LEGACY 500 MAKES SINGAPORE DEBUT

News / Business aviation, Events / Festivals, Manufacturer

Claudio Camelier, v-p sales for Middle East and Asia Pacific (not including China) for Embraer Executive Jets (EEJ), told AIN last week that the region accounts for 10 percent of its fleet now. At the Singapore Airshow, the highlight for the Brazilian company will be the debut of its Legacy 500 here; it also has a Phenom 100, a Phenom 300 and a Legacy here on the static display.

“It’s the first time for the Legacy 500 at a major airshow,” said Camelier. “We have two registered already in the Asia Pacific–one in Australia and another in China [owned by Jackie Chan].”

Camelier said that although the U.S. General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) results for 2015 haven’t been published yet, he expects the Legacy 500 to have achieved “a 50 percent market share in its segment.”

Generally in the Asia Pacific market, he reflected that “Embraer is the youngest OEM in the bizjet market–we had our first delivery here in the early 2000s, and the bizjet division was launched in 2005–and we are now close to reaching 1,000 business jet deliveries worldwide.” He added that around 88 of these deliveries had been in the Asia Pacific. (The 1000th aircraft will be delivered “in the coming months” but the type and customer have “not been disclosed yet, but it’ll probably be

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towards the end of the first quarter or beginning of the second quarter.”)

The next generation of EEJ aircraft will have the new Pratt & Whitney geared turbofans that have been selected to power the new E2 regional jets. “Today we have the [existing] Lineage 1000 that is based on the Embraer 190. Embraer right now is in the middle of developing three new E-Jets, the 170E2, 190E2 and 195E2. So it will be a natural [progression] for the Lineage,” said Camelier. “But nothing has been decided or launched yet by Embraer’s board.” There is is an E2 cabin mockup on the static display here at the show.

Camelier said that the markets in China and the rest of the Asia Pacific were very distinct. “China is a very different story [but] in the rest of the Asia Pacific the market has suffered after the crisis of 2008-9, with a reduction in demand. In general, it is still very much not a mature market, except for Australia, for example. And maybe Indonesia and India are slightly more mature.

“The current economic crisis and the strength of the dollar is not really helping. So we have seen in the past two years a slow growth in the market, but lower than what we see in the long-term–GDP is growing very rapidly and there is a huge population and distances, but connectivity to secondary cities is very limited.” Camelier believes that “business aviation could help a lot of businesses to get more connected.”

Distant Lands

He noted that for all the aircraft manufacturers, the Asia Pacific is “a long way from where they’re located…so it [required] a big investment in customer support.” In Embraer’s case he said, “We have an MRO service center network and we keep extending our footprint in the region as the fleet grows.

“Beginning last year with the first Legacy 500 we expanded the service center network and have three spare parts depots. In terms of customer support we have been quite successful worldwide if you look at how we are graded by customers; in the past few years we have been towards the top, including in [the AIN product support survey]–number two in 2015, and we were number one in 2014. “We know that buying an aircraft is just the beginning of a very long relationship,” added Camelier.

As for FBOs in the region, he acknowledged that there was a lack, but said “Yesterday we heard of two newFBOs near New Delhi airport, but in many airports in the region there has not been a lot of activity on the FBOside. The main ones are in Singapore, for example.

“In Singapore there is a large fleet of business jets and also very good air connectivity. In Indonesia, Malaysia and so on, there are large cities…companies have businesses spread [around] in lots of locations and air connectivity is tricky, so a business jet really serves companies…I like to say a bizjet is a productivity tool,” he continued.

“In this region, a lot of buyers are first time buyers so it is more difficult and time-consuming to find those customers, and longer decision making takes longer…customers really want to evaluate the benefits,” he said.

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