Aviation UPDATE

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Sumesh Patel
President of Asia Pacific - SITA

PG 31

Rajeev Kaul
Co-founder & Managing Director
Aequs Limited.

PG 46

WOMEN'S DAY SPECIAL

Preeti Vamsi
Executive Director
Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group

PG 14

PG 23

MR. ALEXANDER DOLOTOVSKIY
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL AIRCRAFT BRANCH
PJSC YAKOVLEV (PART OF UAC)

FIND INSIDE

Aviation UPDATE

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B. KARTIKEYA

Aviation in Motion: Technology, Leadership and Industry Momentum
The aviation and aerospace industry continues to move through a period of rapid transformation. From aircraft manufacturing and digital aviation systems to defence technologies and autonomous platforms, the sector is experiencing strong momentum driven by innovation, partnerships, and industrial capability. This edition of Aviation Update captures several of these developments, combining leadership insights, technology trends, and global industry updates.

Our cover interview features Alexander Dolotovskiy, Deputy Managing Director and Director of the Regional Aircraft Branch at PJSC Yakovlev. He discusses the evolving regional aircraft market and the importance of efficient aircraft platforms for emerging routes. His perspective highlights how regional aviation will play a crucial role in improving connectivity and supporting future air mobility.

In our Women's Day Special, Preethi Raghu Vamsi, Director of Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group, shares her thoughts on leadership in aerospace manufacturing and the growing participation of women in advanced engineering industries. She emphasizes the importance of technical depth, operational discipline, and strong processes in building globally competitive aerospace organizations.

Digital aviation infrastructure takes centre stage in our conversation with Sumesh Patel, President – Asia Pacific at SITA. The discussion explores how biometric systems, digital identity platforms, and integrated airport technologies are transforming the passenger journey while improving operational efficiency for airports and airlines.

From the manufacturing ecosystem perspective, Rajeev Kaul, Co-founder and Managing Director of Aequs Limited, highlights the increasing importance of resilient aerospace supply chains. He also explains how India's aerospace manufacturing sector is expanding its role in precision engineering, components manufacturing, and global OEM partnerships.

We also feature Shailesh, who discusses developments in aerospace technology and innovation within the broader aviation ecosystem. The conversation reflects on emerging opportunities in engineering capability, collaboration, and industrial growth within the sector.

Another important perspective comes from Manubhai Sojitra, who shares insights into industry evolution and business strategies within the aviation and aerospace landscape. His views underline the importance of adaptability, innovation, and long-term vision in navigating today's competitive aviation environment.

Beyond the interviews, this edition presents extensive coverage of industry developments across commercial aviation and defence aerospace. From new aircraft orders, rotorcraft developments, and avionics advancements to missile systems, autonomous platforms, and electronic warfare technologies, the pace of innovation remains remarkable.

As the industry progresses through 2026, one message is clear: aviation is not only expanding in scale but also evolving in capability. Technology, talent, and collaboration will continue to define how the global aerospace ecosystem grows in the years ahead.

Kartikey B.

Ryanair and CFM Strengthen Landmark Partnership With Long-term Services Agreement

Ryanair and CFM International (CFM) announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a long-term material services agreement to support Ryanair's entire fleet of about 2,000 CFM56 and LEAP engines powering its Boeing 737 aircraft. The MoU, announced by Michael O'Leary, CEO of Ryanair, and Olivier Andriès, CEO of Safran, one of CFM's two parent companies, will cover the provision of spare parts and parts repair from CFM for the two new engine MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul) shops that Ryanair plans to establish in Europe from 2029. CFM will also support Ryanair with a services agreement for both CFM56 and LEAP engines, until the Ryanair MRO facilities are fully operational.
This agreement marks a new milestone in the historic partnership between Ryanair and CFM, dating back to 1998. Ryanair operates the world's largest fleet of CFM-powered Boeing aircraft and the largest fleet of CFM56 engines in Europe, powering more than 400 Boeing Next-Generation 737 aircraft. The airline currently has more than 200 LEAP-1B-powered Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft in service. Ryanair has also placed an order for 150 Boeing 737 MAX 10 aircraft, with 150 additional options.
Michael O'Leary, Ryanair's Group CEO said: "We are pleased to extend our long-term partnership with CFM with this multi-billion-dollar spares support agreement. For the last 30 years, CFM has been maintaining all of Ryanair's CFM56 engines under a long term "power by the hour" contract. However, from 2029 onwards, Ryanair expects to bring the maintenance of its engines "in-house", and we are pleased to do so with the help and support of our partner CFM. Ryanair will place substantial orders for initial spare parts provisioning with CFM to support the opening of each of these 2 Ryanair engine maintenance facilities. When Ryanair takes over all its engine maintenance in-house, we expect this contract will be worth in excess of $1bn annually to CFM in spare engines and spare parts supplies. This new spare parts agreement extends our 30-year partnership with CFM, and we look forward to working closely with CFM, Safran and GE to support what will be one of the world's largest commercial aircraft fleets, and one of the world's largest packages of Boeing 737 engines too."
Olivier Andriès, CEO of Safran, said: "This new major milestone further strengthens the strategic relationship we have built with Ryanair over the past three decades, and we are proud to support their continued growth through this comprehensive MRO services offering. With the ongoing success of the CFM56 and the rapid growth of the LEAP fleet, we are investing to build a global MRO network within an open and competitive ecosystem to help our airline customers optimize fleet efficiency and control operational costs."
Lawrence Culp, Jr., chairman and CEO of GE Aerospace, said:"Ryanair is one of our largest customers, and we value the opportunity to work with them on solutions to increase capacity and reduce turnaround time. This MoU demonstrates our commitment to an open MRO ecosystem that supports growing demand while reducing cost of ownership."
CFM LEAP engines have experienced the fastest ramp-up in commercial aviation history. Advanced technologies like composite fan blades and ceramic matrix composites deliver an engine that's 15 percent more fuel efficient, with 15 percent lower carbon emissions than prior-generation CFM56 engines. Backed by advanced health monitoring systems and an open MRO ecosystem, CFM LEAP engines offer mature reliability and enable high asset utilization for narrowbody aircraft.

Air Canada discloses order for eight Airbus A350-1000s

Air Canada has disclosed a firm order for eight Airbus A350-1000 aircraft, marking a pivotal upgrade to the airline's long-haul fleet strategy with an additional commitment to Airbus widebody aircraft. The order was listed as undisclosed in November 2025.
The A350-1000's economics and lower operating costs will deliver a significant competitive

advantage to Air Canada. With an industry-leading range of up to 9,000nm, the latest generation widebody aircraft will be central to the airline's global expansion, enabling seamless, non-stop connectivity from Canada to high-growth markets across the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and Australia.

"Air Canada's continued global ambitions are solidified by the selection of the Airbus A350-1000, a natural next step in the evolution of our fleet. The aircraft brings state-of-the-art capabilities and improved efficiencies to Air Canada, unlocking new long-haul opportunities around the globe," said Mark Galardo, Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer, and President of Cargo at Air Canada. "With the Maple Leaf adorning the tail, the Airbus A350-1000 will play a central role in defining Air Canada's next era, connecting our customers, our hubs, and our country to the world."

"Air Canada's selection of the A350-1000 to lead its long-haul fleet strategy is a strong testament to the most technologically advanced widebody on the market," said Benoit de Saint-Exupéry, Airbus EVP Sales of the Commercial Aircraft business. "This decision is not only about fleet modernisation, it is also about Air Canada's ambition to set new standards in range, performance and customer satisfaction which we are proud to support."

CDB Aviation Sells 2 Airbus A321-200s to Finnair

CDB Aviation, a wholly owned Irish subsidiary of China Development Bank Financial Leasing Co., Limited ("CDB Leasing"), announced today the sale of two Airbus A321-200 aircraft to the flag carrier of Finland, Finnair.

CDB Aviation has built a strong partnership with the Finnair team, aiding their long-term fleet strategy since the execution of the lease agreements for these two narrowbody aircraft in 2017.

Truenoord Delivers 2 ATR 42-600s to Premium US Regional Carrier JSX

Specialist regional aircraft lessor, TrueNoord, has announced the successful delivery of two ATR 42-600 aircraft to JSX, the US public charter carrier known for its distinctive 'hop-on' premium service model. The first aircraft was delivered in November, with the second following in January. Both turboprops are now in operation with the service.

The transaction strengthens TrueNoord's presence of ATR turboprops in the North American market. Maarten Grift, Sales Director – Americas at TrueNoord, comments: "This is an important milestone not only for JSX and TrueNoord, but for the broader US regional market. The ATR 42-600 delivers a modern, cost-efficient solution for routes where jets are not commercially or operationally viable. JSX's adoption of the type demonstrates its confidence in turboprop operations and the aircraft's ability to deliver convenience, comfort, and a distinctive travel experience for premium passengers."

"We're pleased to partner with TrueNoord as we introduce the ATR into the JSX fleet," said Alex Wilcox, CEO of JSX. "The ATR 42-600's versatility helps us expand access to joyful, simple air travel for more communities across the U.S., and will open meaningful new opportunities in regional mobility."

Paul Murphy, TrueNoord CFO, comments, "The delivery of these aircraft underscores our focus on prudent investment in high quality assets that contribute to a stable, sustainable financial platform for TrueNoord and its customers."

Grift explains that the placement of these aircraft reflects TrueNoord's commitment to providing operators with flexible, long-term regional fleet solutions. "It is a pleasure working with JSX's professional team and we look forward to supporting their unique public charter operations and ambitious growth plans moving forward."

Tata Advanced Systems Inaugurates Airbus H125 Helicopter Production Line to Boost India's Vertical-lift Capabilities

Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) has inaugurated India's first private-sector helicopter Final Assembly Line for the Airbus H125 at Vemagal in the southern Indian state of Karnataka.

The H125 helicopter Final Assembly Line facility was inaugurated virtually by Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, and Mr Emmanuel Macron, President of France.
Present at the event in Vemagal were Shri Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Defence Minister, Government of India, Ms Catherine Vautrin, Hon'ble Minister of the Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs, Government of France, and Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Hon'ble Minister for Civil Aviation, Government of India. Also present were Tata Advanced Systems and Airbus senior leadership teams.
This partnership is a watershed for 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) in aerospace, marking the first time the Indian private sector will undertake the manufacturing, integration, testing and maintenance of a sophisticated rotary-wing platform in India. By building the civil H125 and potentially its military variant H125M in Vemagal, Tata and Airbus are ensuring that Indian operators have immediate access to world-class technology with localised maintenance and lifecycle support, maximising helicopter availability.
We are proud to establish the H125 Helicopter Final Assembly Line, a first in the private sector in India - a landmark step in the nation's journey towards self-reliance in aerospace and defence. This facility reflects the growing depth of India's industrial capabilities and the strength of our long-standing partnership with Airbus. Together, we are contributing to the creation of a globally competitive aerospace ecosystem in India," said N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons.
"The inauguration of the H125 FAL is a defining step towards India's civil and defence sovereignty when it comes to vertical lift capabilities. By establishing this facility with the Tata Group, Airbus is offering the Indian market a versatile and competitive platform with unrivaled performance that is 'Made in India' and tailored for missions across the country's unique topography," said Bruno Even, CEO of Airbus Helicopters. "The FAL will also be able to produce the military version H125M with a level of local manufacturing that ensures the Indian forces remain mission-ready at all times. It will also be a game-changer for the development of the civil helicopter market," he added.
The 'Made in India' H125 is set to become an essential tool for nation-building by supporting the development of critical civil and para-public market segments such as emergency medical service and disaster management as well as law enforcement and regional connectivity under the Government of India's regional connectivity scheme, UDAN, to bridge the last-mile for tourism and passenger transport.
The H125M is optimised to serve as a high-altitude force multiplier across a spectrum of critical missions. This versatile platform is designed to excel in tactical reconnaissance and surveillance by leveraging its low acoustic and thermal signatures. Additionally, the H125M provides a decisive edge in high-altitude logistics, ensuring the delivery of vital supplies to remote frontline outposts, and serves as a rapid-response asset for search and rescue or medical evacuation operations.

Air Astana Finalizes Order For Up to 15 Boeing 787 Dreamliner Jets

Boeing and Air Astana JSC announced the Kazakhstan flag carrier has finalized an order for up to 15 787 Dreamliner jets to

grow and modernize its Boeing widebody fleet. The agreement for additional 787-9 airplanes will enable Air Astana to expand its operations and enhance its passengers' experience. The order, previously announced as a commitment in November 2025 , represents Air Astana's largest single airplane purchase. With three more 787-9 airplanes to be delivered via lessors, Air Astana's 787 fleet will grow up to 18 787-9 airplanes to fuel its long-haul capabilities.

Boeing and Sun PhuQuoc Airways Announce Order for Up to 40 787 Dreamliner Jets

Boeing and Sun PhuQuoc Airways announced the new Vietnam-based carrier has ordered up to 40 787 Dreamliner jets to serve as the backbone of its widebody fleet. The airline will leverage the ultra-efficient, long-range 787 Dreamliner to connect international travelers to its Vietnam hub at Phu Quoc International Airport.
"Our partnership with Boeing establishes a strong foundation

for building a world-class airline that operates in sync with the tourism and resort ecosystem Sun Group has developed," said Dang Minh Truong, chairman of Sun Group, the airline's Vietnam-based parent company. "We selected the Boeing 787-9 not only for its superior operational performance, but because it is the most suitable aircraft type to realize our vision of bringing Phu Quoc to the world and bringing the world to Phu Quoc."

General Secretary To Lam and U.S. government representatives joined airline and Boeing leaders to recognize Sun PhuQuoc's previously unidentified purchase, which is the largest Boeing widebody order in Vietnamese history.

With a range of 7,565 nautical miles (14,010 km), the 787-9 will position Sun PhuQuoc Airways to efficiently connect Phu Quoc with major cities and other tourist destinations across Asia, Europe and North America.

The 787 Dreamliner delivers superior comfort to passengers with the largest windows of any widebody airplane flying today and air that is pressurized at a lower cabin altitude, allowing passengers to arrive at their destinations feeling more refreshed.

"We are excited to work with Sun PhuQuoc Airways as they join other global airlines in flying the 787 Dreamliner, which connects the most countries of any widebody fleet," said Stephanie Pope, president and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "The 787-9's unmatched range, fuel efficiency and passenger comfort will give the airline flexibility to open new long-haul markets, lower operating costs and contribute to local tourism growth."

Since airlines began flying the 787 Dreamliner family in 2011, the global fleet has helped launch more than 535+ new nonstop routes globally and carried more than 1.2 billion passengers, further enhancing connectivity and expanding global travel options. With Southeast Asia poised for significant air travel growth over the next 20 years, Vietnam is expected to be the region's fastest-growing aviation market with annual passenger growth of nearly 8% by 2030.

Airbus Granted Transport Canada Type Certification for the H175

Airbus Helicopters has been approved by the Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA) authority for the operation of the H175 helicopter in Canada, positioning the aircraft for entry into the Canadian market.

The H175 is a cutting-edge and proven platform capable of supporting diverse operations including: energy, search and rescue (SAR), emergency medical services (EMS), private and business aviation, public services, and defence. Its robust design and advanced systems are well-suited to Canada's demanding operational environments, from offshore platforms to remote northern regions.

"This is a pivotal moment for the Canadian helicopter industry. We are delighted to receive Transport Canada certification for the H175, a testament to the dedication of our teams and the capabilities of this exceptional aircraft," said Bart Reijnen, Airbus Helicopters Head of the North America region. "This certification underscores our commitment to providing Canadian customers with advanced rotary-wing solutions that deliver enhanced performance, safety, and efficiency, and opens the door for new opportunities for operators seeking a highly capable, versatile,

and dependable helicopter for their critical missions across Canada's vast and challenging environment."

The multirole super-medium H175 provides a superior combination of range, speed, and useful load in its class. Equipped with the state of the art Airbus Helicopters' Helionix avionics suite, the H175 offers enhanced situational awareness, reduced pilot workload, and improved passenger safety, while providing a smooth and comfortable ride for up to 18-passengers.

With 300,000 flight hours accumulated worldwide and also certified by EASA and CAAC, the H175 has proven its reliability and performance across a wide range of missions, providing a strong foundation for its potential use and success across various segments for Canada.

Boeing Receives Initial Qualification for 777-9 Training Devices

Boeing 777-9 flight training simulators are one step closer to conducting regulator-approved pilot training after the U.S. Federal

Aviation Administration (FAA) and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) issued simulator qualification certificates granting initial qualification.

