Luxaviation UK enjoys positive start to summer

Luxaviation UK is experiencing a rise in summer bookings, with a 15 per cent increase in June versus the same period last year. According to the operator, this trend has been driven by growing demand for travel to Mediterranean hotspots, the onset of music festivals and a need for clients to avoid the delays and cancellations associated with commercial airlines.

CEO Patrick Margotson-Rushmore says: “Our positive booking figures for June are a good indication that the industry is stable and that customers in the UK continue to value private aviation as a worthwhile investment. We all know that figures are not as high as they were before the recession, but we are confident that the summer months will continue to bring solid growth for us.”

“This year, business generated by music festivals is up around 30 per cent on last year. Getting artists, their management and support teams from A to B at the height of the festival season in the UK and the rest of Europe is a key part of our summer business.”

Luxaviation UK has named its ten most popular private jet destinations for summer departures from the UK: Nice, Ibiza, Palma de Mallorca, Cannes, Mykonos, Faro, Olbia, Malaga, Split and Nc. Some of these locations have only recently become popular, as MD George Galanopoulos explains: “We definitely see changing trends. Whether this is for economic reasons or driven by fashion or taste, we have seen a significant rise in requests for Mykonos, while Split in Croatia is a popular destination.”

Biggin Hill-based operator Zenith Aviation has experienced a considerable year-on-year increase in hours flown so far in 2017. MD Stuart Mulholland comments: “We saw a 37 per cent increase in June compared to the previous year, and the January to June period generated a huge 83 per cent increase. Combined with the impressive growth in our engineering business, this makes for a stellar first half of the year for Zenith. We are delighted.”

Mulholland attributes the success of the business to Zenith’s product and service delivery. “It is easy for the smallest thing to spoil the customer’s experience and we try that little bit harder to ensure that this does not happen. The addition of our Learjet 75 aircraft has re-energised the demand for the traditional double club four seating configuration, with more customers returning to this brand.”

The company is evaluating the offerings of several OEMs as it looks to strengthen its fleet for 2018. According to Mulholland, Zenith would like to add at least two further aircraft in the super-light category during the first quarter of 2018 and is keeping a watchful eye on other market sectors as it looks to add diversity to its portfolio.

Global Jet adds G650 for Mediterranean ad hoc clients

Swiss-headquartered Global Jet Concept has taken delivery of a Gulfstream G650 which will be immediately available for charter. One of the few with regular ad hoc availability in Europe, it will have multiple bases in the summer across popular Mediterranean destinations.

The 14-passenger jet has a range of 7,000 nm with a top speed of Mach 0.925. Onboard features include wi-fi, 16 panoramic windows, a two-sided forward galley and a cabin with two facing divans.

Bjorn Naebhuis, VP of business development, says that the G650 is a known product for Global Jet: “We have operated a few already and the type has always met our expectations. These types of aircraft are rarely available for charter as the demand is still higher than the supply.”

“Our international fleet is growing. Clients from other parts of Europe have been flying on our managed fleet of 25 different models. We pay attention to retaining a small structure, in order for the clients to feel close to the management company and to uphold personal relationships. This is more costly for us as a company, but the clients get what they deserve; we say that we are a tailor-made business but we have to deliver this too.”

Global Jet has a diverse fleet already, so adding the G650 is not set to change that. The operator has secured non-ETOPS 180, CAT II landing minimas and Wyvern Wingman approval for the latest jet.

It is also opening a brokerage office in Spain as European expansion continues, despite a number of challenges. “We face fewer parking possibilities at airports, more slot-related delays and tricky peak periods at popular destinations,” Naebhuis continues. “We are focusing on keeping clients informed and suggesting alternative solutions if situations get out of hand. We also need to stick to our primary principles of managing aircraft. This is the way forward for us and it is our strong suit. “We believe that safety and quality are going to become even more important in this growing market. It may not necessarily be easier in the future, but it will certainly be more interesting.”