Airbus and Boeing each plan to make a series of “backloaded” commercial announcements at the Dubai airshow on November 14 and 15, notwithstanding extended negotiations over a highly anticipated order for at least 36 A380s from Emirates. By late yesterday Airbus had delivered the contract papers to the airline and awaited word on a decision, according to a source close to the manufacturer.

Originally expected on the show’s opening day, the announcement about the A380s hinged on a demand by Emirates that Airbus issue a guarantee that production of the superjumbo would continue for at least another 10 years, confirmed the airline.

The potential deal for the A380s might have signaled a resurrection of sorts for the superjumbo, whose dwindling backlog and lack of recent order activity has industry analysts questioning the long-term viability of the line.

The developments came a day after Emirates apparently exacted a last-minute snub of Airbus on the A380s. As reporters gathered for what Boeing and Airbus executives expected to be a joint order announcement on Monday morning, representatives from both manufacturers joined them in one of the venue’s conference rooms. But after an extended delay, the Airbus officials left and Emirates chairman and CEO Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum entered and took a seat behind a model of a 787-10, forty of which the airline would ultimately commit to order.

Separately, Boeing tacked on another fairly significant backlog addition for its 737 Max line, sealing a 20-unit order with Kuwait’s Alafco involving Max 8s. Valued at $2.2 billion at list prices, the deal doubles Alafco’s Max orderbook to a total of 40. Alafco hasn’t yet placed the leased airplanes with operators, but prospects in the region look positive based on the demand the company has seen for its first batch of Maxs, reported deputy CEO Adel Al Banwan at the show on November 12.
Saab keeps Dubai ATC on cutting edge

by David Donald

With air traffic set to grow annually in the Middle East by 7.7 percent, the provision of state-of-the-art air traffic control at both local and regional levels is vital to maintain safety and improve on-time dispatch figures. This is particularly important in regions of heavy traffic, such as Dubai. As one of the world’s foremost air traffic management system experts—the company claims that one in four flights worldwide benefits from its systems—Saab (Stand 340) is implementing key elements of the Dubai region’s air traffic system.

Earlier this year the company was awarded contracts to provide multilateration networks at both Dubai International (DXB) and Dubai World Central (DWC), covering both surface and wide-area airspace monitoring.

Multilateration works by a small ground unit transmitting to an aircraft’s transponder, which then returns a signal. By using time-of-arrival information from three or more separate ground units the aircraft’s position can be plotted to within seven meters.

In the wide-area application the systems at DXB and DWC can draw on information from the same ground unit network, representing the world’s first example of a dual-site installation.

Both airports are also receiving a surface multilateration system. This works in a similar fashion to plot aircraft movements on the ground. Airside vehicles can also carry transponders so that their movements can be integrated with those of aircraft. Typically a runway area employs 18 to 20 ground units to provide full coverage, whereby three units must have line-of-sight to ground vehicles with one redundant unit always available to cater for failure.

The benefits of using multilateration over radar are a quicker refresh rate—every second rather than every five or so for a typical radar—and the ability to place the ground units wherever they are required. The ease with which they can be placed or relocated elegantly accounts for the ever-changing building landscape of the modern airport. However, only the vehicles and aircraft that carry transponders can be tracked, meaning that surface radars are still required to detect and track non-cooperative targets such as animals, people or errant vehicles in crucial areas such as on and around the runways.

UAE is launch customer for multi-spectral recon pod

UAE’s ministry of defense announced at the Dubai Airshow 2017 that it has ordered the MS-110 reconnaissance pod from UTC Aerospace Systems/Goodrich. The deal is worth $420 million and covers an unspecified number of pods. The UAE is the first customer for the multi-spectral derivative of Goodrich’s DB-110 dual-band sensor system that has been acquired by more than a dozen F-16 operators, as well as being operational on the F-15, Tornado and P-3 Orion. The UAE air force already operates the DB-110 on its F-16s.

The UAE air force’s other fighter community—which flies the Dassault Mirage 2000—is also benefiting from recent deals through the placing of a $120 million order for the P3 guided bomb from Tawazun Dynamics. This new weapon is being shown for the first time at the Dubai show, both on the Tawazun Dynamics stand and under the Calidus B-350 in the static park.

In other deals announced on the second day of the Dubai air show Global Aerospace Logistics was awarded a contract worth nearly $400 million to provide logistics and maintenance support for UAE Joint Aviation Command helicopters, while Advanced Integrated Systems received a $350 million contract to provide support services for an unspecified reconnaissance aircraft. Maximus Air received a follow-on contract to provide heavy lift support for a further two years, while SCG was contracted for UAV services.

Dubai Airshow News

The AIN Publications graphic artists have redesigned its print magazines Aviation International News, Convention News, and Airshow News to give them a more modern look. The new design reflects AIN’s mission “to provide timely, accurate, and balanced aviation and aerospace news, analysis, and data around the world” with the same high standards of excellence that we have always maintained for all AIN Publications products. The newly designed issues commence with this issue of Dubai Airshow News.

Dubai Airshow News

Along with the MS-110 pod the UAE defense deals announced yesterday included a contract for Tawazun Dynamics to supply the P3 guided bomb for use on the Mirage 2000.

Rolls-Royce’s Advance3 core nears milestone

Rolls-Royce (Stand 1028) said at the Dubai Airshow 2017 that it is close to carrying out the first run of the Advance3 core demonstrator. The new engine core is designed to deliver maximum fuel efficiency and low emissions, and forms a key part of the company’s Advance and UltraFan engine designs.

“The new core architecture being tested in this demonstrator is a critical part of our strategy and will help us to deliver even better economic and environmental performance for our customers,” said Eric Schulz, Rolls-Royce president for civil aerospace.

The test program is designed to gather data on engine performance across more than 2,800 parameters. The test engine features a high-power gearbox, designed to deliver efficiency at high bypass ratios. Earlier this year the gearbox achieved 70,000 hp while on test, a new record in the aerospace industry, according to Rolls-Royce.

With the Advance3 core, UltraFan will offer a 25-percent fuel efficiency improvement compared with the first generation of Trent engines, and it is expected to be available for service in 2025.

Also at the Dubai Air Show, the UK OEM launched a new range of apps for airline pilots, “to give them better insight into their engines.” The Pilot App will help pilots to monitor engines and manage fuel consumption, and will initially cover the Trent XWB, which powers the Airbus A350XWB, and the Trent 1000, which powers the Boeing 787.

J.W.
New trainer/light-attack aircraft to be built in UAE

by David Donald

Unveiled at the Dubai show this week, the Calidus B-250 is a light attack/trainer aircraft that has been developed in Brazil but which will be built in the UAE by Calidus (Chalet A34-35) as part of the Bader program. A facility is being completed in Al Ain to build the aircraft, which is intended for a range of duties, including ISR, counter-insurgency, close air support and training.