"Securing these approvals is an important step as we prepare for the start of flight training," said Capt. Gary Mandy, 777X chief technical pilot. "Pilots will benefit from an immersive training experience that will help ensure our customers' operational readiness for the 777-9."

The development of these devices has been a collaborative effort between Boeing and device manufacturer CAE. The 777-9 training devices, located at the Boeing Training Campus in Gatwick, U.K., include a state of the art full-flight simulator and flight training device that replicate the airplane's advanced systems, allowing pilots to gain proficiency in all operational aspects of Boeing's latest widebody.

"The qualification of these training devices underscores our commitment to delivering high-quality training solutions that meet the needs of global airline customers and regulators," said Chris Broom, vice president, Commercial Training Solutions, Boeing Global Services.

The training devices integrate airplane systems and sophisticated simulation software that model flight dynamics and environmental conditions to provide a realistic training experience for pilots. Following this initial qualification, the training devices will be used by regulatory authorities to validate and approve training courseware before customers commence their pilot training.

"This qualification is the result of a multi-year effort between CAE and Boeing's leading experts," said Alexandre Prevost, President – Civil Aviation, CAE. "We're excited to continue this strong collaboration as we deliver full-flight simulators to our mutual customers around the world."

The first member of the 777X family, the 777-9 has a flight deck designed to achieve a high level of comfort and commonality with the 777 and 787 Dreamliner while incorporating advancements for flight crews, including:

Large-format displays with touchscreen capability.

The option for dual head-up displays similar to the 787 Dreamliner.

A redesigned pilot seat that offers greater comfort.

A unique control and indicator for the 777X folding wingtips that clearly highlights whether wingtips are extended, in motion or folded.

Integration of portable tablet based Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) capability.

Adani Defence & Aerospace and Embraer propose E175 Final Assembly Line in India

Adani Defence & Aerospace, a leading player in India's aerospace and defence, and the flagship company of Adani Enterprises Ltd and Embraer have exchanged an enhanced Memorandum of Understanding regarding the establishment of a Final Assembly Line (FAL) for the E175 regional jet for India's Regional Transport Aircraft (RTA) program. The MoU was exchanged between Francisco Gomes Neto, President and CEO, Embraer and Mr Jeet Adani, Director, Adani Defence & Aerospace in the presence of Honourable President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and the Honourable Minister of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, Mr Piyush Goyal.

This advancement from the initial MoU signed in January 2026 represents a significant step forward and forms part of a broader roadmap to develop an integrated RTA ecosystem in India. The MoU also represents strengthening of strategic relations between India and Brazil.

The industrial partnership will aim to establish an ecosystem for the E175. Both companies are already working together to progress all aspects of the MoU, including opportunities in aircraft manufacturing, supply chain, aftermarket services, and pilot training, and securing orders to support the proposed FAL.

"Regional aviation is the backbone of economic expansion. With initiatives like UDAN transforming air connectivity across Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, the need for an indigenous regional aviation ecosystem has become critical," said Jeet Adani, Director, Adani Defence & Aerospace. "This partnership will also strengthen strategic relations between India and Brazil, bringing complementary capabilities together."

"We are shaping India's regional transport aircraft ecosystem, a bold stride toward Aatmanirbhar aviation that bridges urban-rural divides,

generates high-skill employment, and elevates India's position in the global aerospace industry," said Ashish Rajvanshi, President & CEO, Adani Defence & Aerospace.
"The E175 has a global track record of enabling efficient, high-frequency regional operations and India is a key growth market in that segment," said Francisco Gomes Neto, President and CEO, Embraer.
"This signing represents a critical milestone for our partnership, as we continue to work together on all aspects of the proposed aerospace ecosystem, including securing orders for a Final Assembly Line in India."
As one of the world's fastest growing aviation markets in terms of passenger traffic, India is expected to require at least 500 aircraft in the 80-to-146 seat segment over the next 20 years. This reflects a strong demand for efficient regional and short-haul connectivity driven by smaller, efficient jets.
The E175, a proven regional jet with seating for up to 88 passengers, is uniquely suited to unlock India's 'blue ocean' opportunities in uncontested market spaces concentrated in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. These markets remain underserved by larger aircraft and the E175 can enable new routes, improved connectivity, reliable operations and accelerated expansion of regional air travel.
As the government accelerates efforts to bring air travel to more people, the E175 offers a proven and efficient solution for the RTA, that aligns strongly with UDAN, which is transforming air connectivity across Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities of India.

Aviation Capital Group Announces the Delivery of 2 Boeing 737 MAX 8 Aircraft to WestJet

Aviation Capital Group LLC, a premier global full-service aircraft

asset manager, announced the delivery of two Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft to the Canadian airline WestJet.
These deliveries mark the completion of a two-aircraft sale-and-leaseback transaction between ACG and WestJet. Both aircraft, equipped with CFM LEAP-1B engines, were delivered in Seattle this week.
"We are delighted to complete the delivery of two Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft and to strengthen our long-standing relationship with WestJet. These modern, fuel-efficient aircraft will support WestJet's fleet expansion and continued growth," said Carter A. White, Chief Commercial Officer, ACG. "We also extend our congratulations to WestJet as the airline celebrates its 30th anniversary and wish the team continued success for the years ahead."

Jetstream Delivers 1st Saab 340B to CM Airlines

Jetstream Aviation Capital, LLC is pleased to announce the delivery of one Saab 340B passenger aircraft to CM Airlines of Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
The aircraft, serial number 340B-173, was delivered on February 28, 2026. It is the first of a multi-aircraft Saab 340B commitment between Jetstream and CM, and will be used for their scheduled and chartered passenger services throughout Honduras and Guatemala.
CM Airlines was founded in 2007 and is a privately owned scheduled air carrier servicing destinations throughout Honduras and Guatemala. They are headquartered at Toncontín Airport in Tegucigalpa.

ANA receives Boeing's 100th 787 Landing Gear Exchange Delivery

Boeing successfully completed its 100th 787 Landing Gear Exchange (LGE) delivery, highlighting its commitment to innovative solutions that enhance operational efficiency and safety for its customers. The milestone delivery was received by ANA.
"The Landing Gear Exchange program has been instrumental in optimizing our maintenance operations and ensuring the highest levels of safety during our passengers' journeys with us," said Yukifumi Ueda, vice president and general manager, Engine, Component & Supply Chain, ANA.
"This latest delivery demonstrates our strong partnership with Boeing and our commitment to providing exceptional, seamless service to our customers."
ANA has received and installed landing gear assemblies through the exchange program on 30 of its 787s.
"This milestone reinforces our dedication to providing airlines with critical parts when and where needed to maximize fleet availability and strengthen operational resilience. By ensuring a reliable and efficient supply chain, we continue to drive measurable

value for airline operations worldwide," said William Ampofo, senior vice president, Parts & Distribution and Supply Chain, Boeing Global Services. "We are also investing in and expanding our exchange pool capacity to meet the growing needs of our customers as they begin their 787-9 overhaul cycle."

Over the past 20 years, the LGE program has become the preferred choice for operators around the globe. Boeing has successfully contracted exchanges for more than 480 787 tails from 34 airlines into the landing gear exchange skyline – with many customers extending services or adding tails to the exchange. ANA has LGE contracts to support its 787-8 and 787-9 fleet. Other recent contracts include unnamed customers signing up for a total of 65 exchanges for their 787-8 and 787-9 fleets.

Boeing's LGE program also offers a capital-efficient model eliminating the need for airlines to purchase and manage landing gear assets or oversee complex overhaul processes. By delivering forward exchange of certified, overhauled landing gear, the program reduces green time loss and aircraft downtime, enabling airlines to preserve liquidity, streamline maintenance, and focus on delivering seamless, reliable service to their customers.

De Havilland Canada Delivers OEM Refurbished Dash 8-400 to TrueNoord

De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited (De Havilland Canada) is pleased to announce the delivery of one OEM refurbished Dash 8-400 aircraft to regional aircraft leasing specialist, TrueNoord. The aircraft will be placed on lease to Nexus Airlines, a growing regional carrier in Australia. "We are delighted to expand our

relationship with TrueNoord and to support Nexus Airlines as they build their regional fleet around the Dash 8-400," said Ryan DeBrusk, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, De Havilland Canada. "Our OEM Refurbished Program delivers high-quality aircraft designed to meet the needs of growing regional operations, while providing exceptional value, performance, and reliability."

Refurbished at De Havilland Canada's Calgary facilities, an OEM Refurbished Dash 8-400 offers the proven dependability of a new-production aircraft along with tailored upgrades to suit customer requirements. This makes it an ideal choice for operators seeking a cost-effective, dependable, and high-performance solution.

The deal underscores the growing demand for the Dash 8-400's unbeatable combination of performance, efficiency, and versatility—qualities that have made it a backbone of regional fleets worldwide.

Carst Lindeboom, Director Asia Pacific, TrueNoord, commented: "We are excited to partner with De Havilland Canada on this project. The OEM Refurbished Program ensures delivery of a Dash 8-400 that is both reliable and versatile, and we are confident it will enable our customer to deliver vital air services with confidence."

Michael McConachy, Managing Director, Nexus Airlines, added: "This acquisition marks an important milestone in our fleet strategy. With the support of TrueNoord and De Havilland Canada, we are strengthening our commitment to providing reliable, community-focused air services in Western Australia with world-class aircraft."

Cathay Group Selects Thales Avionics Solutions to Equip its New Airbus A330neo and A321neo/A320neo Fleets

The Cathay Group will equip its new fleets of 30 A330neo aircraft to be operated by Cathay Pacific and 18 A321neo/A320neo aircraft to be operated by HK Express with Thales' market-leading avionics solutions. This includes Airbus' new generation Flight Management System (FMS) which is based on Thales' PureFlyt FMS, Thales' 5G-Immune Low-Range Radio Altimeter (LRRA) and Head-Up Display (HUD), as well as the Traffic Collision Avoidance System (T3CAS) by ACSS. Cathay Pacific will also equip its A330neos with AVIATOR S, Thales' cockpit satellite communications (SATCOM) system. This new agreement demonstrates Thales' commitment to support the development of the Hong Kong-based group with advanced solutions and exceptional levels of service.

Thales' PureFlyt FMS provides unique functions, an intuitive interface, and high reliability and is used by major airlines worldwide. With its unmatched trajectory computation accuracy and the unique dedicated DIRECT TO (DIR TO) page displaying only relevant information, this future-proof solution optimizes airline operations by reducing pilot workload, air congestion, and fuel consumption.

L3HARRIS SECURES FRP CONTRACT FOR US NAVY SUBMARINE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

L3Harris Technologies has received its largest full-rate production contract for communications systems from General Dynamics Electric Boat to deliver 26 shipsets for Virginia- and Columbia-class submarines. By utilizing state-of-the-art technology, these systems will enhance situational awareness and communication across submarine crews.

The follow-on award includes production for both submarine classes through 2033, with support extendable to future Columbia-class platforms and allied navies worldwide.

"The ability for submarines to operate undetected is vital to the U.S. Navy's strategic advantage," said Nino DiCosmo, President, Maritime, Space and Mission Systems, L3Harris. "With decades of experience in submarine technology and in partnership with General Dynamics Electric Boat, L3Harris will deliver highly reliable, undetectable communications systems to enhance operational effectiveness."

This award builds on L3Harris' decades-long legacy of supporting U.S. Navy submarine programs, including the Ohio- and Los Angeles-class submarines. Virginia-class submarines are nuclear-powered, fast-attack vessels designed for both littoral and deep-sea operations. The Columbia-class submarines, under development, will replace the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines as the cornerstone of the nation's sea-based nuclear deterrent.

HENSOLDT AND SCHWARZ DIGITS FORM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR DATA-DRIVEN DEFENCE CAPABILITIES

System House HENSOLDT and Schwarz Digits are entering into a strategic partnership to jointly advance the expansion of software-defined defence and sovereign, data-driven capabilities for the networked operational environment. The aim of the collaboration is to provide fully integrated, sovereign and cloud-enabled solutions for Germany and other nations allied with Germany.

Holistic protection: from VS-Secret to quantum resistance
The partnership responds to the urgent need for independent cloud technology for the defence sector. STACKIT, Schwarz Digits' cloud provider, delivers an end-to-end infrastructure for this purpose. Beyond the infrastructure, Schwarz Digits brings specialised security capabilities to the partnership.

Highly secure communication stacks will enable data exchange up to the VS-Secret classification level. To counter future threats, Schwarz Digits relies on quantum-resistant encryption methods and comprehensive cyber security solutions. This integrated approach provides seamless protection for the integrity of data streams against digital access.

Modular multi-domain operations software suite
HENSOLDT contributes its entire defence technology portfolio. This includes, in particular, MDOcore (Multi-Domain Operations Core) – an open, modular and cloud-enabled software suite that acts as a universal translator for different, distributed data sources with the ability to perform AI-supported data fusion and integrate capabilities across multiple military domains. In addition, HENSOLDT is contributing its product range of radar, optronics, electromagnetic signal intelligence and active and passive sensor systems.

This is complemented by distributed data management and interoperability solutions. Further contributions include simulation and synthetic environments for generating data for training, artificial intelligence training, and software testing and validation. In addition, HENSOLDT's comprehensive expertise in the integration of mission systems across land, air, sea, cyber, space and cross-domain operations complements the service portfolio.

Oliver Dörre, CEO of HENSOLDT, says: "The security challenges of our time call for sovereign, powerful and networked solutions that Europe can provide from its own technological strength. The partnership with Schwarz Digits combines leading defence electronics with sovereign digital infrastructure. This enables us to create the conditions for the holistic implementation of software-defined defence and to provide armed forces with highly effective and expandable capabilities for the networked theatre of operations."

Christian Müller, Co-CEO of Schwarz Digits, says: "With Schwarz Digits, we are laying the digital foundation for a new era. In doing so, we are proving that digital sovereignty offers the necessary speed and security to operate critical systems in a future-proof manner."

Sven Heursch, Chief Digital Officer at HENSOLDT, says: "Software-defined defence requires sovereign data spaces, powerful sensor technology and end-to-end, secure processing from the operational environment to the cloud. At Schwarz Digits, we share the understanding that technological sovereignty and operational effectiveness are inextricably linked. Together, we are laying the foundation for data-driven, resilient defence solutions that meet the requirements of modern multi-domain operations."

EDGE GROUP AND SAFRAN JOIN FORCES TO DISRUPT THE SMART WEAPONS MARKET

EDGE Group of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Safran Electronics & Defense, an international high-technology group operating in the aviation, defence and space market, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly explore the development, production, and commercialisation of advanced air-to-ground weapon systems. This first phase of engagement establishes the potential to build on Safran's existing systems, expand their range and performance, advance into surface-to-air missile development, and ultimately progress into the next generation of smart weapons.

By combining Safran's world-class in defense and navigation systems with EDGE's industrial scale and advanced technology portfolio, the partnership aims to deliver highly competitive, export-ready solutions for the global market, offering enhanced operational effectiveness to international customers.

The signing ceremony took place at EDGE Group headquarters in Abu Dhabi, and was formalised by Hamad Al Marar, Managing Director and CEO of EDGE Group, and Alexandre Ziegler, Head of Defense Global Business Unit, Safran Electronics & Defense.

Hamad Al Marar, Managing Director and CEO, EDGE Group said: "This collaboration brings together two companies with complementary strengths. Safran's long-standing capabilities and expertise in aerospace and defence, combined with EDGE's production capability, creates a unique platform to deliver innovative, high-value solutions for global defence customers. Together, we see clear potential to address evolving operational requirements across a broad range of international markets." Alexandre Ziegler, Head of Defense Global Business Unit, Safran Electronics and Defense, said: "For more than 30 years, Safran has built relationships in the UAE which are founded on trust, long-term cooperation, and operational excellence. Today's agreement with EDGE reflects the strength and maturity of that partnership. By leveraging our complementary strengths, particularly in the field of smart air-to-ground weapon systems, we intend to jointly develop innovative, localised solutions tailored to the evolving needs of allied armed forces, while supporting localisation and innovation."

COLLINS AEROSPACE AUTONOMY SOLUTION, SIDEKICK, FLIES GA-ASI'S YFQ-42A CCA PLATFORM

Collins Aerospace, an RTX business, showcased its Sidekick mission autonomy software in a successful test flight of a YFQ-42A, an uncrewed jet developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. for the U.S. Air Force's Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) program. The flight test paired uncrewed aircraft with crewed fighter jets to enhance sensor range, increase weapon effectiveness, and improve overall mission success.

