

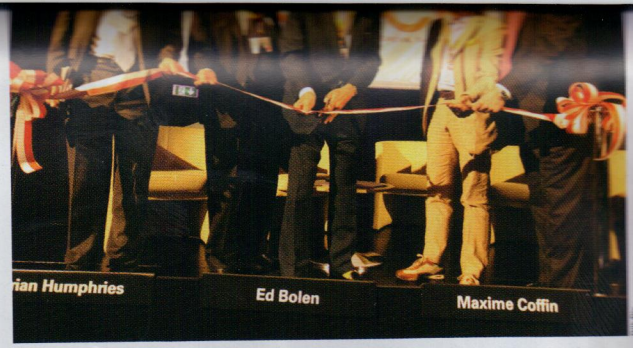
by the Canadian airframer earlier this year, bringing VistaJet's backlog to 10 long-range Global 6000s, six large-cabin Challenger 605s, 11 midsize Learjet 85s and six Learjet 60XR. VistaJet chairman Thomas Flohr said the Swiss company is to focus on large, longer-range aircraft to build its share of emerging markets in West Africa, the Middle East, Russia/CIS and Asia.

Brian Humphries, chief executive and president of the European Business Aviation Association, said that too frequently politicians had "misunderstandings and misconceptions" about business aviation, which led to poor rule-making.

He cited the UK's planned flat rate tax of £186 (\$300) per passenger on each business jet flight as a result of this. It would, he said, raise the cost of a helicopter flight to the Scilly

has managed to maximise its case at European level, that degree of empathy is "not always found among the 27 member states".

His comments were echoed by his counterpart at the National Business Aviation Association, Ed Bolen. He said that too often politicians had the perception that business aviation was solely used by the largest corporations and wealthy individuals. "The reality is that business aviation is



Humphries argues business aviation 'fosters communities'



Comlux America supporting Airbus with cabin design (L-R): Comlux America's Christophe Pelet, Scott Meyer, Ettore Rodaro with Airbus' Arnaud Martin, Gregory Coston, and Fabienne Fioroni

Comlux America gets Airbus seal of approval

US completion specialist Comlux America has been given the nod by Airbus to become an authorised cabin outfitter for its family of corporate jets. The Indianapolis-based company has already outfitted an Airbus ACJ320, which is making its debut at the show. Airbus executive vice-president programmes Tom Williams said Comlux plans to complete three to four business aircraft a year.

Airbus (stand 7071) now offers its customers "a choice of nine Airbus-approved cabin outfitters, giving them a wide choice of cabin completion options and facilitating faster access to completion slots".

The approval is key plank in Comlux Group global expansion and strategy. Comlux is strengthening its charter offering in the Middle East through an alliance with fellow VIP operator Saudia Private Aviation, announced at the show. The duo plan to expand their share of this lucrative market by using one other's aircraft.

Comlux, which has a base in Bahrain, will make its fleet of Airbus Corporate Jets available to Saudia Private Aviation clients and Comlux customers will have access to Saudia's fleet, which includes a Dassault Falcon 7X and a Hawker 400XP.

"This should cover most mission requirements," Comlux said.

Hawker Beechcraft aftermarket u

Continuing its tradition of offering aftermarket upgrades and modifications across its family of business jets and turboprops, Hawker Beechcraft Services (stand 7070) launched two new performance enhancement programmes at the show today to extend the life, sustain the appeal and increase the resale value of the aircraft for its global network of customers.

The first offering is a winglet retrofit programme for the Hawker 750 – a \$295,000 modification that will provide an incremental performance improvement in time to climb, range and fuel consumption for the 67 Hawker 750 owners, said HBS vice-president for strategic aftermarket integration Brian Howell.

"The enhancement gives a 5% improvement in time to climb and a 4% or about 185km [100nm] increase in range," he added. The upgrade is also in line with Hawker's strategy to equip its models with winglets where possible, Howell said. Winglets are now fitted on five in-production/development types and will be available on four aftermarket aircraft.

A member of the King Air twin turboprop family has also been singled out for modification. The \$350,000 B200GT upgrade pack-

Al Bateen airport's new FBO brand means business

The Middle East's first business aviation-only airport has launched its own fixed-base operation brand as it prepares to announce further FBO developments at the show.

Abu Dhabi's Al Bateen Executive airport (stand 336) is calling the service Dhabijet. It will incorporate the airport's existing VIP terminal with a new handling operation and be run by FBO manager Pauline Smith, formerly

The city centre airport is planning a burst of infrastructure developments as it transforms itself from a former air base. Aside from the confirmation of a third-party FBO and maintenance facility – thought to be Jet Aviation – owner Abu Dhabi Airports' long-term plans for the airport include further hangars and a crew hotel and managed offices.

"We have around 40 projects that we are considering," said

"The military is progressively releasing space for us to turn into hangars. By November we will also have an executive catering operation on site."

Other possibilities include hosting the 2012 Middle East Business Aviation convention, until now held in Dubai. "We are waiting for a decision on that from the organisers, but we are ready and willing," said Jones.

Al Bateen has announced a

craft movements in April compared with the same month in 2010. It follows an 18% rise in the first quarter. Jones said users were switching from other airports in the region.

"People are becoming aware of the advantages of Abu Dhabi," he said. "The decision to revise our aeronautical charges last year and the introduction of a new instrument landing system has boosted traffic



Artistic impression of the new