Kingdom's Civil Aviation Authority ("CAA"). **BAI**

First Batch of EHang's EH216-S Delivered

EHang announced that it has delivered the first batch of 10 units of EH216-S pilotless electric vertical take-off and landing ("eVTOL") aircraft to Taiyuan Xishan Ecological Tourism Investment Construction Co., Ltd. ("Xishan Tourism") in the second quarter of this year, and completed debut passenger-carrying flights of EH216-S in Taiyuan, Shanxi on July 28, 2024.



The ceremony took place at the Paddy Field Park in Taiyuan, where two units of EH216-S eVTOL aircraft took off simultaneously with four passengers onboard for an aerial view of the vast paddy fields. The flights showcased the potential of pilotless eVTOL in providing aerial sightseeing services in Taiyuan, and demonstrated the EH216-S's advantages in autonomous flying, cluster management, and safe and stable operations, earning both acknowledgement and praise from the guests and passengers.

During the event, EHang also showcased its VT-30 long-range pilotless passenger-carrying eVTOL, the EH216-F for fire-fighting use, and the EH216-L for logistics use, demonstrating EHang's comprehensive eVTOL product portfolio and solutions for the low-altitude economy ecosystem. **BAI**

PHOTOGRAPHS: JEKTA, EHang, Joby Aviation

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