During the flight test, autonomy mode was engaged to enable a four-hour autonomous flight managed by a human operator on the ground. The successful test showcased seamless integration between Collins' autonomy software and the YFQ-42A's mission systems, ensuring precise piloting commands. This marks a significant step forward in support of the U.S. Air Force's efforts to advance its CCA program.

"The rapid integration of Sidekick onto this platform to perform various combat-relevant tasks highlight the strength and adaptability of Collins' open systems approach," said Ryan Bunge , vice president and general manager for Strategic Defense Solutions, Collins Aerospace. "The autonomy capabilities showcased in this flight highlight nearly a decade of dedicated investment and close collaboration with our customers to advance collaborative mission autonomy."

Collins' collaborative mission autonomy solution, called Sidekick, enables open systems collaboration between human teams and autonomous platforms. Designed for combat-related air operations, the software is intuitive, adjusting to the pilot's working style and mission specifics.

The business was selected by the U.S. Air Force to support development and testing for the Collaborative Combat Aircraft, Increment 1 program.

ELBIT AWARDED CONTRACTS VALUED AT APPROXIMATELY $435 MILLION FOR ADVANCED DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Elbit Systems announced that it was awarded several contracts with a total value of approximately $435 million from an international customer. Under these contracts, the Company will supply a range of advanced systems, including land systems, and will also carry out a development program for an innovative defense solution. The contracts will be performed over a period of six years.

Bezhalel (Butzi) Machlis, President and CEO of Elbit Systems: "These contracts reflect confidence in both our operational proven systems and our ability to develop strategic, future oriented capabilities. We take pride in being recognized not only for reliable, fielded solutions, but also for our capacity to innovate and adapt to the evolving challenges of the modern battlefield."

On the occasion of Women's Day, Preeti Raghu Vamsi, shares her insights on leadership in aerospace manufacturing, the importance of strong technical foundations, and the growing role of women in shaping the future of advanced engineering industries.

Aviation Update Editor Kartikeya in Conversation with

Preeti Vamsi

Executive Director- Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group

Q As a leader in the aerospace manufacturing sector, what inspired your journey into an industry traditionally dominated by men, and how has your experience shaped your leadership approach?

A My journey into aerospace manufacturing so far has driven by the opportunity to work in an industry where precision, discipline, and long-term accountability are fundamental. Aerospace and defence manufacturing operate under the most demanding quality and process standards, and that challenge itself was the primary motivation.

In this industry credibility is built through consistent execution rather than titles. Leadership therefore focuses on building strong processes, enabling capable teams, and maintaining operational discipline. My approach has always been to strengthen systems and encourage teams to take ownership of outcomes, because in aerospace manufacturing reliability and repeatability are critical to long-term success.

Q The aerospace and defence sector requires technical expertise, precision, and strong leadership. What key challenges did you face as a woman entering this field, and how did you overcome them?

A One of the early reflections was the low representation of women in engineering and manufacturing leadership roles, particularly on the shop floor. In highly technical industries like aerospace manufacturing, there were fewer visible pathways for women in operational and strategic leadership roles.

The suggested way is to focus on capability, consistency, and results. When teams see strong technical understanding and disciplined decision-making, the conversation naturally shifts toward performance and outcomes. Over time, credibility built through execution becomes the most effective way to overcome structural barriers and build trust across teams.

Q Women are increasingly taking leadership roles in engineering and manufacturing. In your view, what changes are helping accelerate this transformation across the industry?

"Confidence grows with competence. When individuals invest in deep technical expertise and practical experience, opportunities for leadership and innovation follow naturally."

A Two major changes are contributing to this shift. First, more women are entering STEM disciplines and gaining exposure to advanced engineering and manufacturing technologies early in their careers. This has significantly strengthened the talent pipeline.

Second, organizations are becoming more conscious about leadership development and mentorship. Visibility of women leaders in engineering, manufacturing, and research roles has also improved. These changes help normalize women's presence in technical industries and encourage younger professionals to pursue leadership roles within these sectors.

Q At Raghu Vamsi Group, how do you encourage greater participation of women in engineering, manufacturing, and leadership roles within the organization?

A At Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group, the focus is on capability and technical exposure rather than role-based segmentation. Women engineers and professionals are encouraged to participate in areas such as engineering design, quality systems, program management, and manufacturing process improvement.

We also encourage cross-functional exposure so that individuals gain a deeper understanding of how engineering decisions translate into manufacturing outcomes. When women participate in core operational functions and decision-making processes, it builds confidence and visibility. Over time, this helps create internal role models and encourages more women to pursue careers in aerospace manufacturing.

Q What advice would you give to young women who aspire to build careers in aerospace, advanced manufacturing, or other high-technology industries?

A The most important step is building strong technical foundations. Aerospace and advanced manufacturing industries require attention to detail, discipline, and the ability to solve complex engineering problems.

Young professionals should seek exposure to real manufacturing environments, understand how systems are designed and validated, and continuously develop problem-solving capabilities. Confidence grows with

competence. When individuals invest in deep technical expertise and practical experience, opportunities for leadership and innovation follow naturally.

Q Balancing professional leadership with personal responsibilities can be demanding. What strategies have helped you maintain focus and resilience in your career journey?

A Maintaining balance requires clarity of priorities and strong organizational support systems. Over time, I have learned that building capable teams and delegating responsibilities effectively is essential for long-term sustainability in leadership roles.

Leadership is not about managing every operational detail but about enabling teams to operate with accountability and ownership. When teams are empowered and processes are structured, it becomes easier to maintain focus on strategic objectives while managing personal and professional responsibilities effectively.

As the aerospace and advanced manufacturing sectors continue to evolve globally, leaders like Preethi Raghu Vamsi represent a growing wave of women shaping the future of engineering, innovation, and industrial excellence.

Q From your perspective, what more should industry and educational institutions do to inspire and support the next generation of women engineers and innovators?

A Stronger collaboration between industry and academia can make a meaningful difference. Early exposure to real-world engineering and manufacturing environments helps students understand how their academic knowledge translates into practical applications.

Internships, industry-led projects, and mentorship programs allow students to engage with real engineering challenges. For women in particular, access to mentors and role models within the industry can help build confidence and encourage long-term participation in technical careers.

Q On the occasion of Women's Day, what message would you like to share with women who aspire to lead and innovate in sectors like aerospace and defence?

A Aerospace and advanced manufacturing are industries built on discipline, technical expertise, and continuous learning. Women who aspire to enter these sectors should approach them with confidence and curiosity.

The opportunities available today are far greater than they were a decade ago. With strong technical foundations and a commitment to excellence, women can contribute significantly to shaping the future of engineering, manufacturing, and innovation.

BAE DEMOS MODULAR AIRBORNE ELECTROMAGNETIC ATTACK CAPABILITIES AT US AF TEST EVENTS

BAE Systems has successfully demonstrated scaled electromagnetic attack (EA) capabilities during multiple test events using a modular version of its high-performance hardware, which is designed to neutralize adversary air defenses and disrupt their use of the electromagnetic spectrum for battlespace coordination. The small-scale systems enable mass electromagnetic effects from multiple platforms with differing mission capabilities.

The demonstration was conducted in collaboration with the U.S. Air Force and other organizations, flying the prototype system in a weapon pod on a test aircraft representing a Group 4 or Group 5 unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The successful event highlighted BAE Systems' ability to rapidly prototype a small, capable EA system running proven counter-C5ISRT (command, control, communications, computing, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting) software, including a third-party software application.

"We're showing the armed services that we can scale down our high-performance EA hardware and repurpose it for smaller nodes on the network," said Rory Duddy, program director for Modular Electromagnetic Attack at BAE Systems. "We're innovating to deliver a cost-efficient mix of exquisite and affordable capabilities that work together to deliver a discriminating effect on the battlespace."

The configurable EA system uses core building blocks from BAE Systems' proven, high-power airborne EA weapon systems, which are designed for the counter-C5ISRT mission. The modular system delivers low-cost EA capabilities in a demonstration-ready package for small applications, enabling an affordable network of distributed EA capabilities.

The modular EA system provides warfighters with the flexibility to independently deliver select counter-C5ISRT effects or complement the full-spectrum capability of the U.S. Air Force's EA-37B electromagnetic attack aircraft.

The system is configurable for specific platforms based on size, weight, and power constraints and desired mission effects. It can be fitted into a weapon pod or modified for collaborative combat aircraft, UAVs, rotary-wing platforms, ground vehicles, surface vessels, and weapon stations. This provides a cost-effective way to add counter-C5ISRT capacity and simultaneity of effects for both U.S. and allied forces.

BAE Systems' EA mission systems employ open architecture hardware, software-defined radios, and best-in-class electronic warfare applications and techniques. The systems enable quick hardware and software updates and rapid capability insertion, including third-party applications, to counter emerging threats.

The modular EA system architecture is aligned with Big Iron standards, is SOSA (Software Open Systems Architecture) compliant, and strategically incorporates high-performance commercial technology to improve affordability.

AIRBUS UNVEILS NEXT GENERATION ROTORCRAFT CONCEPTS FOR NATO STUDIES

Airbus Helicopters has unveiled its next generation rotorcraft concepts to address the NATO Next Generation Rotorcraft Capabilities (NGRC) study requirements.

Airbus' proposal to NATO, developed in collaboration with RTX businesses Collins Aerospace and Raytheon, and MBDA, includes two concepts: a high-performance conventional helicopter alongside a novel high-speed compound concept, ensuring operational efficiency and fleet complementarity for military partners. Modularity and simplicity are core tenets of the Airbus NGRC proposal. The design philosophy aims to deliver platforms that are simple to manufacture, maintain, and upgrade, ensuring long-term affordability, thanks to its Modular Open System Architecture approach. The two concepts will be highly connected and will share commonalities in terms of maintenance, training, weapons and systems.

"We want to ensure that Europe is in a position to propose a platform that will best fit our military partners' needs in terms of affordability, operational efficiency and maximum availability for both the conventional helicopter and for the high speed rotorcraft. These two concepts are a basis to further exchange with our military partners on their vision and need for future military operations," said Bruno Even, CEO of Airbus Helicopters. "Airbus Helicopters is actively working on the future of its military range. On the one hand, we are preparing the evolution of our legacy range with a continuous improvement policy. With the Block 1 and 2 studies, we have a long-term NH90 evolution roadmap. Our dual product range, the H145M, the H160M, and the H225M, is setting new standards for military helicopters in terms of affordability, connectivity, and maintenance," he explained. "On the other hand, we are working on the next generation of rotorcraft systems, leveraging modular multi-platform technologies such as connectivity, cybersecurity, crewed-uncrewed teaming, multi-domain collaborative combat, survivability and battle damage repair," he added.

ROLLS-ROYCE COMPLETES KEY F130 ALTITUDE AND OPERABILITY TESTING, ADVANCING USAF B-52J PROGRAM

Rolls-Royce announced the successful completion of altitude and operability testing for the F130 engine in another step towards delivering for the United States Air Force B-52J Stratofortress. Rolls-Royce conducted the testing at the U.S. Air Force Arnold Engineering Development Complex (AEDC) in Tullahoma, Tennessee, where Rolls-Royce engineering teams worked side-by-side with the Air Force to validate performance in demanding mission conditions.

At AEDC, Rolls-Royce conducted altitude tests to demonstrate sustained performance for long-duration, high-altitude strategic missions; operability testing with distortion screens to replicate turbulent, real-world airflow and confirm engine stability under stress; and Integrated Drive Generator (IDG) testing with Boeing to ensure stable and reliable electrical power during all mission scenarios.

Jennifer Schwerin, Director, Early Life Cycle & Naval Programs – Defense, said: We are proud to deliver another milestone for our F130 engine testing program, on-time and on-budget, for the Air Force. Working closely with our partners at Boeing and the Air Force, our team has demonstrated the F130's ability to meet mission requirements and further strengthened confidence that this engine is the right choice for the B-52J."

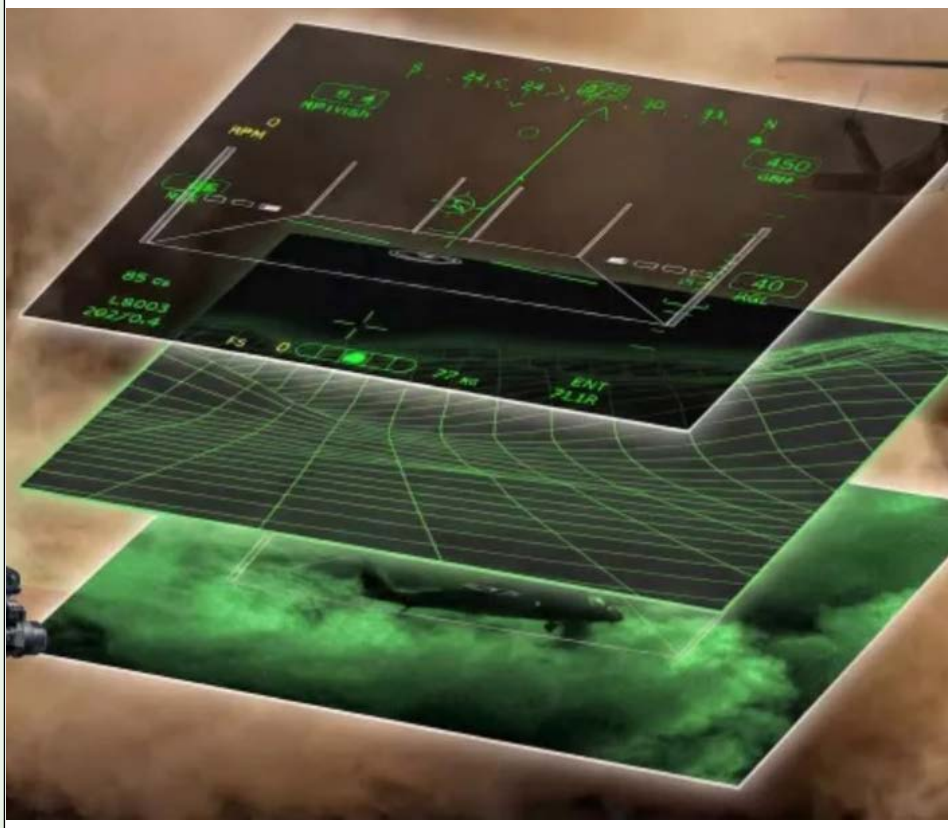
Lt. Col. Timothy Cleaver, USAF Program Manager, B-52 Commercial Engine Replacement Program said: Throughout this F130 engine test campaign, we gathered essential data about how this engine operates across the full spectrum of flight conditions. Completing the series of tests at AEDC's world-class facility gives us confidence in the engine and associated systems as we proceed into test aircraft modification and flight testing."

This milestone comes after the Rolls-Royce F130 team completed Critical Design Review (CDR) in late 2024, clearing the way to build the first flight test engines. Additionally, the engine testing program has completed:

Rapid Twin Pod Tests at NASA Stennis Space Center where Rolls-Royce tested the F130 engines for the first time in the unique dual-pod configuration of the B-52. These tests played a key role in validating Rolls-Royce's analytical predictions, further de-risking the integration of the F130 engine onto the B-52J.

The first phases of F130 sea-level testing in Rolls-Royce's recently revamped test cell in Indianapolis where the team tested the initial software release for the engine and gathered critical performance data for the program to progress.

ELBIT TO SUPPLY HELMET DISPLAY AND TRACKING SYSTEM FOR THE ISRAELI AF UH 60 BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER FLEET



Elbit Systems Ltd. will supply the HDTS – Helmet Display and Tracking System – for the Israeli Air Force's UH 60 Black Hawk ("Yanshuf") helicopter fleet, to enhance operational capabilities and flight safety.

The HDTS is a lifesaving, operationally proven system that provides aircrews with advanced 3D Synthetic Vision Symbology (SVS) depicting terrain, obstacles and flight plan in real time. It significantly enhances situational awareness and decision making in degraded visual environments including dust, precipitation, fog, smoke and night conditions, while providing critical decision support during approach and landing. In brownout conditions, a synthetic landing zone display maintains continuous situational perception and preserves flight safety margins – often making the difference between mission success and failure.

The system features Line of Sight (LOS) head tracking technology that precisely aligns displayed symbology with the pilot's viewing direction, enabling seamless coordination among cockpit crew members according to mission requirements. This improves team performance and reduces human error in dynamic flight conditions. Built on an open and modular architecture, HDTS integrates with ISR and thermal imaging sensors, navigation and positioning systems, obstacle detection sensors and external video sources, supporting safe and continuous operation day and night and in all weather conditions.