Developed under conditions of some secrecy in just 20 months, the B-250 has been designed by Novaer at São José dos Campos, near São Paulo, under the leadership of Joseph Kovács, who created the Embraer Tucano. The B-250 draws on Kovács’s work in producing the redesigned Golden Aircraft/US Aircraft Corporation A-67 Dragon, but incorporates significant elements of composite structure. It has a stepped tandem cockpit and is powered by a Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-68 that develops 1,600 shp.

The avionics are provided by Rockwell Collins in the form of the touchscreen Pro Line Fusion system, which supports a digital head-up display. Calidus is performing the missionization of the system and will handle further updates, drawing on Fusion’s open systems architecture. For the ISR/light attack mission the B-250 is fitted with an electro-optic turret and can carry a range of weapons on its seven hardpoints. The example in the static display is being shown with GPS-guided bombs from Tawazun Dynamics, the LIG Nexi LOGIR imaging infrared precision rocket and DS-16 smart munition. Avibras Skyfire-70 and Equipaer 70-mm rocket pods are also on show. A second B-250 is taking part in the daily air display.

Alongside the B-250 is the T-Xc Sovi basic trainer aircraft, which is also a Novaer design, first flying in Brazil in 2015. The side-by-side aircraft has a pressurized cabin that permits a service ceiling of 25,000 feet, and it can be powered by either piston or turboprop powerplants. Novaer designed the aircraft with an aim of providing a successor to the Brazilian air force’s aging T-25 Universal and T-27 Tucano fleets.

Embraer: C Series drama may stimulate market

by Gregory Polek

Any stimulation of the small narrowbody market resulting from Airbus’s involvement in the Bombardier C Series program will also serve to help Embraer (Chalet A48), whose E190-E2 and E195-E2 present perhaps the only legitimate challenge to the Canadian product in the under-150-seat market segment, according to Embraer Commercial Aviation CEO John Slattery.

Speaking at the show yesterday, Slattery also reminded reporters that until the U.S. government issues antitrust immunity for Airbus’s planned 50.1-percent stake in the C Series, the European manufacturer cannot get involved in C Series marketing efforts. When it does, however, the Brazilian manufacturer expects airlines to abide by their fiduciary responsibility to invite competing bids, opening more targets of opportunity for the E2s.

“Airbus’s potential investment into the C Series certainly validates that 100- to 150-seat segment,” said Slattery. “I expect with Airbus’s marketing team, once they commence marketing the aircraft...my working expectation is that the number of campaigns will increase for Embraer. Ours is a competitive business. There are very few campaigns—less than one percent around the world—where airlines don’t request a competitive bid.”

In fact, added Slattery, Embraer has begun increasing its sales and marketing staff to address the expected increased activity.

So far the three E2 members have drawn orders for just 233 copies since its launch in 2013, and none in the Middle East. But with expected certification of the E190-E2 coming within the next 90 days, the company anticipates more commercial announcements early next year, said Slattery.

Addressing market prospects in the region, Embraer vice president of sales and marketing Martin Holmes issued what he called a conservative 20-year market estimate of 370 aircraft, or 4 percent of the world fleet of airplanes with fewer than 150 seats. The forecast assumes airlines in the region will address overcapacity, presenting opportunities for Embraer to help “light-size” fleets from large narrowbodies and even widebodies often used as defacto regional aircraft.

In fact, 48 percent of intra-Middle East flights depart with fewer than 120 passengers and 42 percent with load factors of less than 70 percent, according to Embraer analyses. Sixty percent of all segments in the region offer less than one daily flight. “This [presents] a huge potential for efficiency improvements within the region,” said Holmes. “We think that capacity management can really help improve yields.”

Esterline Avionics Systems (Stand 1440) has signed a deal with Emirates to supply its CMC Electronics intermediate gain antenna (IGA), the CMA-2200SB, for the carrier’s Boeing 777Xs arriving in 2020.

The company said the antenna is ARINC 781 compliant and supports cockpit safety service and multi-channel Inmarsat SwiftBroadband (SBB) satcom.

“Considering the 777X’s flight deck satcom target to be a light installation, Emirates finds the Class 7 SBB data rate of the CMA-2200SB to be adequate for cockpit use, while reaping the benefits of a new technology, lower weight and less drag IGA,” according to Esterline. “It has been assessed to be the lightest weight and lowest drag multi-channel top-mount satcom antenna.”

Esterline said the CMA-2200SB is approved under U.S. and Canadian TSO standards.
Airships are coming to the Middle East

by Chris Pocock

Two projects that would bring airships to the UAE for tourist sightseeing with a difference are being discussed here at the Dubai Airshow. On Stand 1697, the Spirit of the Emirates is demonstrating its ambitious plan to bring a 246-foot-long airship to the UAE for tourist sightseeing. On Stand 362, Airships Arabia is explaining its plan to bring a smaller Skyship 600 here within the next few months.

The Spirit of the Emirates is the brainchild of Khalid Ahmed Al-Ansari, an Emirati who has gained the support of the UAE's Establishment for Small and Medium Projects. He is the local agent for Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik (ZLT), the German company that revived the famous name from airship history by building New Technology (NT) semi-rigid versions. ZLT flies them from its base at Freidrichshafen, usually on pleasure flights over Lake Constance carrying up to 10 passengers.

Khalid plans to bring one of these 246-foot-long machines to the UAE for a winter season of potentially more than 1,500 flights from both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. From 1,500 feet, tourists will get a spectacular view of the UAE coastline and—equally significant—they will also enjoy augmented reality interpretations of the scenery unfolding below them. “This application is one of a kind and exclusive to the Spirit of the Emirates,” claimed Khalid.

On the stand is a diorama of the longer-term plan to build a fancy base and hangar for the airships. When AIN visited with Khalid, various UAE Air Force officers were showing interest, and Khalid says that there could be intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) applications for these airships too.

The founder of Airships Arabia, Gregory Gottlieb, knows quite a lot about the ISR potential of airships. In a previous career, he was a UK Army officer responsible for the operation of a British-built Skyship airship over Northern Ireland, monitoring the movement of republican terrorists. After moving to this region, he consulted on and built tethered aerostats for ISR missions.

But, as Gottlieb noted, “There has never been any type of airship in the Middle East.” He has sourced one of the eight remaining Skyships and plans to employ it here on advertising and surveillance work, as well as tourist flights. As this issue of Dubai Airshow News went to press, Gottlieb announced a strategic partnership for seed funding with Saeed Abdulla Al Ghaith, prominent investor, in key companies both here and overseas.

Longer term, Airships Arabia expects hybrid airships to become its core business. “Once they are type-certified, they will offer a disruptive, inexpensive, highly flexible and adaptable alternative to both surface and aerial transport modes,” said Gottlieb.

Leonardo optimistic about future sales

by James Wynbrandt

Leonardo Helicopters (Chatsworth, Static S18) is reversing this year’s poor financial performance. “2017 will be the bottom,” recently appointed managing director Gian Piero Cutillo said at the Dubai Airshow 2017. “I expect profits starting next year, so that’s what we say to the financial community. We’re not afraid and concerned about the medium or long term.”

