

BUSINESS & GENERAL AVIATION



Quiet Spike starts flight tests this summer.

Gulfstream spikes sonic booms on NASA F-15

Gulfstream is set to test the structural integrity of its Quiet Spike sonic boom noise reduction technology on a NASA F-15 flight test bed this summer. Flight-testing of the telescopic, multi-segmented, articulating spike will take place at NASA's Dryden flight research centre in California.

The 470lb spike is made from advanced composite materials and extends from 14ft in subsonic flight to 24ft in supersonic flight. Gulfstream has

already subjected it to extensive ground testing, including wind tunnel testing. The F-15B is capable of flying at speeds in excess of Mach 2.0.

"From the outset it has been understood that the sonic boom must be reduced to acceptable levels before consideration could be given to developing a prototype quiet supersonic jet," says Pres Henne, senior vice president, programs, engineering and test.

The testing is the latest step in the

manufacturer's bid to convince regulatory agencies and environmental groups that supersonic flight over land is achievable at acceptable noise levels.

When the spike completes the tests successfully it will be added to advanced low-boom configuration aircraft to counteract the loud bang caused by supersonic flight. The spike will flatten out traditional spiky 'N'-wave sonic boom pressure waves into more rounded shapes, like a sine wave.

Century of success for the G550

Gulfstream has racked up a delivery milestone this week with the delivery of the 100th large-cabin, ultra-long-range Gulfstream G550 business jet off the line to US fractional leasing company NetJets International.

Bryan Moss, president of Gulfstream, says: "We are especially pleased to deliver our 100th production G550 to NetJets, our largest customer with 78 Gulfstream aircraft now in its fleet." The G550 has been in service for less than three years, holds more than 25 city-pair speed records and cruises at Mach 0.885 for up to 6,750nm. The aircraft is the company's best-selling business jet.

First Euro fleet order for Challenger 605

Liz Moscrop

Bombardier announced eight orders worth \$106 million at the show yesterday, including the first multiple European order for the Challenger 605. "We're taking orders at the end of the press conference", joked 'Jahid Fazal-Karim, senior vice president, new aircraft sales Bombardier business aircraft.

The Canadian aircraft maker has sold three of the Challenger 605 widebody business jets to Swiss charter operator VistaJet, which has also taken options for two more. VistaJet has 14 aircraft in



Celebrating the first multiple European Challenger 605 order: From left: Bob Horner, Valerio Zamboni, Bing Chen, Pierre Gabriel-cote, Jahid Fazal-Karim and Judith Moreton.

operation or on firm order, including a Global Express XRS and two Challenger 604s. Bing Chen, VistaJet's chief executive said: "We'd like to thank Bombardier for placing its trust in us for

the past few years, resulting in today's partnership."

Chen says the company has already invested \$360m and it intends to expand its partnership with the Bombardier, eventually

replacing its fleet so that it consists entirely of Bombardier products. VistaJet currently operates four 604s, two Learjets, and two Global XRS jets in addition to the five 605s.

Bombardier also announced two firm orders for its new Learjet 60XR. Bulgaria's Nove Holding will be the first operator of the type in Europe and Czech charter operator ABS Jets also bought the aircraft.

Additionally Bombardier announced that Japanese operator Global Wings has taken delivery of its third Learjet 45XR which it will use for charter flights in Japan as well as remote areas of Northern Asia.

Perfect 10 for LHT and Bombardier

Canadian aircraft maker Bombardier and German MRO services provider Lufthansa Technik (LHT) are gearing up to celebrate their tenth anniversary of working together in a series of separate contracts that has seen the companies act as both supplier and customer to each other.

Leo Knappen, Bombardier's manager of communications for business aircraft, says "Lufthansa Technik has an impeccable record of high quality work. They meet their schedules on time and achieve high levels of excellence in engineering and operational capability".

LHT is completing at least 17 Challenger 850s for Bombardier and took delivery of the fifth at its Hamburg facility in May. The company will complete at least 17 executive versions of the 50-seat regional CRJ200 over the next three years and now has five production lines devoted to installing interiors and auxiliary fuel tanks in the extended-range version.

Earlier this year the two companies launched a new total support program (TSP) whereby LHT provides support for the entire Bombardier CRJ aircraft family. The agreement covers the whole CRJ Series of aircraft from the CRJ100/200 up to the CRJ700 and CRJ900 aircraft.



From left: John Lambeth, operations manager at Sloane Aviation and Massimo Isidori, P180 marketing and sales director.

Piaggio and Sloane Aviation promote Avanti in Britain

Even among an array of the world's best business jets, Piaggio's P180 Avanti II twin pusher turboprop stands out.

The Avanti is distributed in Europe by the UK's Sloane Aviation, which has teamed up with the Italian airframer at Farnborough.

"We started promoting the Avanti two years ago and have seen major interest in the aircraft in the UK," says John Lambeth, operations manager Sloane Aviation.

The Avanti II received US certification in May and has an order book of 100 aircraft. Says Massimo Isidori, P180

marketing and sales director: "We have got orders booked up to 2010."

The company says it has seen a great deal of interest from private owners and is also used in missions for the Italian air force. Production will increase from 14 in 2005 to 30 in 2007.

Piaggio it will introduce a jet to the family but is undecided as to where it will fit in the market. The new product would not be as radical a concept as the Avanti was when it was introduced 20 years ago, as that the model is now totally accepted.

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