Yoram Shmuely, General Manager of Elbit Systems Aerospace: "We are proud to continue our longstanding and successful cooperation with the Israeli Air Force. Elbit Systems is a global leader in helmet system technologies, supplying advanced head mounted solutions for a wide range of aircraft platforms worldwide. This program further strengthens Elbit's position as a next generation provider of integrated aircrew solutions, marking the transition from basic helmet mounted displays to a fully operational system that unites display, precise head tracking, synthetic symbology, and multi sensor integration."

BAE AWARDED $500M CONTRACT FOR PALADIN SELF-PROPELLED HOWITZERS

BAE Systems received a contract award valued at more than $500 million to produce additional M109A7 Paladin Self-Propelled Howitzers and M992A3 Ammunition Carriers for the U.S. Army.

"The M109A7 Paladin Self-Propelled Howitzer is designed to provide a significant operational advantage on today's battlefields and into the future," said Dan Furber, program director for Artillery and Combat Support for the Combat Mission Systems business at BAE Systems. "Its proven performance demonstrates its value on the field, and we're proud to support the U.S. Army and its allies in leveraging this critical capability."

This contract, awarded in December 2025, will bolster the Army's ability to meet critical operational requirements, particularly for its Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCTs). BAE Systems remains committed to the future of the Paladin program, ensuring that Soldiers are equipped with the most mission-ready artillery solutions in even the most challenging terrains or conditions. While being one of the lightest tracked self-propelled howitzer systems on the battlefield, the vehicle is engineered with adaptable chassis and next-generation capabilities.

The platform integrates cutting-edge technology and a modern architecture that incorporates advanced digital fire control systems, known as the "digital backbone." These capabilities provide a significant boost in lethality, survivability and responsiveness, enabling warfighters to deliver precise and effective indirect fire support in a rapidly evolving threat environment.

The M109A7 is produced in York, Pennsylvania; Elgin, Oklahoma; and Anniston, Alabama.

L3HARRIS SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA FOR ADVANCED DEFENSE COLLABORATION

L3Harris Technologies has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Investment and the General Authority for Military Industries to develop mutually beneficial investment opportunities.

"L3Harris has been a committed partner with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for over 50 years, and we pride ourselves on delivering the most advanced capabilities to the country," said Jennifer Hanley, Vice President, International, L3Harris. "This MOU is a significant step forward in expanding our commitment to delivering and localizing key capabilities aligned with the Kingdom's development plans and national security needs."

The MOU will assess the local value chain for capabilities to support artificial intelligence applications and resilient command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance solutions.

The agreement continues collaborative efforts within the SAMI L3Harris joint venture signed in 2019.

ST ENGINEERING ENTERS QATAR DEFENCE MARKET WITH MULTI-YEAR MRO CONTRACT

ST Engineering announced its breakthrough in Qatar's defence market through a five-year contract secured by its Land Systems business from Barzan Maintenance Shield to support the Qatar Emiri Land Forces (QELF). The €315m (about S$470m) contract covers maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services for military land platforms, workshop equipment and technical experts, alongside the implementation of digitalised MRO processes and inventory management practices. Work will commence in 2Q2026 in Qatar.

"This contract win marks ST Engineering's breakthrough into the Qatar defence market. We are encouraged by the trust and confidence placed in us by Barzan and the Qatar Emiri Land Forces to maintain its land platforms to ensure operational readiness at all times," said Lim Kok Ann, President of Land Systems, ST Engineering.

"We are committed to working closely with Barzan Maintenance Shield and the Qatar Emiri Land Forces to deliver dependable, long-term MRO support. We are combining our engineering expertise, digital processes and on-the-ground execution to enhance the lifecycle management of the Qatar Emiri Land Forces' operational platforms," he added.

In addition to comprehensive maintenance of the QELF's fleets of vehicles, ST Engineering will enhance MRO operations through the digitisation of maintenance workflows, anomaly detection and fleet analytics to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency. The work will also strengthen inventory management by refining processes, optimising inventory planning and applying data-driven spares provisioning.

This win demonstrates that the Middle East, including Qatar, is a key market focus for ST Engineering, as the Group continues to secure programmes that build on its core capabilities and strengthen long-term partnerships with defence customers in the region.

1ST AUSTRALIAN-MADE AS9S DEBUT IN GEELONG

Hanwha Defence Australia (HDA) has welcomed the first three Australian-made AS9 HuntsmanSelf-Propelled Howitzers (SPH) made at the Hanwha Armoured Vehicle Centre of Excellence (H-ACE) in Victoria. Joining the three vehicles (Batch 1 consisting of two AS9s and one AS10, made in South Korea) announced in February last year, these new vehicles represent high technology vehicle manufacturing coming back to the Geelong region.

Thanks to HDA's supply chain of local and international partners, the vehicles will now go through further testing and training activities as the capability prepares to come into service. HDA is working with soldiers from the Australian Army in the H-ACE training wing, preparing operators and maintainers.

"Seeing the first Australian made AS9s come off the production line and drive their first laps around our test track is a milestone that we're all very proud of," HDA and UK/Europe CEO Mr Ben Hudson said. "This program will see a game changing capability introduced to the Australian Army underpinned by a strategic partner in Hanwha Defence Australia. With the K9 User Community now 11 nations strong, the AS9 variant pushes the boundaries of the platform."

The Batch 1vehicles have been undertaking driver and maintainer training alongside further testing and verification including firing trials for the past 12 months, ensuring that operators are familiar with the vehicles. New vehicles are being added to this training program as they become available.

The AS9 and AS10 Huntsman have been developed to incorporate learnings and experience from the global fleet of over 2,400 K9s and K10s, the most popular SPH globally. With the AS9 Huntsman, Hanwha has a proven 52-calibre 155mm gun system that is in service with multiple nations around the world, including the NATO alliance.

The AS10 Huntsman Armoured Ammunition Resupply Vehicle (AARV) is highly protected and manoeuvrable, with a unique loading system that reduces risk to soldiers from enemy fire while protecting the long-term health and fitness of soldiers operating the vehicle.

Manufactured with Australian supply chain partners like AME, Aurizn, Axalta, Bisalloy Steel, CBG Systems, Defcon, and DVR, Elphinstone, Eylex, HIFraser, Kongsberg Defence Australia, Maser, MMCLD, Redline Engineering, Rojone, Safran Electronics andDefence Australasia, Stahl Metal, TEi, Thales Australia, and Thomas Warburton working alongside the international supply chain base, Hanwha has made a significant ongoing investment in the Australian market.

"The technology transfer on the LAND 8116 program between South Korea and Australia has been a pilot program in many ways, demonstrating the deepening relationship between the two nations," Mr Hudson said.

"This experience provides the foundation to succeed on our other Defence vehicle programs.

"Celebrating this milestone with our government, Defence, supply chain partners and our own exceptional team in our purpose-built facility is an honour," Mr Hudson concluded.

INDRA GROUP REACHES AN AGREEMENT WITH INMAPA TO COLLABORATE IN THE MANUFACTURING OF STRUCTURES AND ENGINEERING FOR DEFENCE

Indra Group and the Palencia-based engineering group INMAPA have reached a collaboration agreement to work jointly on the manufacturing of structures and the development of engineering solutions for military vehicles and defence systems.

INMAPA is a company headquartered in Palencia, specialised in engineering, advanced manufacturing and industrial solutions for highly demanding, technology-intensive sectors. It already has experience in fields such as aerospace, defence, rail and automotive, among others.

Through this agreement, Indra strengthens its relationship with a medium-sized company that already plays a key role within the industrial ecosystem and is able to contribute valuable experience and capabilities to the defence domain.

Both companies have identified potential areas of collaboration in the manufacturing of structures for military vehicles, as well as in other defence-related areas of Indra's activity. While the collaboration is initially focused on projects for the national market, both companies will also explore opportunities that may arise in Europe and in other international markets.

José Andrés González Para, Indra's Engineering Director, stated that "collaboration is key to strengthening Spain's defence industrial base and ensuring that our country takes full advantage of the current period of growth and strong demand. By working together, we can move faster and deliver better systems and platforms, in less time and in greater numbers. The agreement reached today with INMAPA demonstrates that Spain has companies that are fully prepared for this challenge."

For his part, Miguel Sagredo Meneses, CEO of INMAPA, said that "collaborating with a multinational company such as Indra opens the door for us to participate in the major technological programmes that will shape the future of defence. This ensures the sustainability of our activity and contributes to the development of the local industrial base in Castilla y León." Through this agreement, Indra fulfils two of the requirements set out by the Ministry of Defence in its Defence Industrial Strategy, which not only recognises that modern Armed Forces require a strong defence industry, but also establishes the objective of spreading industrial activity across different regions of the country in order to contribute to territorial cohesion.

NAVANTIA OFFERS DENMARK STRATEGIC COOPERATION TO DELIVER ITS NAVAL PROGRAMMES

Navantia has presented in Denmark a proposal for strategic cooperation in the naval domain, as well as its capabilities to ensure fast and reliable delivery starting in 2030. Navantia's proposal guarantees collaboration with Danish industry, support throughout the ships' life cycle, and training with the support of the Spanish Navy.

The presentation took place on the occasion of the visit of the Spanish Navy frigate F 105 to Copenhagen, which is currently participating in NATO's Steadfast Dart 26 exercise in the Baltic Sea.

Navantia's Chairman, Ricardo Domínguez, leading a company delegation, welcomed the Chief of the Royal Danish Navy, Rear Admiral Soren Kjeldsen, who visited the frigate. Representing the Spanish Navy, the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (AJEMA), Admiral Gonzalo Sanz Alisedo, and the Commanding Officer of the F 105, Gabriel Pita da Veiga Subirats, received the guests.

The F 105 is the fifth and most modern frigate of the F 100 series, considered one of the most advanced in NATO due to its anti air capabilities, high interoperability with allied forces, and powerful combat system. Its visit to Denmark reflects the Spanish Navy's support for Navantia's proposal, which highlights the cooperation model between the two organisations, from the definition of ship requirements to life cycle support.

"Navantia, with the support of the Spanish Navy and the Spanish Government, is ready to act as a long term strategic partner for Danish Defence. We can provide Denmark with state of the art naval capabilities tailored to current challenges, with a flexible collaboration model and delivering capabilities that ensure rapid delivery. Navantia is a reliable and long term partner," said Ricardo Domínguez. The F 105 welcomed around one hundred visitors from Danish institutions and also companies within the naval ecosystem, with whom Navantia's representatives have held meetings.

Navantia's proposal responds to the Royal Danish Navy's announcement of a new naval acquisition plan, including frigates. Navantia emphasised its proven track record in collaboration programmes and the transfer of technology and know how with local industries in different countries since its first programme for Australia in 2007, offering cooperation with Danish companies to maximise industrial return.

VISTA PLACES MAJOR CHALLENGER 3500 ORDER WITH BOMBARDIER TO SECURE CAPACITY FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Vista Global has placed a significant order for Bombardier Challenger 3500 business jets to support its fleet expansion and secure aircraft availability over the coming decade. The deal represents one of the largest recent commitments to this model, reflecting strong demand for midsize, long-range business aircraft among charter operators, corporate flight departments and private owners.

Under the agreement, Vista Global will take delivery of a large number of Challenger 3500 jets, reinforcing its position in the business aviation market and ensuring capacity to meet projected customer demand in key regions. The aircraft will be operated across Vista's diverse network of charter and fractional ownership services, including its VistaJet and XO branded offerings, enhancing operational flexibility and trip availability for clients seeking premium travel solutions.

The Challenger 3500 is a modern midsize business jet known for its versatile range, excellent short-field performance and well-appointed cabin, making it a popular choice for both transcontinental travel and regional missions. Its combination of performance, reliability and relatively low operating costs has made it attractive to operators focused on efficiency and passenger comfort.

Vista's order underscores its commitment to renewing and growing its fleet with aircraft that align with market preferences for capability, interior comfort and operational reliability. Securing production slots across a multi-year horizon ensures that the group can manage delivery schedules in a tight aircraft market, where lead times for new business jets have lengthened due to strong global demand.

According to company leadership, the Challenger 3500 order is part of a broader fleet strategy aimed at balancing long-range heavy jets with versatile midsize platforms to address a wide range of mission requirements. The aircraft will support travel between major business hubs, leisure destinations and regional markets where direct connectivity is valued.

Vista's procurement also reflects confidence in the resilience of business aviation demand and its continued growth potential. By locking in capacity well into the future, the group seeks to enhance service reliability for operators and charter customers alike while maintaining a modern, high-utilisation fleet.

Overall, the Challenger 3500 order highlights ongoing investment in fleet modernization across the business aviation sector, where operators are positioning themselves to meet evolving travel patterns and deliver consistent, premium service in a competitive global market.

CIRRUS UNVEILS NEW G3 VISION JET

Cirrus Aircraft has introduced the G3 Vision Jet, the latest generation of its single-engine personal jet, marking a major evolution in the personal and owner-operator business aviation segment.

The G3 Vision Jet builds on the success of the original Vision Jet platform with a series of enhancements that improve performance, comfort and usability. Designed for owners, owner-operators and small corporate flight departments, the aircraft aims to broaden access to jet performance with advanced systems, simplified operation and a refined cabin experience.

Key Features and Improvements

Enhanced Performance: The G3 Vision Jet delivers improved climb rates, higher cruise speeds and extended range compared with its predecessor, allowing pilots to reach farther destinations more efficiently.

Aerodynamic and Structural Upgrades: Modifications to the airframe and wing geometry enhance stability and reduce drag, contributing to better overall flight efficiency.

Avionics and Automation: The aircraft is equipped with the latest avionics suite, featuring upgraded flight displays, intuitive pilot interfaces and expanded automation to support safer single-pilot operations.

Interior Refinements: The cabin has been redesigned for greater passenger comfort, with upgraded seating, improved environmental controls and enhanced soundproofing to create a more pleasant travel experience. Connectivity options have also been expanded for in-flight productivity and entertainment.

Safety Systems: The G3 Vision Jet continues to incorporate Cirrus' signature safety features, including its whole-aircraft parachute system, alongside improved onboard monitoring and alerting functions to assist pilots in managing diverse flight environments.

Market Position and Outlook

The Vision Jet has become a defining product in the personal jet category since its introduction, appealing to pilots seeking a step up from high-performance piston or turboprop platforms into jet performance without the complexity of larger twin-engine jets. With the G3 variant, Cirrus aims to broaden that appeal through incremental but impactful improvements that enhance both utility and comfort.

The company plans to begin customer deliveries of the G3 Vision Jet following certification and production ramp-up, with additional details on specific performance metrics, certification timelines and pricing expected as the programme progresses.

By focusing on owner-centric enhancements and modern avionics integration, Cirrus is reinforcing its commitment to innovation in an aircraft segment that bridges personal travel and light business use. The G3 Vision Jet underscores a trend in business aviation toward accessible, single-pilot jet solutions that provide performance, efficiency and ease of operation for a growing community of private jet users.

Aviation Update Editor Kartikeya In Conversation with

Mr. Alexander Dolotovskiy

Deputy Managing Director, Director of Regional Aircraft Branch, PJSC Yakovlev (Part of UAC)

Q The SJ-100 programme continues to evolve with localisation and new partnerships. From your perspective as Programme Director, what are the biggest technical and programme challenges in progressing the SJ-100 towards wider commercial success globally?

A Before Western sanctions were imposed, we were quite successful in promoting Superjet aircraft on the global market. Then, when our partners let us down, this process slowed down. We had to develop and begin producing domestic systems for our aircraft. This wasn't easy, but Russian science and industry rose to the challenge.

Today, the sovereign Superjet is in the final stages of certification. I am confident this will be achieved, allowing us to more actively promote the aircraft in international markets. Our partnership with HAL will facilitate this process.

Q Recent agreement with HAL aims to enable licensed SJ-100 production in India. What strategic importance does this collaboration hold for UAC and the global footprint of the SJ-100? How do you envision India's role in manufacturing and certification?

A Russia is a partner willing to work with India not only in supplying modern aircraft but also in facilitating the development of India's own aviation industry.

We are ready to share our positive experience operating SSJ-100 aircraft in Russia, where their introduction has improved public transport mobility and airline performance.

For example, these aircraft have opened hundreds of new routes between relatively small cities where the use of larger aircraft is not economically feasible. This could be of interest to India, where, as Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu stated in January, the number of regional airports in India is expected to double in the next 20 years.

In some cases, airlines use Superjet 100 to start new routes, which are then upgraded to larger aircraft.