The Leonardo Group’s third-quarter financial results “reflect the ongoing challenges that the helicopter business is facing,” he said, citing “unfavorable market conditions” and “industrial performance below expectations.”

Cutillo added that the helicopter division didn’t properly manage the configuration process for orders, resulting in rework; or manage its own materials orders—among other internal problems. But “the change has been made [to address the situation],” he told AIN.

The AW609 Tiltrotor is among the programs that have dragged on profitability. At the 2015 Dubai Airshow, UAE announced plans to order three SAR-configured AW609s, with an option for an additional three, but no firm order emerged. Cutillo said at this year’s show, “The launch customer could be the UAE,” adding that a SAR configuration “is one of the options.”

Leonardo is exhibiting the latest generation AW169 and the AW109 Grandi, as well as a cabin mockup of the AW609 tiltrotor in SAR configuration, and is “very close” to signing the UAE as launch customer, managing director Gian Piero Cutillo said. “As we speak we are proceeding on that.” Certification of the platform, initially set for 2018, is now expected in early 2019.

More than 230 of the company’s new-generation civil and military rotorcraft have been ordered by Middle East customers, augmented by comprehensive support and training agreements. The regional fleet includes the legacy AW109 and the AW139, along with new-generation AW189 and AW169 models, popular for supporting oil and gas operations and VVIP transport duties. About 90 percent of the UAE’s AW109 rotorcraft fleet is comprised of Leonardo aircraft.

Going forward, Cutillo said he wants to make the helicopter division “a service company, that doesn’t mean we stop making helicopters, but we’d like to improve on the service side. Support for the customer is the number one priority for us,” which will require “a change of culture, and that will be where I would put a lot of effort.”

Formerly known as Fincammeica and later, Leonardo Finmeccanica, the Italian company was rebranded this year as Leonardo after integrating AgustaWestland, Alenia Aermacchi and DRS Technologies subsidiaries.

P&WC to support Abu Dhabi AW139s

Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&WC, Stand 1444) has signed a 20-year Fleet Management Program (FMP) contract with Abu Dhabi Aviation covering 22 PT6C-67C engines that power the operator’s fleet of AW139 helicopters serving the offshore oil and gas industry in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and India.

“The FMP will also include the installation of P&WC’s Fast Solution for advanced prognostics and engine health management,” said P&WC.

“When it comes to helicopter dispatch, time is paramount—especially given the extremely high number of offshore takeoffs and landings by our fleet,” said Abu Dhabi Aviation chairman Nadir Al Hammadi.

“As the largest commercial helicopter operator in the Middle East, we have opted to invest in an FMP plan and the Fast advanced prognostics solution with P&WC to help optimize our maintenance environment and ensure our AW139 fleet remains mission-ready at all times to the highest safety standards.”

Bell Helicopter also signed an agreement with Abu Dhabi Aviation (Stand 1050) approving it as an authorized customer service facility. The deal was signed by Al Hammadi and Glenn Isbell, executive vice president, Bell customer support and services.

Abu Dhabi Aviation operates 57 helicopters, the most of any commercial operator in the Middle East.
Aviation has never been quite the same since the introduction of HondaJet. Apparently, some rules were meant to be broken if we were to stand by our desire to advance the definition of the ultimate flying experience. Because of our innovative thinking, there is no better place to gain increased productivity, access to more places and time on your own terms. The HondaJet is the fastest, most spacious and efficient way to get it all. Find out more about the world’s most technologically advanced light jet at HondaJet.com. The game has changed. Forever.

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"We are constantly developing new products," said Christian Dries, CEO of Austria’s Diamond Aircraft (Chalet A07), known for its all-carbon-fiber piston and turboprop aircraft spanning military, utility and civilian applications. His statement is illustrated by the five Diamonds on display—four making their regional debuts—at the Dubai Airshow 2017: the Dart 450; DA50; DA62; DA62 MPP (multi-purpose platform); and DA42-6.

The Dart (Diamond Aircraft Reconnaissance Trainer) 450, introduced this year and making its regional debut, is "our highest priority at the moment," said Dries. The single-engine turboprop is designed for reconnaissance, surveillance and trainer roles. It has 8.5 hours of endurance and a 1,500 nm range and deploys a retractable camera pod from its belly in the recon role.

The DA50, also new this year and making its regional debut, is Diamond's top-of-the-line general aviation piston single. The five-seater shown here is powered by a 260-hp Safran/SMA SR305-260E diesel engine, and will be offered as a 230-hp four-seat (trainer) and a seven-seater that will be available with engine options including a GE turboprop.

The twin-engine diesel DA62 has become one of Diamond's most successful platforms, Dries said, and is finding demand for its special-mission version, the DA62 MPP, both also making their first showings in the region at Al Maktoum International Airport. The sensor-packed MPP is designed for surveillance and reconnaissance missions, and its carbon-fiber airframe along with a special exhaust system that mixes hot and cold air and reduces the aircraft’s infrared signature, making it virtually undetectable by radar, Dries said.

Expect more new products from Diamond soon. In its chalet, Dries excitedly showed off a handful of projects, completed and in development, including its DA42 Terrastar, whose gamma ray detector, Tesla coil and other sensors can detect mines, water, ore and minerals to a depth of 300 meters below land or sea; a helicopter; lightweight photovoltaic cell panels; and the recent successful test of a Martin-Baker ejection seat system in a Dart 450. "This is how you destroy 500,000 Euros in five seconds," Dries said.

Boom SSBJ could be built in Gulf

U.S. supersonic airliner developer Boom Supersonic (Stand 1676) yesterday launched the manufacturing site selection process for its planned 55-passenger Mach 2.2 aircraft, which it projects will enter service in late 2023, saying it believes the Middle East could be the best place for the final assembly site. Boom founder and CEO Blake Scholl said he sees a need for 1,000 to 2,000 airplanes over the first ten years...so we need a site that can build 100 per year.” A formal RFP for the production site will be issued in the first quarter of next year.

Meanwhile, having conducted successful wind tunnel tests this year at Wichita State University and received $33 million in private funding for development, the company is on track to fly its XB-1 demonstrator by the end of 2018. Bolstering production plans, Boom also announced two key additions to its team: Bill James, whose prior work includes leading the wing design team for the Airbus A380 as vice president of production operations, and Lourdes Maurice, former executive director of the FAA Office of Environment and Energy, who is joining Boom’s advisory board.

Even with prohibitions on civil supersonic flight over land, about 500 routes are “economically viable,” Scholl said, with costs for passengers equivalent to subsonic business class.

"A ticket would cost about $5,000 for transoceanic passage between the U.S. and Europe, Scholl believes flight over land, prohibited due to concerns about sonic booms, will be allowed in the future. In the airport environment, the aircraft would be quieter than conventional jet airliners, according to Scholl.

