ACROPOLIS CONSIDERS ENGINE AND COMPLETION CENTRE SELECTION FOR ACJ320NEO

News / Business aviation

Acropolis Aviation, launch customer for the Airbus ACJ320neo, intends to select the engine provider and interior outfitter for the new narrowbody in 2016, around two years ahead of its delivery as a green aircraft.

“We want to be as prepared as we can so we are going to do the legwork early,” says Andy West, sales executive at the Farnborough-based VVIP charter provider.

He describes the choice between the CFM International Leap-1A and Pratt & Whitney PW1100G turbofans for the narrowbody as a “tough one”. Acropolis already operates a CFM56-powered ACJ319 (G-NOAH) – to be sold once the re-engined twinjet arrives – which has notched up five years' service.

Asset Image

Asset type unknown

Acropolis Aviation

“G-NOAH has performed well, so we are not ruling out the Leap-1As,” West says. “The PW1100Gs also look promising. However as neither engine has an in-service history yet, it is not possible to make an informed decision. That could take several months.”

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German flag carrier Lufthansa is scheduled to take delivery of the first PW1100G-equipped A320neo imminently, while entry into service of the Leap-1A-powered variant is set for mid-2016.

The fit-out of Acropolis's ACJ320neo is the “subject of ongoing discussion” at the privately-owned company, which points out the longer fuselage means "we have a lot more room to play with".

Certain features of G-NOAH's layout will be retained, however, such as the 19-passenger configuration and master bedroom. “We deal with a host of different customers from around the world, including heads of state, leisure travellers and corporations, so the aircraft has to address a host of different requirements,” West adds.

Acropolis is considering a number of completion centres to outfit the aircraft, including established players such as Jet Aviation, Lufthansa Technik and Airbus Corporate Jet Centre, which completed G-NOAH. “There is plenty of choice,” West says. “The project should take around 12 months to complete and we expect to put into service a VVIP aircraft that is both fantastic and unique.”

These attributes are particularly important for Acropolis given growing competition in the niche sector. Saudi Arabia’s Alpha Star and Germany’s K5 have each placed an order for an ACJ319neo, for delivery in 2019.

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