Q India's regional connectivity goals (including UDAN-like initiatives) present a large market opportunity. What characteristics of the SJ-100 make it well-suited for these domestic short-haul routes compared with other regional jets?

A The SJ-100 surpasses the E190 and B737 in passenger comfort, and is comparable to the A320.
The 3+2 cabin layout is optimal for 100-seat aircraft. It offers several advantages over the 2+2 configuration typical of previous-generation regional and short-haul aircraft:
- Increased passenger personal space;
- Increased cabin height;
- Larger overhead bins;
- A wide aisle, improving boarding and deplaning speeds;
- Wide Economy Class seats.

Q Joint certification pathways are often complex. How do UAC and HAL plan to streamline the type certification process in India, and what regulatory challenges do you foresee?

A Russia and India have a regulatory framework that ensures the certification of Russian-made aircraft in the Indian market.

In particular, on February 27, 2018, the Federal Air Transport Agency of the Russian Federation and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) of the Republic of India signed documents regulating certification issues. These documents define procedures for design approval, production activities, export airworthiness certificates, post-design approval activities, and technical assistance between the agencies.

These documents supplement the Russian-Indian Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement (BASA) on enhancing flight safety, which was concluded in February 2001.

In January of this year, during the Wings India 2026 exhibition in Hyderabad, representatives of the aviation authorities of Russia and India agreed to continue their joint work on aircraft certification and airworthiness.

According to Russian and Indian experts, based on the agreed regulatory documents, it is possible to develop a certification (validation) program for SJ-100 aircraft for operation by Indian airlines.

Q HAL plans phased implementation —What strategies play in early commercial adoption, and how can this accelerate broader market acceptance?

A Russia has a program to subsidize air travel in certain regions, covering some SSJ-100 routes. In some respects, this practice is similar to the Indian program for developing regional airports and routes with subsidized fares.

The new experience of Rossiya Airlines, which introduced a new form of air travel in 2024, is also worth analyzing. This program, called "AeroShuttle," offers flights every 15 minutes between Moscow and St. Petersburg. Passengers purchase tickets that allow them to select their desired flight directly at the airport, without being tied to a specific departure time.

The Superjet, with its 100-seat capacity, has proven to be ideal for such highly convenient travel. As a result, Rossiya Airlines' SSJ-100 fleet flight hours have increased by 50%.

We cannot rule out that this experience will be of interest to India. HAL estimates that the Indian market for 100-seat jets could reach up to 300 aircraft in the long term.

Q Technology transfer and localisation are central to the India partnership. Can you share UAC's approach to transferring critical systems knowledge, manufacturing practices, and quality processes to HAL and Indian aerospace partners?

A UAC and HAL's collaboration in development, production, and technology transfer has been well-established over the past decades during defense programs. The Su-30MKI program is a result of our collaboration. This is a well-established practice; we understand each other well and work as a unified team.

Today, UAC and HAL are transferring more than sixty years of successful collaboration in the production of military aircraft to the civil aircraft industry.

Civil aircraft have specific requirements, primarily related to safety. In the production of the Superjet, we relied on global standards from the very beginning. This was confirmed when we certified the Superjet and its production according to EASA standards. We plan to continue to collaborate with our Indian partners, relying on the norms and standards common to all modern aircraft manufacturing.

Q Partnerships are increasingly multi-regional. Beyond this Indian collaboration, how is UAC positioning the SJ-100 in markets across Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America? Are there plans for additional co-production or support hubs beyond India?

A When developing the new SJ-100, we adhered to the same strict requirements as when designing and testing the Superjet 100. The SSJ-100, as you know, has been in operations in Mexico, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Therefore, we have this experience. Consequently, we are ready to certify the new aircraft according to the standards of Indian aviation authorities or other countries.

Supply chain and geopolitical shifts are impacting aviation. How is UAC managing supply-chain risk and ensuring long-term supportability for the SJ-100 family amid global pressures and regional diversification?

Russia currently has a modern operational support system in place that meets airline needs.

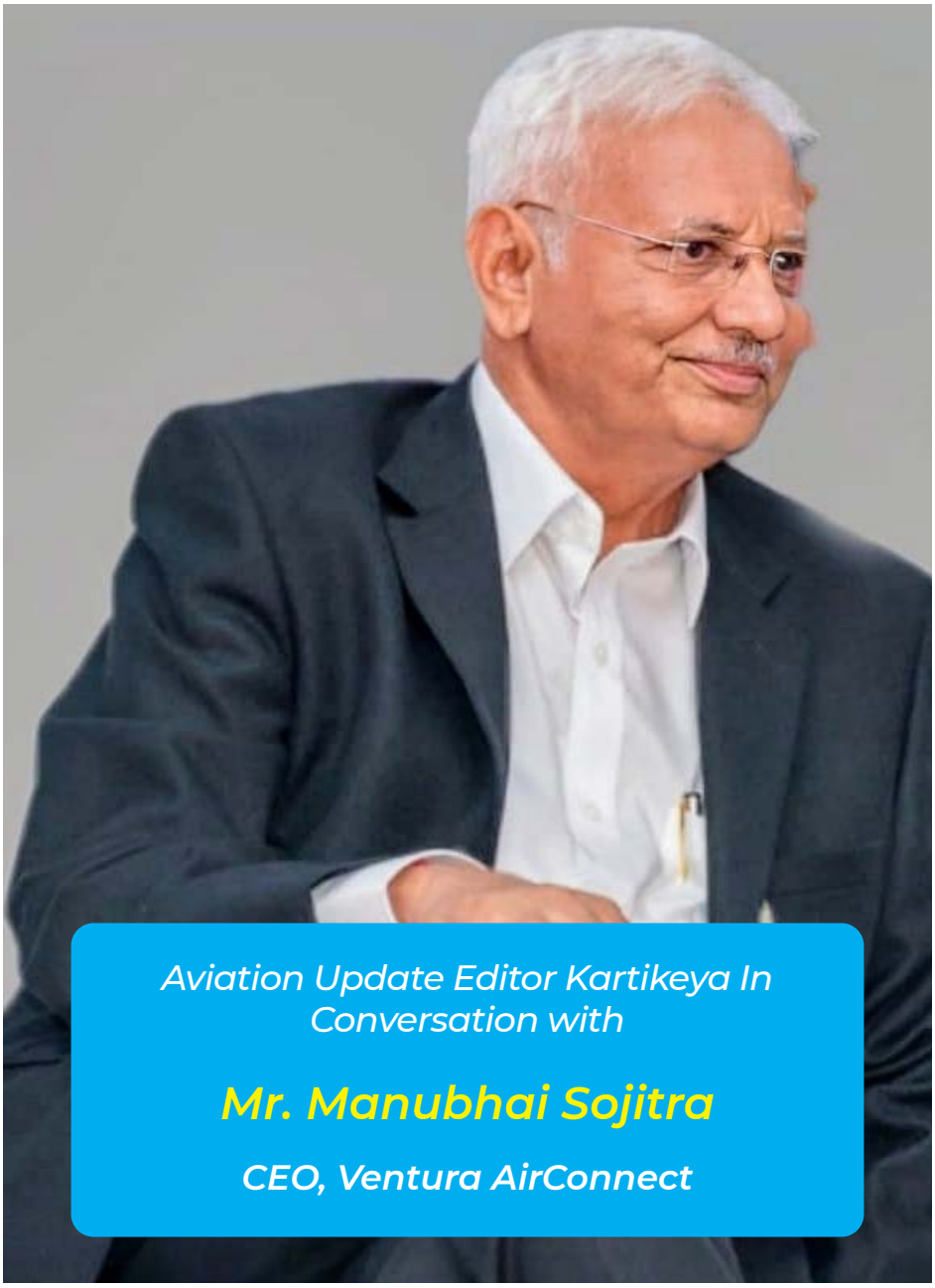
Even under Western sanctions, the frequency of SSJ-100 aircraft operations in 2025 increased compared to pre-sanction 2021. For all of 2021, the fleet logged 187,000 flight hours, and for the first nine months of 2025, 198,000 hours.

The flight accuracy of SSJ-100 aircraft operated by Russian airlines has remained stable at 97.5% in recent years.

Q Looking to the next decade, what is your vision for the SJ-100 in terms of fleet size, regional airline adoption, and its contribution to UAC's broader commercial aircraft strategy — and how does India fit into that story?

A The SJ-100 is a next-generation aircraft in its class. Its key advantage is the level of passenger cabin comfort and control automation comparable to long-haul aircraft, while maintaining operating costs comparable to regional jets.

The program is distinguished by the comprehensive use of digital technologies across all lifecycle stages, from design to after-sales service. The aircraft is equipped with a modern fly-by-wire integrated control system without a mechanical backup (a characteristic feature of next-generation commercial aircraft).
Fully digital control of the aircraft systems has been implemented, as well as a centralized onboard maintenance system.
The aircraft's production utilizes cutting-edge jigless assembly technologies.



Aviation Update Editor Kartikeya In Conversation with

Mr. Manubhai Sojitra

CEO, Ventura AirConnect

Q Ventura AirConnect has sustained daily regional operations for over 11 years. What key strategic decisions enabled this long-term stability in a challenging regional aviation market?

A Our longevity is rooted in disciplined, purpose-built regional aviation — not imitation of airline models designed for metro routes. Early on, we made three critical strategic choices:

Right-sized aircraft instead of chasing scale — ensuring viable load factors even on thin routes

Operational consistency over aggressive expansion — building reliability and trust in underserved markets

Deep regional integration — aligning schedules with business, medical, and administrative travel needs rather than leisure-driven demand

By focusing on connectivity that solves real mobility gaps instead of speculative demand, we created a sustainable ecosystem rather than a seasonal market.

Q Operating small aircraft under the NSOP category presents both flexibility and limitations. How do you see the regulatory environment evolving for regional carriers in India?

A India's regulatory framework is gradually recognizing that regional aviation is structurally different from scheduled airline operations.

We expect evolution in three key areas:

Simplified compliance pathways for sub-20 seat aircraft operating lifeline connectivity

Infrastructure-linked policy support for last-mile air access

Operational flexibility for mission-based flying, including medical and time-sensitive logistics

The future lies in enabling NSOP operators to function as mobility infrastructure partners — not just charter providers.

Q With flight times between Surat and Saurashtra reduced to under an hour, how has passenger demand evolved, and which customer segment is driving growth — business, medical, or leisure?

A Initially, demand was overwhelmingly business-led — driven by textile, diamond, and SME movement.

However, the evolution has been notable:

Medical mobility has grown significantly, especially for time-critical treatment access

Family-linked travel has increased due to convenience replacing overnight surface journeys

Government and institutional travel now forms a stable segment

Today, growth is increasingly purpose-driven, with business travel leading the demand.

Q The introduction of the Pilatus PC-12 marks a move into premium charter services. Do you foresee charter operations becoming a larger share of your overall revenue mix?

A Charter services are not a shift in direction — they are a natural extension.

We see premium charter contributing meaningfully, especially for:

Medical mobility - for time-critical treatment

access

Corporate leadership movement

High-value cargo and time-sensitive logistics

Institutional and government missions

Over time, charter operations will likely form a stronger secondary revenue pillar — complementing, not replacing, regional connectivity.

Q Your dedicated organ transport air service is a significant humanitarian initiative. What operational adjustments were required to integrate medical emergency missions into your regular network?

A Integrating organ transport missions required us to evolve our operational framework in line with regulatory expectations.

The permissions process with Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) necessitated the development of dedicated SOPs to ensure:

Safety and integrity of the organ during transit

Priority handling and time-sensitive dispatch

Seamless coordination with medical teams and airport stakeholders

Equally critical has been the unwavering dedication of our personnel. These missions demand rapid mobilization, often at short notice, and our crews and operational teams have consistently demonstrated exceptional responsiveness and commitment. Their readiness to move swiftly — at any hour — has been instrumental in making these life-saving missions operationally successful.

These SOPs, combined with the human commitment behind them, have enabled us to undertake such critical missions without compromising safety or network stability.

Q With Surat positioning itself as a potential aircraft maintenance hub, how does your new maintenance facility strengthen both operational efficiency and long-term expansion plans?

A The facility allows us to:
Reduce aircraft downtime
Improve dispatch reliability
Lower long-term maintenance costs
Build technical capability locally

Strategically, it transforms Surat from an operational base into an aviation support node — which is essential for scaling regional networks.

Q Looking ahead, does Ventura AirConnect plan fleet expansion, new route additions, or partnerships under the regional connectivity framework?

A Growth will be calibrated and demand-led. We are evaluating:
Selective fleet expansion aligned to route viability

New regional sectors where surface travel remains inefficient

Partnerships that strengthen last-mile connectivity rather than dilute operational focus

The objective remains unchanged: enabling meaningful regional mobility through sustainable aviation.

EMBRAER UNVEILS NEW PRAETOR 500E AND PRAETOR 600E BUSINESS JETS

Embraer has introduced updated versions of its successful Praetor family — the Praetor 500E and Praetor 600E — expanding its midsize and super-midsize business jet lineup with enhanced comfort and capability.

The new "E" variants build on the strong performance and market appeal of the original Praetor 500 and Praetor 600 models, both of which have been popular choices in their segments for long-range missions, efficient cruise performance and modern cabin environments. The enhancements focus on passenger experience and operational flexibility, aiming to meet evolving demands from corporate flight departments, charter operators and private owners.

Key Features and Enhancements

Interior Comfort: Both jets receive a refreshed cabin interior with upgraded seating, improved sound insulation and refined ergonomic layouts that maximise comfort on longer flights.

Advanced Systems: The Praetor 500E and 600E incorporate updated avionics and flight deck enhancements designed to support pilot workload reduction and operational efficiency.

Cabin Customisation: Operators will have new options for interior design and connectivity, allowing bespoke configurations that align with owner preferences and mission profiles.

The Praetor family is known for strong performance characteristics, including high-speed cruise and long-range capability. While specific performance figures for the "E" models will be finalised closer to entry into service, the new variants are expected to retain the long-range cruise and short-field performance that make them competitive in their respective categories.

Market Position and Timing Embraer's announcement reflects continued investment in its business aviation portfolio amid growing global demand for versatile, efficient jets that can serve a range of missions — from transcontinental travel to regional shuttle operations. The company plans to begin customer deliveries of the updated Praetor 500E and 600E jets later in the decade, with detailed certification timelines to be confirmed as development progresses.

By enhancing cabin amenities and avionics while preserving the core performance strengths of the original Praetor series, Embraer aims to offer operators a compelling combination of comfort, capability and value in the midsize and super-midsize jet markets.

GULFSTREAM G700 RECEIVES CERTIFICATION IN INDIA

Gulfstream Aerospace has secured type certification in India for its flagship Gulfstream G700, clearing the aircraft for operation and delivery to customers in the country.

The certification was granted by India's aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), marking an important milestone for Gulfstream in one of Asia's fastest-growing business aviation markets. With regulatory approval in place, the manufacturer can proceed with deliveries to Indian owners and operators seeking long-range, large-cabin aircraft capabilities.

The G700 is positioned at the top end of the ultra-long-range business jet segment. It offers a maximum range of approximately 7,750 nautical miles, enabling nonstop connections between major global city pairs. The aircraft also features one of the largest cabins in its class, designed to provide multiple living areas, advanced cabin technology and high levels of passenger comfort on extended missions.

India has seen increasing demand for large-cabin business jets as corporate travel, high-net-worth ownership and international connectivity continue to expand. The certification of the G700 follows previous approvals in India for other Gulfstream models, reinforcing the company's footprint in the region.

Gulfstream has emphasised that the G700 combines high-speed performance with fuel efficiency and advanced avionics, making it attractive for both private owners and corporate flight departments. The aircraft's performance capabilities allow it to operate efficiently from a range of airports while maintaining intercontinental reach.

The Indian certification represents another step in the global rollout of the G700 programme, supporting Gulfstream's broader strategy of expanding its presence in key international markets. As business aviation activity continues to grow in South Asia, the approval positions the G700 to compete in a premium segment where range, comfort and technology are primary decision factors for buyers.

DAHER TO SPOTLIGHT KODIAK 100 AND KODIAK 900 AS "FORCE MULTIPLIERS" AT VERTICON 2026

Daher will make its first exhibitor appearance at VERTICON 2026, where it plans to showcase the Kodiak 100 and Kodiak 900 as complementary assets for helicopter fleets, particularly in public safety, law enforcement and government operations.