While its projected 4,500 nm range isn’t sufficient for trans-Pacific routes, even with a technical stop in Tahiti for fuel, total travel time would be half the current 15 hours between the U.S. and Australia. About 10 percent of the 500 viable routes pass through the Middle East, which is "ideally positioned as a connecting hub between Australia, Asia and Europe," he said.

The region could also be an ideal site for Boom’s planned production facility, Scholl hinted. “The theme of this year’s show is ‘the future of travel,’ and the UAE is home to the most forward-thinking visionaries in transportation,” said Scholl, adding, “Supersonic flight is the most significant leap forward since the jet.”

J.W.

by James Wynbrandt

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Boom Supersonic’s booth (1676) at the 2017 Dubai Airshow includes this windtunnel model. The company says it’s on-track to fly a demonstrator by the end of 2018.

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Cropdusters take on more lethal roles

by Chris Pocock

Separated by a suitable distance in the Dubai static display are two rival American cropdusters that have found new missions—close air support (CAS) and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR). The UAE has pioneered the military use of these ungainly turboprops, and now even the U.S. Air Force is taking an interest.

The story of the Archangel and the LongSword is complicated and controversial. The two prime contractors and integrators are Iomax and L3 respectively. The two airframe providers are Thrush and Air Tractor for L3. But Iomax, which won the pioneering contract from the UAE, did so with airframes from Air Tractor, before switching allegiance to the Thrush S2R-660 airframe.

The reason for that varies, depending on who you ask.

Iomax is a North Carolina company founded by the charismatic Ron Howard, who persuaded the UAE Special Operations Command that there was a better way to monitor and strike insurgents who did not possess significant air defenses than to fly expensive fighter jets against them. He sold the Emirates 24 heavily-modified Air Tractor AT-802i cropdusters in 2010-12, naming them Border Patrol Aircraft (BPAs) Blocks I and II. The UAE soon employed them in action over Egypt, Libya and Yemen. The conversion made its public debut here in 2013, featuring GBU-12 laser-guided bombs, Hellfire missiles and rockets. He said that Egypt has formally requested more aircraft from Iomax, and that there is significant market potential throughout Africa and Central and South America.

Iomax has brought its upgraded Archangel Block II demonstrator to Dubai. It has the very large L3 Wescam MX-25 sensor ball fitted, as well as the now-familiar 8,000-pound payload and armor-plating—on the production line. He subsequently sold 24 Archangels to the UAE, but this time to the air force here, which had claimed responsibility for acquisition from the special forces, apparently after an internal spat. At about the same time, the Emiratis gave six of their original 24 Iomax conversions to Jordan and another 12 to Egypt.

Air Tractor officials have told AIN that the reason they parted company with Iomax was a desire to protect their core business: selling cropdusters at home and abroad. They wanted to avoid any questions over certification of the modifications, and they also had some concern about the extent to which Iomax was complying with U.S. export control regulations. In response, Iomax told AIN that the switch to the Thrush airframe was made because "there were inherent structural and safety issues that Air Tractor would not address."

Air Tractor subsequently formed a partnership with another Texan business, L3's Platform Integration division in Waco. The pair developed a new conversion that they named the AT-802L LongSword. L3 added its own mission management system with large-screen display, a Moog Gen 3 weapons controller and an advanced communications suite. A Thales Scorpion helmet-mounted-display was provided for pilots, and the cockpit lighting is compatible with night-vision goggles.

By the time that L3 brought the LongSword demonstrator to the Paris Air Show, in June this year, it had secured the interest of Kenya, which had received a formal offer via the Pentagon's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) system for up to 12 AT-802Ls plus two AT-504 trainers in a package worth $418 million. The U.S. Defense Security Co-operation Agency (DSCA) said the aircraft could operate much closer to the conflict area and would be more “fiscally efficient” than Kenya’s aging fleet of F-5 fighters.

Iomax had also been talking to the Kenyans about the Archangel, and formally objected to this FMS deal, claiming misrepresentation. There has since been separate investigations by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) and the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). Last week, Air Tractor business development representative Tom Menker told AIN that both probes had cleared his company and L3 of any wrongdoing. The Pentagon has extended the validity of the FMS offer while Kenya’s political situation stabilizes, he added.

During the controversy, Iomax founder Ron Howard died unexpectedly. His son K.C. Howard has taken over as president and CEO. He told AIN that the aircraft supplied by Iomax have already delivered “over 4,000 munitions...laser-guided bombs, Hellfire missiles and rockets.” He said that Egypt has formally requested more aircraft from Iomax, and that there is significant market potential throughout Africa and Central and South America.

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Further down the static line, the L3 LongSword demonstrator comes to Dubai after recently participating in the USAF’s Light Attack Experiment flying trials at Holloman Air Force Base. The service evaluated three other more conventional solutions for lower-cost CAS there: the Textron Scorpion jet, along with the Beechcraft AT-6 Wolverine and Embraer Super Tucano turboprops. A report on the trials is due shortly; USAF vice chief of staff General Steven Wilson told AIN in Dubai last Saturday that the aircraft could operate much closer to the conflict area and would be more “fiscally efficient” than Kenya’s aging fleet of F-5 fighters.

Iomax has brought its upgraded Archangel Block II demonstrator to Dubai. It has the very large L3 Wescam MX-25 sensor ball fitted, as well as the now-familiar array of weaponry.

By the time that L3 brought the LongSword demonstrator to the Paris Air Show, in June this year, it had secured the interest of Kenya, which had received a formal offer via the Pentagon’s Foreign Military Sales (FMS) system for up to 12 AT-802Ls plus two AT-504 trainers in a package worth $418 million. The U.S. Defense Security Co-operation Agency (DSCA) said the aircraft could operate much closer to the conflict area and would be more “fiscally efficient” than Kenya’s aging fleet of F-5 fighters.

Iomax had also been talking to the Kenyans about the Archangel, and formally objected to this FMS deal, claiming misrepresentation. There has since been separate investigations by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) and the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). Last week, Air Tractor business development representative Tom Menker told AIN that both probes had cleared his company and L3 of any wrongdoing. The Pentagon has extended the validity of the FMS offer while Kenya’s political situation stabilizes, he added.

During the controversy, Iomax founder Ron Howard died unexpectedly. His son K.C. Howard has taken over as president and CEO. He told AIN that the aircraft supplied by Iomax have already delivered “over 4,000 munitions...laser-guided bombs, Hellfire missiles and rockets.” He said that Egypt has formally requested more aircraft from Iomax, and that there is significant market potential throughout Africa and Central and South America.

Iomax has brought its upgraded Archangel Block II demonstrator to Dubai. It has the very large L3 Wescam MX-25 sensor ball fitted, as well as the now-familiar array of weaponry.

