

BOMBARDIER DENIES NEAR-TERM PLAN FOR CS500

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Despite reports to the contrary, Bombardier has no immediate interest in developing a larger version of the CSeries family, often called the CS500.

“There is no CS500 in sight,” says Colin Bole, senior vice-president of sales and marketing for Bombardier Commercial Aircraft, speaking to Flightglobal in an interview at the Regional Airline Association’s annual convention.

In 2010, Bombardier trademarked aircraft designations for the “CS500” and “CS900”. The trademarks were allowed to lapse in 2014, according to the Canadian Intellectual Property Office, with no recorded attempt to revive them.

Yet, speculation has continued to swirl around the possibility that Bombardier might soon add a third and larger member to the CSeries family, joining the 110-seat CS100 and 135-seat CS300.

Bole, however, seems in no rush to directly confront the heart of the 150-seat-and-above narrowbody market currently dominated by Airbus and Boeing.

“We truly have to be focusing on what we’re trying to deliver — the CS100 and 300,” says Bole, formerly an executive at the ILFC aircraft leasing firm. “If you look back in history ... I do not recall a programme that had two variants being certified and delivered within such a short period of time.”

The CS300 is expected to enter service in the fourth quarter with AirBaltic, less than six months after the operational debut on 15 July with SwissInternational Air Lines. Both aircraft, powered by Pratt & Whitney PW1500G engines, feature a collection of new technologies for Bombardier, including three-axis fly-by-wire, composite wing panels and aluminium-lithium metal in the fuselage.

Following entry into service, Bombardier plans to ramp-up production over the next five years, aiming for the programme to break-even with as many as 325 CSeries aircraft delivered through 2020.

Beyond that timeframe, Bole was not inclined to rule out any further developments.

“The future will bring what it brings and the market will dictate which way we go,” Bole says. “For now we are exclusively focused on the CS100 and the CS300.”

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