At the event in Atlanta, Daher will position its rugged turboprop aircraft as "force multipliers" rather than helicopter replacements. The strategy highlights how fixed-wing platforms can extend operational reach, provide longer endurance and reduce operating costs while supporting rotorcraft units during demanding missions.

The Kodiak 100 and Kodiak 900 are designed for utility and multi-mission roles, offering long on-station endurance — often seven to eight hours or more — significantly exceeding typical helicopter flight times. This endurance enables persistent aerial surveillance, search and rescue coverage, maritime patrol and border monitoring without frequent refuelling interruptions.

Daher emphasises that the Kodiak family's ability to fly at slower speeds while maintaining stability makes the aircraft well-suited for observation and sensor-based missions. The company has also expanded in-house systems integration capabilities, enabling installation of mission consoles, electro-optical sensors, communications equipment and other specialised payloads.

Since acquiring the Kodiak programme in 2019, Daher has increased production capacity and introduced the larger Kodiak 900 variant to meet growing demand from government and special-mission operators. A rising share of annual sales now comes from multi-mission customers rather than purely commercial utility operators.

Recent operational demonstrations have highlighted the aircraft's value in real-world law enforcement scenarios, where extended endurance allowed continuous aerial tracking even when accompanying helicopters required refuelling. This capability illustrates how fixed-wing aircraft can enhance situational awareness and operational continuity for rotorcraft-based units.

AAR EXPANDS BUSINESS AVIATION AVIONICS PORTFOLIO

AAR Corp has announced an expansion of its business aviation avionics product and service portfolio, reinforcing its position as a key supplier of integrated avionics solutions for corporate and private aircraft.

Under the initiative, AAR has added several new avionics lines and service capabilities tailored specifically to the business aviation market. These additions aim to support aircraft operators with both component supply and aftermarket services, including installation support, testing, repair and certification assistance for a range of avionics systems used in business jets, turboprops and piston-powered aircraft.

The expanded portfolio covers advanced avionics technologies that improve safety, situational awareness and operational efficiency. This includes modern flight displays, navigation and communication modules, enhanced surveillance equipment and next-generation sensor interfaces that are increasingly demanded by operators seeking to modernise ageing systems or upgrade to the latest standards.

AAR's avionics expansion is also designed to support maintenance and refurbishment facilities with integrated logistics and technical expertise. By offering consolidated supply and aftermarket support, the company aims to help business aviation operators manage lifecycle costs and reduce aircraft downtime during upgrades or repairs. This is a key consideration for corporate flight departments and private owners who prioritise mission readiness and fleet reliability.

The move comes amid growing activity in the business aviation segment, where aircraft utilisation continues to rise and operators seek avionics solutions that support expanded capabilities such as satellite communications, advanced navigation performance, enhanced traffic awareness and next-generation autopilot functionalities. AAR's expanded offerings are expected to align with these trends and support both retrofit and new-equipment requirements.

In addition to component supply, AAR emphasises its ability to coordinate engineering support and certification pathways, ensuring that avionics upgrades meet relevant regulatory standards across markets. This assistance is particularly valuable for operators managing cross-border flights and needing compliance with varying regional avionics mandates.

By broadening its business aviation avionics portfolio, AAR aims to strengthen its value proposition as a one-stop source for avionics parts, services and technical assistance, helping support continued growth and performance optimisation throughout the business jet community. The expanded product lines and services are now available to customers globally, reflecting demand from operators seeking robust avionics solutions for their next generation of missions.

Aviation Update in Conversation with

Sumesh Patel

President of Asia Pacific, SITA: Thai Airways' Baggage Automation Journey By Kartikeya

Q What specific operational pain points in baggage handling pushed Thai Airways to prioritise automation at this stage of its recovery post-pandemic?

A When Thai Airways came out of the pandemic, everything was changing rapidly. Flight schedules were shifting, passenger numbers came back at different speeds, and it wasn't easy to have enough experienced people on the ground. Very quickly, manual baggage processes started to slow things down. And baggage really matters — it affects the airline's costs, how confident passengers feel, and how smoothly the whole operation runs. When something goes wrong, customers see it right away. That's why bringing in automation was about getting back control and making things more predictable. At the same time, as Thai Airways worked to rebuild trust with its passengers and improve performance, reliability was everything.

Q Reducing baggage processing time from minutes to seconds is a big leap — what internal changes (process, people, or mindset) were required to make this transition successful?

A Getting from minutes down to seconds didn't happen just because Thai Airways added new technology. It meant changing how decisions are made on the ground. In the past, many recovery steps relied on people stepping in manually, often without a full picture of what was happening. Automation helped bring everyone — the teams, the processes, and the systems — onto the same shared view of the operation.

Once people can trust the data and see what's happening in real time, they can act much faster. The biggest shift, though, was cultural. Instead of reacting and firefighting when something went wrong, teams can now stay ahead of issues and use data to keep things running smoothly, even under pressure.

Q How did the shift from manual reconciliation and paper-based workflows to automated reflighting impact staff productivity and stress levels on the ground?

A Manual reconciliation is one of the most stressful parts of baggage operations. People are trying to make quick decisions while hunting through information that might be incomplete or already out of date. What automation does is take away a lot of that uncertainty. With a clear, real-time view of where each bag is, teams can spend their energy fixing the real problems instead of trying to build the picture first. Yes, it improves productivity. But just as importantly, it makes the working day far more manageable for frontline staff, particularly in peak periods or when operations aren't running as planned.

Q From a passenger experience perspective, what tangible changes have you observed since implementing automated baggage management, especially at high-traffic hubs like Bangkok?

A If you look at a busy hub like Bangkok, the real test is what happens when

things get crowded or plans change. That's when passengers feel every delay. Our work with Thai Airways leverages automation to create a more responsive operation. Bags are tracked, reassigned and prioritized in real time as flights move. So instead of problems building up behind the scenes, the baggage operation keeps pace with the passenger's journey, which leads to a calmer and far more predictable experience for travelers. There are fewer worried moments at the belt, less stress during connections, and more confidence that their bag will arrive where it should, even at the busiest times.

Q Data visibility is a major theme in this deployment — how has real-time insight into baggage status and 'reason for loss' improved decision-making and cost control?

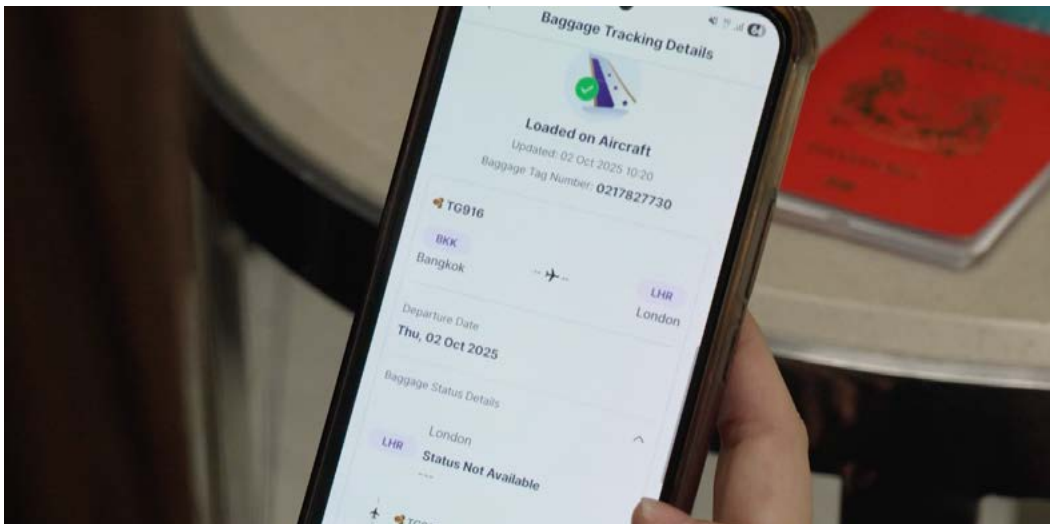
A What real-time visibility really does is change how decisions get made. Instead of waiting until a bag is already delayed or sent the wrong way, teams at Thai Airways can step in much earlier. And it's not just about knowing where the bag is — it's understanding why it might become a problem. That means the focus shifts from treating symptoms to fixing root causes. Over time, that kind of insight leads to smarter planning, lower disruption costs, and better decisions about where to invest next in the baggage operation.

Q Sustainability is becoming critical in airline operations. How do solutions like automated reflighting and the removal of paper rush tags contribute to your broader sustainability goals?

A Sustainability in aviation often comes down to the small decisions that get made thousands of times every day. Take automated reflighting. When a bag can be reassigned automatically, you avoid extra manual handling, repeated processing, and many of the knock-on impacts that come with disruption. Even moving away from paper-based tools like rush tags might sound like a small thing. But at scale, it cuts material use and makes life simpler for the teams working on the ground. What really matters is that these changes improve efficiency and reliability at the same time. And that's the key point: sustainability isn't something separate from the operation. It's built into running a better, leaner, and more resilient network.

Q Looking ahead, how do you see advanced baggage solutions supporting Thai Airways' ambitions beyond core operations — such as overseas stations or ground handling for other carriers?

A As airlines like Thai Airways grow and expand into more destinations, keeping things consistent becomes harder, especially across overseas stations and different ground handling partners. What advanced baggage solutions give you is a common, scalable foundation you can roll out across the whole network. That brings visibility and control, but without slowing down growth. From our perspective, this is the bigger picture. Automation isn't only about making today run better. It creates a platform that helps the airline support future plans, new partnerships, and new ways of serving passengers.



EUROFIGHTER AND NETMA SIGN CONTRACT TO PROGRESS AERODYNAMIC MODIFICATION KIT (AMK)

AMK will allow faster integration of new weapons and certification of new external loads, including future anti-radar missiles, which enable the suppression and destruction of enemy air defence radars.

Additional capabilities like cutting-edge Air-to-Ground Weapons and Air-to-Air Missiles will be integrated for the core customer in the AMK variant. Future integrations involve, among other, the latest version of standoff missiles.

AMK also paves the way to further improve the jet's air combat performance – particularly through enhanced target acquisition and improved close-quarters combat capabilities. This improvement is driven by extensions to the fuselage strakes, the flaperons and the leading-edge root, resulting in a noticeable increase in maximum wing lift.

AMK development and production – conducted by Eurofighter Partner Companies Airbus, BAE Systems, and Leonardo – will further strengthen the technological expertise of the European aerospace industry, demonstrating successful cooperation in the development and qualification of modern combat aircraft systems.

"Signing the AMK contract marks a major milestone for the Eurofighter programme, further enhacing the jet's long-term capability." said Jorge Tamarit-Degenhardt, Chief Executive Officer of Eurofighter

"The AMK will provide a huge boost to our Air Forces during their missions, significantly enhancing the integration of air-to-surface configurations and offering greater flexibility in stores carriage, while supporting flight performance.

"The Eurofighter Typhoon will continue to be the backbone of European air defence into the 2060s, and capability enhancements, such as the AMK, will ensure the platform is operationally effective to fulfil that role."

"The signature of the AMK contract is a significant achievement for the Eurofighter Programme, enabling faster weapon integration, heavier load certification and host of other improvements." said Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Simon Ellard (ret.), General Manager NETMA

"This contract will continue the evolution of the Eurofighter Typhoon, and reflects the Programme's commitment to innovation and delivering the capabilities needed by our Air Forces."

BOEING ANNOUNCES LARGEST-EVER LANDING GEAR EXCHANGE AGREEMENT AT SINGAPORE AIRSHOW

Boeing announced the largest landing gear exchange contract in Boeing's history at the Singapore Airshow. Under this contract, Boeing will provide landing gear exchanges for more than 75 aircraft across the 737 MAX and 787 fleets operated by the Singapore Airlines (SIA) Group. The landing gear exchange program offers gear overhaul scheduling flexibility that will optimize the useful life of the gears and minimizing aircraft downtime.

"Our relationship with the SIA Group is built on delivering dependable solutions," said William Ampofo, senior vice president, Parts & Distribution and Supply Chain, Boeing Global Services. "By combining our global inventory and rapid distribution capabilities with the carrier's maintenance planning, this agreement helps deliver parts faster and closer to operations—reducing downtime and supporting consistent, reliable service."

Boeing's Landing Gear Exchange program provides tailored solutions to airline customers needing timely access to serviceable landing gear assemblies through a managed inventory and partner network. It reduces the need for carriers to hold large on-site spares, shortens maintenance-related aircraft on-ground time and supports sustained dispatch reliability across busy networks.

The agreement complements Boeing's broader aftermarket portfolio, which includes parts distribution, repair management and logistics solutions designed to improve fleet readiness and reduce maintenance-related disruptions.

AJW GROUP SIGNS LONG-TERM PBH AND MBK AGREEMENT WITH SUN PHUQUOC AIRWAYS

AJW Group announces the signing of a new Power-by-the-Hour (PBH) and Main Base Kit (MBK) support agreement with Sun PhuQuoc Airways, a newly launched airline based in Vietnam.

Sun PhuQuoc is a start-up carrier owned in part by the Sun Group, a well-established luxury hospitality brand. The airline is headquartered in Vietnam and currently operates a fleet of Airbus A321ceo and A321neo aircraft, initially connecting the island of PhuQuoc with Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi Noi Bai International and Da Nang. Further route expansion to South Korea and Taiwan is planned from 2026.

Under the terms of the agreement, AJW Group will provide comprehensive PBH and MBK support for Sun PhuQuoc's current fleet of six aircraft, comprising two A321ceos and four A321neos. The contract will support the airline's operations as it enters service and positions Sun PhuQuoc to scale efficiently in line with its ambitious growth plans.

FOKKER SERVICES GROUP AND FALCON AVIATION SERVICES SIGN NOSE-TO-TAIL COMPONENT SUPPORT AGREEMENT

Fokker Services Group and Falcon Aviation Services have signed a nose-to-tail power-by-the-hour component support agreement for Falcon's DHC-8 Q300 fleet. The agreement covers two aircraft operating from Falcon's Abu Dhabi base and was signed at MRO Middle East Dubai.

Under the agreement, Fokker Services Group will provide guaranteed component availability and repair support through its Abacus component support program. The scope includes all major aircraft systems, including rotables, propellers and brakes, delivered under a flight-hour-based model.

For Falcon Aviation Services, the agreement supports its ongoing focus on maintaining high dispatch reliability and operational efficiency across its fixed-wing fleet. A customized preventive maintenance program has been jointly developed and implemented, tailored specifically to Falcon's operating environment and mission profile. This proactive approach is intended to

reduce unscheduled maintenance events while maximizing aircraft availability.

Falcon Aviation Services brings extensive operational experience in demanding regional conditions, and this collaboration reflects its commitment to partnering with established global aviation support providers to enhance fleet performance, safety, and cost control.

Fokker Services Group has supported Dash-8 Classic aircraft through component pooling and power-by-the-hour programs for many years, combining technical expertise with a practical understanding of regional aircraft operations.

The agreement reflects Fokker Services Group's continued focus on providing long-term component support solutions for regional aircraft operators, combining technical depth with flexible support models tailored to specific operational requirements. Niels Elshof, Sales Manager at Fokker Services Group, commented: "We are proud to support Falcon Aviation Services with a component support solution focused on reliability and operational continuity. By combining guaranteed availability with a maintenance program adapted to Falcon's operating conditions, we support stable operations and predictable costs. We recognize the demanding operational environment in which Falcon operates and it is our honor to be part of this winning team."

Capt. Ramandeep Oberoi, CEO of Falcon Aviation Services added: "At Falcon Aviation Services, excellence and safety are fundamental to everything we do. This partnership with Fokker strengthens our maintenance framework and engineering support, reinforcing our commitment to safe, reliable, and predictable fleet operations."

ROLLS-ROYCE SIGNS TOTALCARE AGREEMENTS WITH CHINA AIRLINES FOR 36 TRENT XWB ENGINES

Rolls-Royce announces China Airlines, a Taiwan-based carrier, has signed TotalCare agreements for 36 Trent XWB engines, including 30 Trent XWB-97 and 6 Trent XWB-84, that will power 15 Airbus A350-1000 and three A350-900 aircraft respectively. The A350-1000 aircraft order was announced by Airbus in 2025.

As part of the deal, China Airlines continues to select Rolls-Royce's comprehensive TotalCare service to cover the health and maintenance of the engines.

Currently, China Airlines operates a fleet of 15 Trent XWB powered A350 aircraft, and with the addition, their total A350 fleet will reach 33.