Further down the static line, the L3 LongSword demonstrator comes to Dubai after recently participating in the USAF’s Light Attack Experiment flying trials at Holloman Air Force Base. The service evaluated three other more conventional solutions for lower-cost CAS there: the Textron Scorpion jet, along with the Beechcraft AT-6 Wolverine and Embraer Super Tucano turboprops. A report on the trials is due shortly; USAF vice chief of staff General Steven Wilson told AIN in Dubai last Saturday that the aircraft could operate much closer to the conflict area and would be more “fiscally efficient” than Kenya’s aging fleet of F-5 fighters.
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#ATRLeads
Kamov Ka-62 certification back on track

by David Donald

Having made its first horizontal flight on May 25, the Kamov Ka-62 multirrole medium-twin helicopter is progressing with its delayed flight trials, and is currently testing principal dynamic components such as engines and transmission. Next month the second helicopter will join the test program, followed by a third by the end of Q3. According to Russian Helicopters CEO Andrey Boginsky, three test vehicles should be sufficient to complete flight testing, aided by a ground test rig. Certification is due in 2020.

Boginsky reported that the company is on course to deliver more than 220 helicopters this year. A 1.6-ton single-engine light helicopter is currently in development with an aim of achieving certification in 2021.

Russia is undergoing a recapitalization of its medevac fleet, and the company is on contract for 12 Ansat helicopters and 19 Mi-8/17s for delivery by the middle of next year. Proposals are also being prepared for the implementation of medevac capabilities in Colombia and Mexico. The coaxial rotor Ka-226T has been performing well in medevac trials in the mountainous regions of Iran, while the Ansat has also been extensively tested in Pakistan.

Russian Helicopters (Chalet C7) froze work on a new 10-ton medium civil helicopter primarily intended for oil/gas work some while ago, when oil prices slumped, but Boginsky reported that the company has been filling the gap by developing its Mi-171A2 for offshore duties in conjunction with Russia’s oil-and-gas industry. The larger Mi-38 continues to advance towards certification.

In the domestic military sector Russian Helicopters received a contract for two Mi-38s for the Russian armed forces this year, and this month began delivering modified Mi-28UB attack helicopters. This upgrade provides the ‘Havoc’ with full dual-control capability, along with other improvements. It could be trialed in combat operations in Syria shortly.

Both the Mi and Kamov design bureaus are now developing concepts for a new high-speed combat helicopter, with Russia’s defense ministry to make a decision on which will proceed at the end of next year.

Boginsky refuted suggestions that Russian Helicopters should merge the activities of the two design offices. “The two design approaches offer only benefits,” he said. “Together we have a great heritage reaching back into Soviet times. We need to keep it. We need to grow it.” At the same time, he acknowledged that it made practical sense to harmonize elements of the design process, notably by sharing processes and test facilities.

Breitling named show’s ‘Official Timing Sponsor’

by James Wynbrandt

Aviation chronograph specialist Breitling (Chalet B7-18) is the “Official Timing Sponsor” of the 2017 Dubai Airshow, as it was for the last edition of the biennial event. “Dubai has played a key role in the development of the aerospace industry in the Middle East, and the Dubai Airshow has helped lead this change by creating a world class exhibition showcasing the latest and greatest in military, general and commercial aviation,” said Michele van Akelijen, managing director of show organizer Tarsus F&E Middle East. “As a specialist in instruments for aviation professionals, Breitling is the perfect time-keeping sponsor for the show.”

Breitling is one of the world’s only major watch brands to equip all of its models with chronometer-certified movements, according to the Swiss company. “The world of aviation requires the highest levels of precision and technical accuracy—two fields which Breitling specializes in,” said Aed Adwan, Breitling Middle East. “We look forward to showcasing our product lineup to visitors to the show.”

Esterline demos advanced copter cockpit

Esterline Avionics Systems (Stand 1440) is displaying its integrated CMC Electronics helicopter cockpit demonstrator for the first time in Dubai to highlight the company’s capabilities in integrating systems to meet varied customer requirements.

The scalable, flexible and customizable system uses a modular approach that allows the system to meet a range of needs from minimum to advanced, as well as offer minor upgrades of existing systems through to a full integrated avionics suite. Flexibility comes from an open architecture that allows end-users to employ their own software. Together, these qualities make the solution fully customizable.

On display at Dubai Airshow 2017 in the cockpit demonstrator are the company’s MD-3068 6 x 8-inch smart displays, which can host third-party applications. The displays feature MOSArt (modular open system architecture) middleware that permits the partitioning of applications. The high-definition displays can show primary flight data, navigation information, engine data and moving maps. Also included in the integrated flight deck display is the CMA-9000 flight management system (FMS), supporting both civil and military navigation modes. The FMS is compliant with the latest standards for Required Navigation Performance (RNP) and Satellite-Based Augmentation System (SBAS) approaches. Also included in the demonstrator is the CMA-6024 GPS landing system sensor that provides SBAS GPS capability from departure to approach. D.D.
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Shaesta Waiz promotes STEM at Dubai Airshow

by Samantha Cartaino

Pilot and Dreams Soar founder Shaesta Waiz has returned to the Middle East after completing her solo flight around the world. Visiting 22 countries from May 13 to October 4, Waiz flew 24,800 nm and accumulated 176 flight hours in her A36 Bonanza, while setting a speed record while visiting 22 countries from May 13 to October 4, Waiz flew 24,800 nm and accumulated 176 flight hours in her A36 Bonanza, while setting a speed record.

Waiz’s visit to the Dubai Airshow is a special moment for her because she was born in a refugee camp in Afghanistan before moving to Richmond, California with her parents and five sisters in 1987 following the break-out of the Soviet-Afghan war. Returning to the Middle East to promote STEM and aviation as the youngest woman to complete a solo trip around the world in a single-engine aircraft is an example of how beneficial the fields can be for young women and minorities. “STEM is our future,” Waiz said. “It is important for the next generation, especially women, to pursue careers in STEM so that we can sustain a healthy, diverse and balanced future, globally.”

During her world flight, Waiz participated in 32 outreach events where she spoke to 3,000 children and young adults. She plans to continue these events in more countries in South America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Most recently Dreams Soar accepted its first scholarship donation that will go towards supporting children pursuing STEM and aviation-related education and training.

On October 4, 2017, Shaesta Waiz became the youngest woman to fly solo around the world. After completing her solo flight around the world in October that she would like to visit countries she was not able to visit on her trip to continue spreading the word about STEM and aviation. She told AIN at NBAA in October that she would like to visit more countries in South America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Most recently Dreams Soar accepted its first scholarship donation that will go towards supporting children pursuing STEM and aviation-related education and training.

LoPresti Aviation (Stand 1867) is launching a commercial division to market the company’s BoomBeam high-intensity discharge (HID) landing lights at the Dubai Airshow. The lights, which are compatible with models such as Boeing’s commercial aircraft, replace the stock incandescent lights with a pair of triple-array HID lights. The multiple-array lights mean that the aircraft can be dispatched with as many as four elements inoperative. Installation can be completed in 10 to 12 hours.

The HID lights from LoPresti Aviation offer 1.4 million candela compared with the 300,000 candela from LED competitors. The range of LED lights is 350 feet, while the range for HID lights is 5,000 feet. Mean time between failure is 18,000 hours. According to LoPresti Aviation CEO Tyler Wheeler, pilots operating aircraft with LED lights have between two to four seconds to react to something out on the runway while pilots with HID lights have 20 seconds to react. While LoPresti Aviation also owns an LED light company, Wheeler says HID lights are better for landing and taxiing.

Expanding STC List

“Right now our most popular products are large-cabin Gulfstream [lighting] for the G550 and G450, Challengers and the Global Express,” Wheeler told AIN. “These aircraft have the highest closing rate so they’re flying faster, and they need the range. It’s also a more expensive aircraft, [and operators are] willing to spend a little extra to have the best lighting versus LED lighting. We also foresee our new BBJ lights heading the same way.”

According to Wheeler, there is almost no difference between HID lights designed for business aircraft and those for commercial aircraft. Both sets of lights have the same two working parts: the ballast and the lamp itself. The only difference is the light’s form, so each light is customized for the specific need of the aircraft. Each light has two part numbers that are compatible with more than 500 aircraft models. Currently, the company is working closely with its business aviation dealers such as Duncan Aviation, Elliott Aviation, Stevens Aviation and Textron Aviation’s Citation Service Centers along with all of its other dealers. Looking forward, LoPresti Aviation plans to expand its STCs to cover more commercial aircraft and helicopters.

T.A.I.’s ATAK attracts attention

Jointly developed by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) and Leonardo, the T129 is based on the A129 Mangusta. It’s powered by two LHTEC CTS800-4A turboshaft engines of 1,361 shp each and is optimized for ‘high and hot’ conditions. Available armaments include Hellfire and Spike air-to-ground missiles, the Stinger air-to-air weapon and 70 mm (2.75-inch) unguided rockets.

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LoPresti Aviation

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Emirates 777-300ERs get IFEC upgrade

Emirates is showcasing at the Dubai Airshow 2017 the airline’s newest Boeing 777-300ER, which features among its enhancements a new version of the “ICE” platform, the in-flight entertainment and connectivity (IFEC) system developed by longtime partner Panasonic Avionics. The upgrades bring significant improvements for passengers in first, business and economy classes, according to Panasonic.

“Panasonic and Emirates have worked together for over 20 years to provide best-in-class experiences for their passengers,” said Hideo Nakano, CEO of Panasonic Avionics. “Emirates challenged us two years ago to take another huge step forward with the ICE experience in all classes of service, while reducing weight by 12 percent. Together we did it.”

The IFEC system weight reduction reflects the partners’ commitment to an “eco-friendly skies vision,” Panasonic said, as it results in reduced fuel burn and emissions.

First class IFEC upgrades include a next-generation mode controller, in the form of a 15-inch touchscreen tablet; a wireless handset control with a full set of buttons for all IFEC functions; and room service video call, a new feature that enables passengers to communicate with the cabin crew via video chat and place requests at their convenience via voice and video.

Enhancements in business class include new 23-inch touchscreen smart monitors, the largest monitor in class across the Emirates fleet; a new high-power single USB type-C charging jack; new HD premium seat boxes, which have an almost 20 percent higher graphic performance in comparison to other IFEC system types; and new slim seat power modules, which provide high-amperage DC voltage for USB charging. Economy class is outfitted with new “super eco” touch screen monitors with ultra-wide viewing angles; and new dual high-power charging ports, slim seat electronic boxes and slim seat power modules.

The ICE enhancements will be incorporated into all the airline’s new 777-300ERs and complemented by refreshed cabin appointments.

J.W.

Azerbaijan Airlines ordered five 787-8

AERODEFENSE INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

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U.S. AIR FORCE

One of the most distinctive aircraft in the Dubai static display is the Boeing E-3C Sentry airborne early warning and control aircraft from the U.S. Air Force. The AWACS aircraft are deployed to the Gulf region with the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing. This unit provides AWACS, ISR, refueling and other capabilities in support of Operations Inherent Resolve over Syria/Iraq and Resolve Support over Afghanistan. The Royal Saudi Air Force also operates the Sentry in the region (inset), and Boeing has recently been awarded a $240 million contract to update the fleet’s mission computing, navigation and IF under the RSAF AWACS Modernization Program (RAMP).

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DCAF celebrates opening of second DWC hangar

by Peter Shaw-Smith

DC Aviation Al Futtaim declared its second hangar open on the first day of the Dubai Airshow Sunday, as its DWC early adopter status continued to set the tone for the rest of the field in the provision of business and general aviation services at the airport.

DCAF managing director Holger Ostheimer was joined by Omar Al Futtaim, vice chairman of Al Futtaim, group, Michael Kuhn, CEO of Germany’s Ostheimer said the new facility would

“Please accept this facility as our personal contact with you,” Ostheimer added.

The 7,500-sq-m hangar will double capacity, bringing total land-side plot area to 24,000 sq m and apron area to 13,000 sq m. It will allow DCAF (Stand 1522) to add two single-aisle aircraft maintenance bays and provide enough space for an additional workshop and equipment storage. It will also significantly increase the size and number of aircraft that can be accommodated at the facility. The new hangar will also see DCAF further expand its MRO capabilities.

Speaking to AIN before the event, Ostheimer said the new facility would offer several new options in terms of space, as Hangar 1 now operates at full capacity. “The biggest aircraft it could accommodate would be a 767-300, even though there are very few out there in the market. It provides for a convenient mix of about 14 aircraft—737s, BBJs and ACJs, as well as the G650, Falcon 7X and Globals— or 10 larger aircraft.

“We have a demand in pretty much everything, which reconfirms our plans in what was originally called Dubai World Central. Four years later, we celebrate the opening of our hangar expansion, which will give us more hangar parking, which is in dire demand, and more maintenance capacity,” he said.

The additional hangar space will also provide the foundation to further enhance the strategic cooperation between DC Aviation and Lufthansa Technik, enabling the company to extend its reach within the region and serve as first port of call for VIP carriers from the GCC.

“That is our plan for the second half of the hangar, allowing for three BBJ or ACJ events at a time,” he said. “This will provide the first half of the hangar with additional ad hoc parking and maintenance capacity. We are adding workshops and interior shops that can be used at a time in the future.

“The second hangar will be operational shortly after the issuing of all operational licenses. We are already in the process of securing long-term parking clients. We still have 5,700 sq m of space in the old hangar. That continues to provide MRO capabilities. It’s the backbone for our long-term hangar requirement.”

DCAF claims to have been among the most active of a total of five ground handlers and FBO and MRO operators at DWC of late. “On the maintenance side, we have been the most active maintenance provider and are adding more complexity over time,” he said.