Ewen McDonald, Chief Customer Officer – Civil Aerospace, Rolls-Royce, said: We're delighted to deepen our partnership with China Airlines through this TotalCare agreement. The Trent XWB family delivers exceptional fuel efficiency, reliability and durability. The Trent XWB-97 is the most utilised aircraft engine in the world, making it a great choice for airlines

to expand their routes.

"Thanks to China Airlines for your trust in Rolls-Royce. With our continuous product improvements and our comprehensive service support, we look forward to powering China Airlines to unlock new route opportunities with confidence and efficiency."

The Trent XWB-97 has proven its reliability and durability over seven years of service and more than four million engine flying hours. It has received the first two of its three phases of durability enhancements, which are already delivering a 60% increase in time on wing. The third phase, which will enter service in 2028, will total a doubling of time on wing in challenging environments; and provide 50% improvement in benign conditions.

TotalCare is designed to provide operational certainty for customers by transferring time on wing and maintenance cost risk back to Rolls-Royce. This industry-leading premium service offering is supported by Rolls-Royce's advanced engine health monitoring system, which helps provide customers with increased operational availability, reliability and efficiency.

CAE LEADS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN HUNGARY TO DEVELOP NEXT GENERATION SIMULATION INTERFACE

CAE Inc. announced its participation in a research and development (R&D) initiative supported by the Hungary National Research, Development and Innovation Office, aimed at developing a next-generation, user-friendly interface for large-scale simulation environments.

Led by CAE's subsidiary in Hungary, in collaboration with ARWorks Kft. and Óbuda University, the team is designing and delivering a scalable, intuitive graphical user interface (GUI) tailored for Live-Virtual-Constructive (LVC) simulation environments. This advanced interface will empower users to set up and manage complex simulation scenarios across a multi-domain operational environment.

Backed by HUF 621,861,558 in funding from the Hungary National Research, Development and Innovation Office, the project seeks to simplify the creation and execution of realistic training and decision-support simulations for emergency response and defence operations. While today's cloud-based technologies can support simulations at this scale, they are often too complex to use. This initiative will harness the power of advanced automation, machine learning, and generative AI to create a GUI that is both powerful and accessible.

"This project exemplifies CAE's commitment to innovation and our mission to make training and simulation technology even more intuitive and impactful," said József Hajdu, Country Manager, CAE Hungary, Kft. "By collaborating with leading Hungarian university partners, SMEs, and harnessing advanced technologies, we are shaping the future of training and simulation for the defence and security industry worldwide."

This initiative reinforces CAE's global leadership in the pursuit of innovation in training and simulation, and reflects the company's dedication to delivering smarter, scalable solutions that help defence and security organizations prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

STANDARDAERO COMPLETES FIRST CFM LEAP-1A PRSV

StandardAero a leading independent pure-play provider of aerospace engine aftermarket services including engine maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) and engine component repair, recently completed delivery of its first CFM International LEAP engine to undergo a performance restoration shop visit (PRSV). Achieving this milestone, which followed pass-off testing of the engine at StandardAero's San Antonio, TX facility, demonstrates the maturity of the company's LEAP program in support of more than 20 customers around the world.

The engine referenced was a LEAP-1A owned by leading aviation leasing provider AerCap, powering one of the lessor's Airbus A320neo family aircraft. Aviation leasing companies such as AerCap today account for approximately half of the global commercial aircraft fleet. AerCap's fleet of approximately 1,700 owned and managed aircraft includes more than 350 LEAP-powered Airbus A320neo family and Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

Commenting on the announcement for StandardAero, Rebecca Lane, Senior Vice President – Global Sales, said: "The delivery of our first LEAP PRSV workscope is a significant step for StandardAero and reinforces our continued commitment to meeting the needs of the global LEAP community. It is especially fitting that this milestone was achieved on an engine belonging to AerCap, the world's largest aviation leasing company. A sincere thanks to our colleagues at AerCap for the trust they have placed in our San Antonio based LEAP team. AerCap joins the growing list of LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B customers from across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the Asia- Pacific region who rely on StandardAero for their LEAP MRO services, and we look forward to continuing to serve the needs of AerCap and its airline clients for many years to come."

StandardAero supports the LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B engine family from its 810,000 sq. ft. facility in San Antonio as a CFM LEAP Premier MRO provider, having signed the first non-airline CFM Branded Service Agreement (CBSA) in the Americas for the LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B in March 2023. StandardAero has been providing LEAP quick-turn shop visit (QTSV) services to operators since March 2024, and completed correlation of its first test cell for the LEAP in November 2024, paving the way for PRSV inductions.

In addition to establishing MRO capability for the LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B at its San Antonio facility, StandardAero is also industrializing new engine component repairs for the LEAP family through its Component Repair Services (CRS) network of locations, and its Repair Development Center of Excellence. To date, StandardAero's CRS team has industrialized more than 450 component repairs for the LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B. StandardAero also continues to grow its team of LEAP technicians through its in-house Aviation Mechanic Training Program, located at its San Antonio site's Training Academy. AerCap is the global leader in aviation leasing with one of the most attractive order books in the industry. The company serves approximately 300 customers around the world with comprehensive fleet solutions. AerCap is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (AER) and is based in Dublin with offices in Shannon, Memphis, Miami, Singapore, London, Dubai, Shanghai, Amsterdam and other locations around the world.

Aviation Update Editor Kartikeya In Conversation with

Mr. Shailesh Shukla

Co-founder of NDPM Group

Q As Director and Co-founder of NDPM Group and multiple industry media platforms, how has your journey in building New Delhi Print Media from the ground up shaped your approach to launching and scaling DEFTECH Bharat?

A NDPM Group was established in 2010 with a clear objective of providing the industry with superior technology media platforms across Print, Digital, and Online channels in a cost-effective manner.

We commenced our journey with ELE Times magazine as our flagship brand; a monthly publication focused on electronics and technology. Shortly thereafter, we developed eletimes.com, an online portal dedicated to the same subject. Over time, we continued to expand our offerings in the online and digital media space, becoming a recognized media house within the global technology community. We actively support major technology exhibitions and conferences both in India and internationally as their principal media partners.

In 2022, we launched our inaugural exhibition, Auto EV Bharat - An Automotive and EV Technology Show. We noted the Government's policy aimed at promoting Indian manufacturing in the automotive sector, particularly for electric vehicles, and recognized the necessity for exhibitions where automakers, OEMs, and Tier 0.5 & Tier-1 suppliers could discover advanced technologies from around the globe to incorporate into their upcoming automotive and EV designs and manufacturing processes. Additionally, we introduced the Auto EV TECH-VISION Summit, a two-day international conference on the same topic, held concurrently with the exhibition.

The next initiative in this direction is DEF-TECH Bharat 2026. DEF-TECH Bharat 2026 is a prestigious global event set to take place from May 20 to May 22, 2026, at the Karnataka Trade Promotion Organisation (KTPO) in Bangalore, India. This event serves as a significant platform for showcasing cutting-edge technologies in the defense and aerospace sectors, including design, technology development, technical collaboration, and system integration services for Aerospace & Defense equipment and systems.

By uniting innovative technologies and aligning them with the specific needs of national security, DEF-TECH Bharat 2026 seeks to bridge the divide between technological progress and defense priorities.

Q Having led sales, marketing, and P&L responsibilities across India's electronics sector, what strategic insights do you bring to positioning DEFTECH Bharat as a serious global aerospace and defence exhibition?

A In order to establish DEFTECH Bharat 2026 as a significant global exhibition, it is strategically presented as a "Deep-Tech and Engineering First" event, transcending the conventional showcase of completed military equipment.

DEF-TECH Bharat represents a transition from "Procurement" to "Co-Development"; whereas traditional exhibitions emphasize the buying and selling of finished platforms, DEFTECH Bharat focuses on the research and development as well as the design stages.

DEF-TECH Bharat 2026 presents a substantial opportunity for the global technology sector to engage with leading professionals, engineers, and representatives from both private and government sector defence equipment manufacturers, including their OEMs, Tier-0.5, and Tier-1 suppliers, as well as individuals involved in research and development at major defence and aerospace laboratories nationwide, who are typically not easily accessible.

Q What specific gap in India's aerospace, defence, and space exhibition ecosystem does DEFTECH Bharat aim to address?

A DEFTECH Bharat 2026 aims to bridge the specific gap between technological advancements and defense priorities by shifting focus away from finished platforms toward R&D, engineering, and deep-tech innovation.

Unlike conventional Indian defense expos, which primarily showcase finished equipment, DEFTECH Bharat 2026 is designed to address the following:

R&D and Engineering Centricity: It is uniquely positioned as an engineering-centric exhibition rather than a showcase for completed hardware, focusing on the design and system integration stages.

Direct Connectivity: It aims to directly link technology developers—including deep-tech startups and inventors—with defense users, system integrators, and global supply chains.

Mission-Critical Tech: It serves as a specialized platform for "Mission Critical" capabilities, such as AI-driven C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) projects.

Intellectual Property Development: Through a strategic partnership with IFIA Bharat, the event emphasizes inventor-led solutions and IP development, moving beyond simple manufacturing to indigenous innovation.

Q Bengaluru is India's aerospace capital. How does hosting DEFTECH Bharat at KTPO strengthen engagement with OEMs, MSMEs, startups, and global delegations?

A Hosting DEFTECH Bharat 2026 at the Karnataka Trade Promotion Organization (KTPO) in Bengaluru's Whitefield district leverages the city's status as a global aerospace hub to create a high-concentration networking environment.

The venue's location and specialized focus strengthen engagement across four key pillars:

1. Proximity to Major OEMs and R&D Labs

KTPO is situated in the Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) Zone, placing it near critical defense and aerospace hubs. This proximity allows for direct, face-to-face interaction with:

Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs): Major entities like HAL and ISRO are headquartered or have massive operations in Bengaluru.

Defense Research & Development: Scientists and engineers from DRDO labs (such as ADE, ARDE, and DARE) can easily attend, facilitating technical deep-dives often missing from general trade shows.

2. Specialized Access for MSMEs and Startups

Unlike larger "air shows" that prioritize public spectacle, DEFTECH Bharat at KTPO focuses on the supply chain and engineering level.

Lowering Barriers: By focusing on R&D and components rather than just finished platforms, the event provides a dedicated stage for MSMEs and deep-tech startups to showcase innovations in AI, robotics, and cybersecurity directly to procurement officers.

B2B Matchmaking: The venue is equipped with meeting rooms and structured business centers designed specifically for procurement and

matchmaking sessions between small innovators and large system integrators.

3. Integration with High-Level Technical Dialogues

The co-located DefTech Con 2026 conference at the same venue ensures that business deals are grounded in strategic foresight.

Interactive Engagement: Round-table discussions and Q&A sessions allow leaders to discuss technology transfer and co-development opportunities immediately after seeing the tech on the exhibition floor.

Q With your background in enterprise solutions and electronics vertical growth, how do you see defence electronics, photonics, and advanced manufacturing shaping the conversations at DEFTECH Bharat 2026?

A In DEFTECH Bharat 2026, defense electronics, photonics, and advanced manufacturing are not just background elements; they are the core themes driving the shift from "finished platforms" to "deep-tech engineering".

The conversations are expected to be shaped by these fields in the following specific ways:

1. Defence Electronics: The "Nerve System" of Modern Warfare

As the fastest-growing segment in Indian defense (projected at 12% CAGR), electronics will dominate discussions on C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance).

Semiconductors & Sensors: Key sessions will focus on the India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 and the development of indigenous GaN (Gallium Nitride) RF modules for next-generation radars and electronic warfare (EW) systems.

Avionics & Embedded Systems: Engineers will discuss high-reliability embedded processing and avionics design, focusing on moving away from imported components to "Made in India" chip-level solutions.

2. Photonics and Optoelectronics: Enhancing Precision

Photonics will be central to conversations regarding advanced sensors and secure communication.

Precision Targeting: Discussions will cover optoelectronic equipment used in high-precision air defense and laser-based guidance systems.

Secure Communications: The use of rugged fiber optics and quantum-resistant communication networks will be featured in technical tracks as essential for future battlefield survivability.

3. Advanced Manufacturing: Building the Industrial Backbone

DEFTECH Bharat 2026 is specifically positioned as an advanced manufacturing hub, shifting the dialogue toward how things are made rather than just what is made.

Digital Twin & Simulation: Strategic partners like CADFEM India will showcase how physics-based simulation and Digital Twin technology accelerate design validation and certification for indigenous platforms.

Additive Manufacturing & Materials: Conversations will center on 3D printing for rapid prototyping of critical components and the use of advanced materials (like rare earth alloys) to build lighter, more resilient aerospace structures.

Manufacturing 4.0: Dialogue will focus on green manufacturing and smart digital systems to reach India's goal of ₹3 lakh crore in defense production by 2029.

By integrating these disciplines, the event seeks to move India from a "buyer" of technology to an "inventor-led" global exporter of specialized defense subsystems

Q As India accelerates its defence indigenisation and export ambitions, how can industry platforms like DEFTECH Bharat contribute to stronger international collaborations and supply chain integration?

A India is one of the strongest armed forces in the world. The industry is likely to accelerate with rising concerns about national security. Demand for defence equipment in India has been growing due to the ongoing territorial disputes with some of our nabouring countries. Over the last five years, India has been ranked among the top importers of defence equipment to gain technological advantages over rival countries. To modernise its armed forces several initiatives have been taken by the government to encourage 'Make in India' activities via policy support initiatives.

Industry platforms like DEFTECH Bharat 2026 act as a strategic catalyst for international collaboration by shifting the focus from simple procurement to joint research, co-development, and deep-tech integration. By gathering over 150 exhibitors from 5 countries, the platform enables the following:

Supply Chain Integration: The exhibition directly connects technology developers with global OEMs and tier-1 suppliers, allowing Indian MSMEs and startups to be vetted and integrated into international manufacturing networks.

Structured B2B Matchmaking: Dedicated sessions facilitate "matchmaking" between Indian innovators and international delegates, accelerating discussions on technology transfer and co-production opportunities.

Knowledge-Led Partnerships: Through the co-located DefTech Con 2026, global experts engage in technical dialogues on high-stakes domains like AI-driven C4ISR and next-gen battlefield solutions, moving partnerships beyond "off-the-shelf" buys to long-term strategic alliances.

Showcasing Export-Ready Innovation: By highlighting "Made in India" breakthroughs in a high-density professional environment, the platform reduces the perceived risk for foreign buyers, helping India reach its ₹50,000 crore defence export target by 2029.

Q Looking ahead, what is your long-term vision for DEFTECH Bharat over the next five years, and how do you plan to position it among leading global defence and aerospace exhibitions?

A The long-term vision for DEFTECH Bharat is to evolve into the definitive global platform for defense innovation, shifting the industry paradigm from a "buyer-seller" marketplace to a research-driven co-development hub. Over the next five years, the exhibition aims to position itself alongside leading global shows by focusing on the following strategic pillars:

Becoming a Global R&D Epicentre: Unlike traditional expos that showcase finished platforms, DEFTECH Bharat plans to be the primary destination for defense R&D and engineering. Its goal is to bridge the "valley of death" for emerging technologies by directly connecting deep-tech inventors with global system integrators and military decision-makers.

Catalysing India's Export Ambitions: The platform is designed to be a springboard for India's goal of reaching ₹50,000 crore in defense exports by 2029. By showcasing "Made in India" innovations to international delegations, it aims to integrate Indian MSMEs into the global supply chains of tier-1 OEMs.

Dominance in Niche Strategic Tech: A core five-year objective is to achieve global leadership in critical domains like AI-driven C4ISR, quantum computing, and autonomous systems. The co-located DefTech Con will serve as the intellectual engine for this, fostering a high-level technical discourse that attracts global scientists and strategists.

Inventor-Led Innovation Ecosystem: Through long-term partnerships with global bodies like IFIA, the event will prioritize intellectual property development and inventor-led solutions, ensuring that India doesn't just manufacture but owns the underlying technology of future warfare.

Capturing the $19 Billion Market: Strategically, DEFTECH Bharat is positioned to capitalize on India's defense tech market, which is projected to grow to $19 billion by 2030. By offering unique access to typically inaccessible R&D labs and procurement officers, it secures its place as a "must-attend" event for any serious global defense player.

JOSÉ ANTONIO BARRIONUEVO NAMED CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF IAG

International Airlines Group (IAG) has appointed José Antonio Barrionuevo as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), succeeding the outgoing finance chief as part of a planned executive transition within the company. Barrionuevo brings extensive experience in financial leadership within the aviation sector. Prior to joining IAG's executive team, he held senior finance roles where he led budgeting, financial planning and analysis, risk management and investor relations functions. His track record includes steering financial strategy through periods of industry volatility, helping organisations maintain fiscal discipline while supporting growth initiatives.