The migration from Dubai International to DWC continues. “I think it’s a matter of time until all business and private aviation activity relocates from Dxb to DWC,” Ostheimer said. “I would estimate the share in [movements] activity being 60 percent at DWC, and 40 percent at DXB at the present time. This is clearly going to change in favour of DWC. That confirms the choice of DWC as being Dubai’s future private and business aviation hub.

“We started in DWC from zero. We have recorded continuous growth in ground-handling activity with the associated side effects on secondary levels of business, including hangarisation, maintenance and of course the strategic backbone of our business, represented by aircraft management, where we have accounted for six aircraft joining the fleet in the last two-and-a-half years, and we are in the process of adding more by the turn of the year.”

Ostheimer is optimistic the venture with Al Futtaim will continue to pay off. “Dubai will continue to be attractive for people to reside and earn their bread and butter. I cannot see that changing. We continue to expect growth in the next few years. I don’t think it will be exponential, but it will be sound growth.”

Mena, Hala Bahrain in partnership

Mena Aerospace (Stand 875) has signed a contract with Hala Bahrain, a provider of ground handling and other airport services, to support business aviation clients at Bahrain International Airport (BIA). Hala Bahrain was launched earlier this year by Bahrain Airport Company (BAC), operator and manager of BIA.

Mena Aerospace hangs seven aircraft, three of which also are managed under its air operator’s certificate (AOC), and is looking into MRO accreditations through its MenaTech- nics maintenance facility.

In partnership with Austria-based International Jet Management (IJM), Mena has also set up a joint venture, known as UJ Mena, which it said has experienced rapid growth in the past two years. UJ Mena is based at Mena Aerospace’s hangar complex at BIA, and holds an AOC issued by the Kingdom of Bahrain’s Civil Aviation Department.

UJM was founded in 2003 and has more than 100 employees at its headquarters in Vienna, and it also has offices in central Europe and the Far East with 30 aircraft under management. P.S.S.
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IDEAS BORN TO FLY™
Lufthansa Technik wins first 787 completion

by James Wynbrandt

MRO and completions specialist Lufthansa Technik (LHT, Stand 1156) has won an order for a VIP cabin completion for a Boeing 787-8 from an undisclosed customer. The order represents its first Dreamliner completion project.

Announcing the news at the Dubai Airshow yesterday, Wieland Timm, senior director sales for LHT’s VIP and special mission aircraft division, said, “With the conclusion of this completion contract, we are closing the final gap in our expertise for the Boeing 787. Our existing experience for this type of aircraft in the fields of modification, maintenance, repair and overhaul is a valuable basis for the equipment of this special VIP aircraft.”

LHT has provided technical services to more than 100 Boeing 787s from various commercial and VIP 787 operators, according to the company. Scheduled to commence in 2018, the forward cabin of the 787 will have an office and bedroom suite, the midsection hosts a dining and conference area while the rear cabin will have delegation seating of different classes.

Tanker Concepts

LHT’s VIP and special mission aircraft division also introduced at the show cabin concepts for the Airbus A330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT), comprising four configurations: State, Governor, Rescue and Trooper. State is designed as a flying government office for heads-of-states, government members and delegations, outfitted with equipment necessary for operations of governmental authorities or military staffs, while the Governor version is designed to transport larger delegations of various functions and statuses.

Rescue was developed for humanitarian aid flights and medical evacuation transports and incorporates a modular intensive care unit that can accommodate additional passengers or medical equipment as needed. For this cabin concept, LHT is offering its patient transport unit. The Trooper concept cabin is optimized for long-distance passenger or troop transport and offers maximum capacity in different classes.

The cabin variants were developed in cooperation with military services and meet requirements with regard to risks through leaking emanations (NATO Tempest requirements). Some 30 A330 MRTT aircraft have been ordered or are already in service with various air forces.

Dubai’s Empire Aviation Group (EAG, Static Sq) is to launch an air charter brokerage and charter management company to meet rising demand in the Middle East. Based in Dubai, Elan Air Charter will handle passenger charter, commercial cargo flights and air ambulance missions, as well as global concierge services. Elan Air Charter’s principal manager, Shafiq Derkeshly, a graduate of Emirates Aviation University, is one of the founding members of EAG.

Bahrain Airshow shifts to November schedule

The biennial Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS) was originally held in January 2010 but has now been changed to alternate with the Dubai Airshow, so the next BIAS will be held November 14-16, 2018, at the Sakhir Airbase. Farnborough Airshows organizes the event for the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Amanda Stainer, Farnborough Airshows commercial director, told AIN that the “purpose-built five-star venue” includes 40 chalets in a line, where exhibitors can also park their aircraft, and one large exhibition hall at the end. Sakhir Airbase is close to Bahrain’s Grand Prix circuit and His Majesty’s palace, and the royal aircraft fleet is now based at Sakhir. It is held over three business days and there are public days but these are held elsewhere, to raise awareness of the event.

The organizers run a delegation program for military and civil VIPs, and the day before the event the Manama Air Power Symposium will be held at the Sofitel Hotel in the country’s capital.

BIAS will include aircraft flying displays as well as the static display—the Russian Knights, Saudi Hawks and Al Fursan (UA Air Force) jet display teams have already confirmed their participation. Overall there will be around 110 aircraft, said Stainer.

The MEBAA business aviation show will be held approximately one month later, December 10-12, 2018, at Al Maktoum International Airport (Dubai South).

Empire Aviation launches Elan Air

by Peter Shaw-Smith

Dubai’s Empire Aviation Group (EAG, Static Sq) is to launch an air charter brokerage and charter management company to meet rising demand in the Middle East. Based in Dubai, Elan Air Charter will handle passenger charter, commercial cargo flights and air ambulance missions, as well as global concierge services. Elan Air Charter’s principal manager, Shafiq Derkeshly, a graduate of Emirates Aviation University, is one of the founding members of EAG. 

Executive director Steve Hartley celebrating Empire Aviation’s 10th anniversary.

Empire is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, and yesterday to mark the occasion it held an event in the static display, where it has a Legacy 650 on show. Steve Hartley, executive director of EAG, said, “Over the past ten years we have built [the company] into a global player in private aviation services and a Dubai aviation success story. Our distinctive aircraft asset management strategy has proved to be very successful, attracting aircraft owners from across the world.” The company now has more than 20 aircraft under management.

EAG also announced at Dubai Airshow the appointment of Scott Glenn as new director of sales, with a remit to drive global sales of new and pre-owned aircraft. He will liaise with the company’s dedicated sales office in the U.S. Glenn, and who holds a private pilot’s license, helped launch U.S. sales operations in 2014, after a stint with Sojourn Aviation as a market researcher.
Hawker Pacific delivers custom designed aviation solutions to government agencies, fleet operators, and commercial airlines looking to enhance the capabilities and functionality of new or existing aircraft. Services include tailored Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) configurations, Pilot or Navigator Training configurations, Aeromedical conversions to name a few.