In his new role as CFO, Barrionuevo will lead IAG's financial strategy and operations, overseeing areas such as financial reporting, treasury management, capital allocation and long-term planning. He is expected to play a key role in shaping the company's response to ongoing economic challenges, competitive pressures and structural shifts in the airline industry, including fuel cost dynamics, exchange rate volatility and evolving regulatory environments.

Barrionuevo's appointment aligns with IAG's broader strategic priorities, which include strengthening financial resilience, optimising cost structures and allocating capital to support fleet renewal, sustainability projects and network expansion. As CFO, he will also engage with investors and financial markets to articulate the group's strategic direction and performance outlook.

The transition in the finance leadership team underscores IAG's focus on continuity and stability at the executive level. With a strong foundation in airline financial management and strategic planning, Barrionuevo is positioned to guide the group through its next phase of financial execution and shareholder engagement. His appointment has been welcomed by industry analysts as a move that reinforces IAG's commitment to disciplined financial stewardship amidst a complex operating environment for global airlines. Barrionuevo's expertise is anticipated to support both near-term performance objectives and longer-term value creation for the group and its stakeholders.

ANA NAMES JUICHI HIRASAWA AS NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO

All Nippon Airways (ANA) has appointed Juichi Hirasawa as its new President and Chief Executive Officer, following a board decision to install fresh leadership at the top of the carrier.

Hirasawa brings extensive experience from within the ANA Group, having held senior executive roles across finance, strategic planning and operational management. His deep involvement in the airline's corporate decision-making and long-term growth initiatives positions him to guide ANA through an evolving aviation landscape marked by competitive pressures, sustainability goals and changing customer expectations.

In his new role, Hirasawa is responsible for steering ANA's overall strategic direction, overseeing daily operations, and strengthening the airline's market position in both domestic and international sectors. Key focuses for his leadership include enhancing profitability, advancing fleet modernization, and driving innovation in customer service and digital transformation.

His appointment comes at a time when airlines worldwide are balancing capacity recovery with cost efficiency and environmental commitments. For ANA, this includes commitments to sustainable aviation fuels, emissions reduction strategies and investments in next-generation aircraft and services. As CEO, Hirasawa will be pivotal in aligning these initiatives with commercial performance and stakeholder expectations.

Industry analysts expect his leadership to emphasise stronger network connectivity, strategic partnerships and operational resilience. Collaborations with global airline partners and alliances are likely to remain central to ANA's growth strategy, opening opportunities for joint ventures and expanded codeshare agreements.

Hirasawa's experience in both corporate finance and broader enterprise management also positions him to engage proactively with investors, regulatory bodies and industry stakeholders. His role will include articulating ANA's strategic roadmap and performance outlook to financial markets and partners, reinforcing confidence in the airline's long-term prospects.

Overall, the appointment of Juichi Hirasawa reflects ANA's commitment to leadership continuity and strategic focus as it navigates competitive dynamics and future growth pathways in global aviation.

ONEWORLD NAMES OLE ØRVER AS NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Oneworld Alliance has appointed Ole Ørver as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), marking a leadership change for the global airline partnership. Ørver succeeds the outgoing CEO as part of a strategic transition aimed at strengthening the alliance's market position and advancing collaborative initiatives among member carriers.

Ole Ørver brings extensive industry experience to the role, having held senior positions across major airlines and aviation organisations where he was responsible for network strategy, commercial partnerships and operational performance. His background includes roles that emphasised cross-carrier collaboration, joint venture development and alignment of shared airline products and services.

As CEO of Oneworld, Ørver will be responsible for guiding the alliance's overall strategic direction, strengthening cooperation among member airlines, and driving the delivery of integrated benefits for passengers. This includes enhancing connectivity through coordinated schedules, expanding joint loyalty initiatives, and supporting unified standards for customer experience across Oneworld's global network.

The appointment comes at a time when airline alliances face evolving competitive dynamics, including shifts in travel demand, regulatory developments and increasing emphasis on sustainability and digitalisation. Member carriers are seeking to deepen strategic partnerships to improve resilience, expand reach and deliver value to customers in a complex global aviation landscape.

Oneworld's CEO role includes representing the alliance in industry forums, leading engagement with key partners and stakeholders, and facilitating initiatives that support both operational efficiencies and growth opportunities. Ørver's leadership is expected to focus on reinforcing Oneworld's identity as a cohesive global alliance, improving interoperability among member systems and promoting collective innovation.

Industry observers view the leadership change as an opportunity for Oneworld to build on its existing strengths while exploring new areas of collaboration, including strategic technology partnerships, enhanced alliance connectivity and responsiveness to customer preferences. Ørver's experience in aligning commercial and strategic goals across airline networks positions him to lead such initiatives effectively.

Overall, the appointment underscores Oneworld's commitment to adaptive leadership and continued evolution in a competitive airline alliance environment, with a focus on delivering combined value for travellers and strengthening the alliance's global footprint.

AAR BOARD APPOINTS DYLAN WOLIN AS NEW CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

AAR Corp has appointed Dylan Wolin as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), following a decision by the company's board of directors. The appointment reflects AAR's focus on strengthening its executive leadership team to support continued growth and operational performance in the aerospace and defence services market.

Wolin brings a strong financial background to the role, with experience spanning accounting, financial planning and analysis, treasury functions and investor relations within complex industrial or aerospace sectors. In his new capacity, he will oversee all aspects of AAR's financial operations, including budgeting, forecasting, financial reporting, risk management and capital deployment.

As CFO, Wolin will play a central role in shaping the company's financial strategy and ensuring alignment with its long-term business objectives. He is expected to help drive initiatives related to cost optimisation, revenue growth and efficient allocation of resources – priorities that are especially important as AAR navigates dynamic market conditions and competitive pressures in both commercial aviation and defence services.

The leadership change comes at a time when AAR is working to expand its service offerings, deepen customer relationships and invest in capabilities that support the evolving needs of airline, government and defence customers. Wolin's appointment is intended to bring financial discipline and strategic insight to these efforts.

AAR's board highlighted confidence in Wolin's ability to contribute to both operational excellence and shareholder value creation. His background positions him to work closely with the company's senior leadership team, stakeholders and external partners as AAR pursues growth opportunities and strengthens its market position. Industry observers view the CFO appointment as a continuation of AAR's commitment to reinforcing its financial leadership amid a competitive aerospace landscape, where strong fiscal management is essential to sustaining long-term performance. Wolin's role will be pivotal in guiding the company's financial execution and supporting its broader strategic direction.

Agusta 139 - VIP Leonardo Helicopter - Model Year: 2013 Maintained Ready for Immediate Acquisition

Aircraft Overview

Model: Agusta 139 VIP

Total Flight Hours: Only 403 hours

Condition: Excellent – comparable to a demonstration model

Configuration: VIP Interior, crafted in Italy with luxury finishes

Manufacturer: Leonardo (Italy)

Current Location: In a secure country (details upon LOI)

Registration: Currently unregistered, allowing for smooth registration in any jurisdiction

Owner: A private, entrepreneur currently residing in Dubai - available for meetings with buyer/s.

Maintenance & Service

Maintained every 1.5 months on average, sometimes monthly during winter

All work performed by certified technicians directly from Leonardo, Italy

Full-service records and documentation available

Certified and guaranteed to meet international aviation standards

No mechanical or operational issues – the aircraft is in virtually brand-new condition.

info@helipadconsultants.in
+91 8341299221

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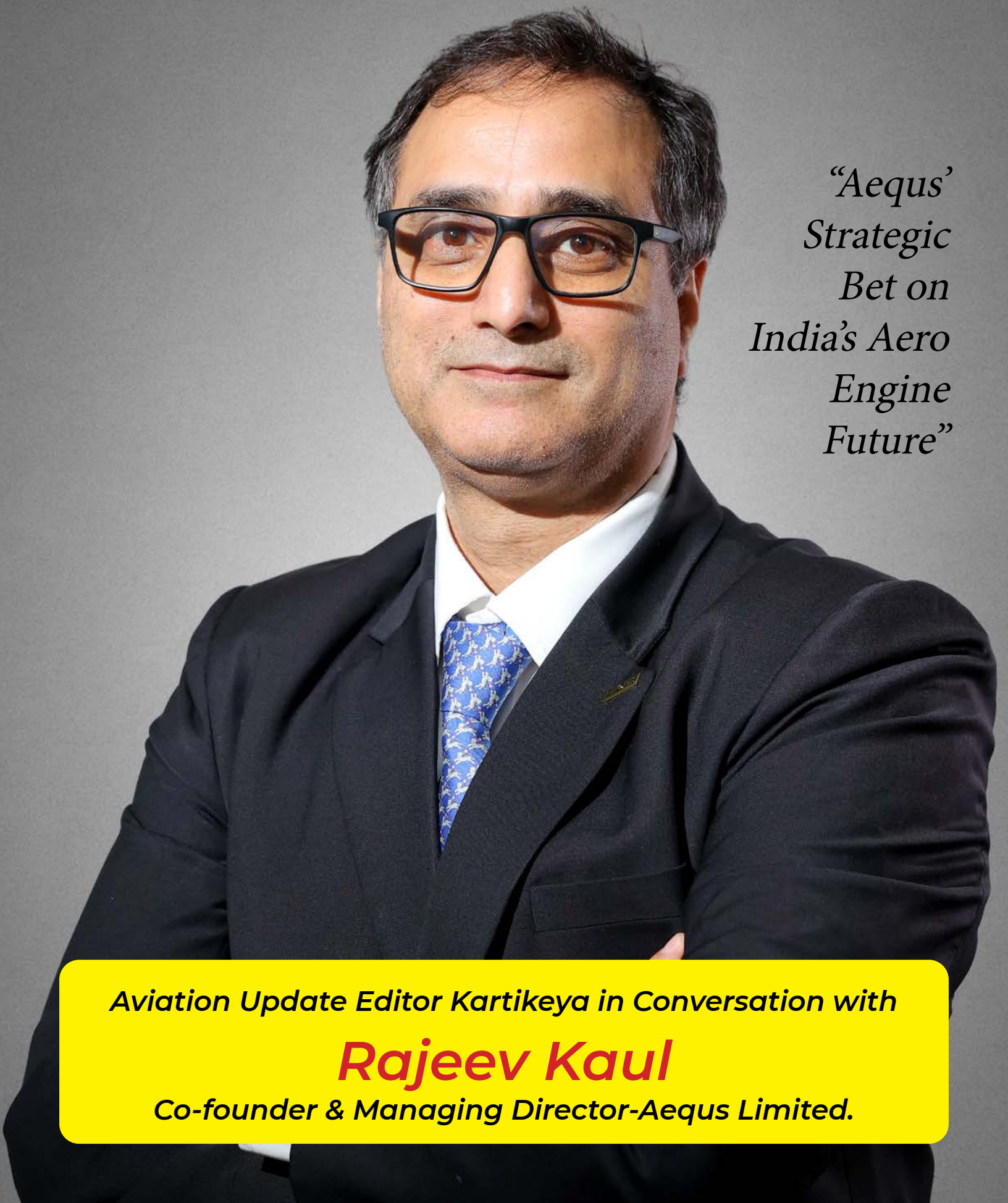

"Aequs' Strategic Bet on India's Aero Engine Future"

Aviation Update Editor Kartikeya in Conversation with

Rajeev Kaul

Co-founder & Managing Director-Aequs Limited.

Q Aequs has committed ₹4,000 crore to establish an aerospace and defence manufacturing cluster in Krishnagiri. What strategic factors influenced the decision to scale up investment at SIPCOT-Shoolagiri?

A The Rs 4000 crore investment mentioned for the recently announced A&D Cluster at the SIPCOT Shoolagiri Industrial Park in Tamil Nadu, is from the Aequs Group, which includes Aequs INFRA and Aequs Limited, the manufacturing arm of the group. Over a period of 10 years, Aequs Limited proposes to invest Rs 1900 crore along with partners to set up manufacturing facilities at the cluster being developed by Aequs INFRA.

The proposed investment by Aequs Limited and partners is intended to further deepen our participation in the global aerospace engine components supply chain by progressively expanding capabilities ranging from material processing to fully finished precision machined components using engine-grade alloys addressing. This will address a critical gap in the industry. This investment aligns with Aequs' vision of being a global partner to customers in every market and segment we serve. The expansion will further strengthen our position as a leader in the industry. The move also aligns with the growing demand for Aero engine components from OEMs in the backdrop of the significant growth projections for new aircraft in the coming years.

Q How will this dedicated cluster strengthen India's position in the global aerospace supply chain, particularly in high-precision components such as engine and gearbox parts?

A The proposed project will focus on components for aero-engine and landing systems that require complex, ultra-precision manufacturing capabilities. The manufacturing will also be focus on ring rolling, forging, machining, surface treatment, and assemblies for aero engine requirements. The initiative comes at a time when India is looking to increase its presence in aero engines to cater to the demand from the domestic civil aerospace and defence programs. At the same time, the industry in the county is looking to increase is share of the global aerospace supply chain to 10% by the mid-2030s, from the less than 2% currently. While the facility will primarily focus on serving the global commercial aerospace market, the capabilities will be very well be suitable for the Indian defence aero engine and systems requirements also if necessary. Clearly, we expect this cluster, which will be the first-of-its-kind in India, to position the country more effectively for a larger share of the global aero engine components market.

Q Is the facility primarily export-oriented, or will it also focus on supporting domestic defence and civil aviation programs?

A As I mentioned, the facility will primarily be export-oriented, but we will be open to exploring domestic programs in both civil and defence areas. Importantly, the cluster, which will

be spread over 250 acres, will also have a DTA.

Q What level of advanced manufacturing technologies — such as automation, additive manufacturing, or digital quality systems — will be integrated into the new cluster?

A Manufacturing Aero engine components by itself is a more complex activity calling for sophisticated capabilities that go beyond the aero structures manufacturing activity that we conduct at our Aerospace ecosystem at the Belagavi Aerospace Cluster (BAC). Having said that, we already make aero engine components at the BAC even though currently it is a minor part of our overall product portfolio. We will deploy all necessary manufacturing technologies and capabilities required for making sophisticated aero engine components at the Hosur cluster which will complement our Ecosystem at Belagavi strengthening Aequs' position as a leading components manufacturer.

Q How do you plan to attract global OEM partnerships and Tier-1 suppliers into this ecosystem, and will there be scope for MSME integration?

> "We expect this first-of-its-kind aerospace and defence cluster to position India more effectively for a larger share of the global aero engine components market."

A Aequs already works with almost every major OEM and Tier-1 supplier in the global Aerospace supply chain. Given that most of them are also present in the aero engine space, we will be leveraging these deep relationships most of which we average over a decade. And yes, we will also develop an ancillary network as required to complete the ecosystem. Given that the cluster will also attract other leading aerospace manufacturers and suppliers including Tier-1 and Tier-2 players, we expect the Hosur cluster to emerge as the preferred A&D destination in the coming years just as Belgaum has for Aerostructures components manufacture.

Q Workforce development is critical in aerospace manufacturing. What initiatives are being planned to build high-skill talent locally?

A Apart from leveraging currently available talents, Aequs will collaborate with the local authorities and the government to develop fresh talent and skill sets. Aequs has a proven track record of people development at its current operations at the BAC. We currently run several comprehensive training programs for skilling and upskilling technical manpower. As you may know we have one of the largest pool of core aerospace engineering talent in the country today.

Q Looking ahead five to ten years, do you envision this cluster evolving into a broader aerospace hub with integrated MRO, assembly, or systems integration capabilities?

A While currently the proposal includes manufacture of only aero engine components, however we cannot rule out the elements you mention. Having said that, we clearly expect the A&D Cluster at the SIPCOT Shoolagiri Industrial Park, to evolve into an important aerospace manufacturing destination in India complementing our manufacturing operations at the Belagavi Aerospace Cluster (BAC).

India's premier aviation monthly magazine

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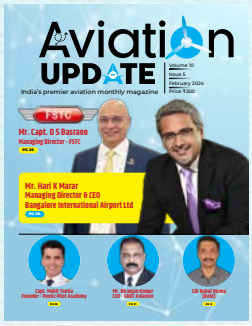

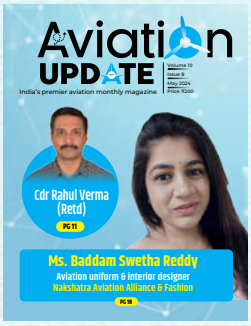

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