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Hawker Pacific delivers custom designed aviation solutions to government agencies, fleet operators, and commercial airlines looking to enhance the capabilities and functionality of new or existing aircraft. Services include tailored Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) configurations, Pilot or Navigator Training configurations, Aeromedical conversions to name a few.

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For more information contact Hawker Pacific Middle East on +971 4 886 0470 or email dubai.admin@hawkerpacific.com
Giving the gift of sight: the Orbis Flying Eye Hospital

by Samantha Cartaino

More than 200 million people around the world are visually impaired. While many take eye care for granted, Orbis International is looking out for the 89 percent of visually impaired people who live in low- and middle-income countries. The nonprofit organization, in operation since 1982, recently launched its third-generation Flying Eye Hospital in 2016 to train local surgeons to better care for their patients while promoting eye care and global health.

The non-profit organization is currently involved in 61 projects in 18 countries including Peru, Cameroon, Ethiopia and China.

Donated by FedEx, Orbis’s MD-10 has been gutted and refurbished with all the equipment needed to train local teams and complete eye exams and surgeries. The front section is a 46-seat classroom where doctors, nurses, teachers and others attend lectures and watch training videos. According to Orbis, approximately 40,000 doctors have completed training on the aircraft and at partner institutes such as local hospitals and universities. One of the next sections is the audio-visual room where surgeries are broadcast live for others to see.

Further along the aircraft is the laser room, which holds surgery simulators. These allow doctors to practice eye surgery such as cataract removal. Fitted with eye-exam equipment, the laser room also acts as a holding area for patients about to go into surgery in the operating room, which allows for hands-on training.

Having An Impact

According to the organization, more than 320,000 eye and laser procedures have been performed on the aircraft and at partner hospitals between 2012 and 2016. One of the last rooms on the aircraft is a recovery room that is manned with teddy bears whose eye patches mimic patients’ operations as a way to comfort young children.

Orbis continues to expand its partnerships with universities and organizations around the world. In announcing its FBO at Al Maktoum International Airport earlier this week, ExecuJet will provide FBO handling support for the Flying Eye Hospital. Moreover, UTC Aerospace’s $1 million contribution, announced at the Paris Airshow in June, will go towards establishing a mobile simulation center outfitted for the aircraft.

“Orbis and the Flying Eye Hospital have made a tremendous impact on the world by restoring vision to hundreds of thousands of people in need,” said UTC president Dave Gitlin. “The mobile simulation center will help Orbis widen its influence by offering training to more volunteer medical professionals in even more remote areas. It will enable them to get in the field faster and make a difference faster. We are so proud to be associated with such a world-class organization that makes a profound difference in people’s lives every day.”

Bruce Johnson, director of aircraft operations for Orbis, told AIN during a tour of the aircraft that the success of Orbis is leading the company towards expanding its program to more low-income countries. Johnson also said that while this MD-10 was launched as recently as 2016, the organization is anticipating its fourth-generation aircraft. Although Johnson recognized the current aircraft could perform for 15 more years, the organization is thinking of the longer-term.

The impact of Orbis International’s Flying Eye Hospital continues even after the aircraft has left a country. Besides providing local teams with the tools they need to improve eye care in communities, technology like CyberSight allows local doctors to keep in touch with the volunteer faculty by broadcasting lectures and surgeries from the aircraft, even after it has moved on.

Kuwait Airways buys CAE sims

Canadian flight training specialist CAE has sold one 500XR flight training device and one Airbus A320neo 7000XR full-flight simulator to Kuwait Airways. The devices will be delivered to the airline’s training center in Kuwait City. The sale of the A320neo simulator was included in CAE’s first quarter fiscal 2018 results, said the company.

Kuwait Airways and CAE (Stand 1335) have had a business relationship for 20 years, and this includes CAE delivering training equipment and services such as Boeing 777 and Airbus A320 pilot training at the Emirates-CAE Flight Training Centre in Dubai. The training company has also selected, assessed and trained pilots for type-rating certification for Kuwait Airways.

The airline plans to recruit more than 100 CAE-trained pilots over the next two years. “It is a pleasure to support Kuwait Airways’s growth and its training needs for its latest A320neo fleet,” said Nick Leontidis, CAE group president, civil simulation and training. “With about 30,000 new airline pilots needed in the region over the next 10 years, we are honored to play a central role in the creation of future pilots; we’re glad that our airline partner continues to entrust us with our ability to provide comprehensive, innovative training solutions.”  S.C.

Gulf Air, DAE ink 787 lease

Gulf Air signed a lease deal with Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) on November 12 involving five Boeing 787-9s scheduled to enter the Bahraini carrier’s fleet next year. The airline plans to use the airplanes as expansion vehicles to facilitate future network development, it said.

“Our agreement with Dubai Aerospace Enterprise sees Gulf Air gear up for a landmark moment in our history as we welcome five Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners in the coming months,” said Gulf Air CEO Waleed Al Alawi. “The incoming aircraft represent an important step in our strategic direction toward furthering Gulf Air’s fleet modernization process, enhancing passenger comfort and broadening our network as we look to strengthen our presence across the globe.”

Gulf Air is Bahrain’s national carrier. It began operations in 1950, and now serves 42 cities in 25 countries spanning three continents with a fleet of 28 Airbus A320s and A330s. In addition to leasing five 787s, it also holds orders for 39 new Boeing and Airbus jets scheduled to start arriving in 2018.
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Flydubai brings its first 737 Max 8 to show

by Peter Shaw-Smith

Flydubai is celebrating its fifth Dubai Airshow with the unveiling of its new Boeing 737 Max 8.

“This is the first aircraft to be delivered from the largest single-aisle Boeing aircraft order placed in the Middle East, in the 2013 edition of the show,” Flydubai said.

The aircraft is the first of 76 aircraft on order from Boeing, all of which are scheduled to be delivered by 2023. Six of them are due to join the fleet by the end of 2017, added the airline.

“At the 2013 Dubai Airshow, we made history by placing the largest order for this aircraft type in the Middle East. This was made before this aircraft took its first commercial flight,” said flydubai chairman, Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum.

“The efficiency and enhanced performance this aircraft promises are going to play an important role in the new chapter of flydubai’s growth strategy.”

Flydubai’s new Boeing 737 Max 8 will initially serve the furthest points on the carrier’s network, including Bangkok, Prague, Yekaterinburg and Zanzibar.

“The 737 Max family is the fastest-selling airplane in Boeing history, with about 3,950 orders from 93 customers worldwide,” said Marty Bentrott, vice president, sales for Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Middle East, Turkey, Russia, Central Asia and Africa.

Honda says its jet’s popularity is growing

The Honda HA-420 HondaJet is the most popular light jet available right now, according to the company, with 24 copies delivered during the first half of 2017. That brings total deliveries of the distinctive single-ilot Honda to around 60. The jet has a GE Honda HF120 turbofan, rated at 2,050 pounds of thrust, above each wing. A three-screen Garmin G3000 flight deck is in the cockpit.
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