

CARIBAVIA 2025 – WHAT TECNAM CAN OFFER TO THE CARRIBEAN – FRANCESCO SFERRA

News / Events / Festivals, Manufacturer



Purchasing an aircraft is a significant choice for an airline, an operator, a country, or a lessor. Before choosing an aircraft type, many hours of planning, examination, and comparison. Return on investment, business strategy, business plan, etc. CARIBAVIA 2025 Day 3: Francesco Sferra's presentation on Tecnam. I must admit, as a potential buyer, I would appreciate even the way it was presented - what Tecnam can offer to the Caribbean.

Italian elegance and heritage are evident as well as the depth of information. The company has been around for more than 75 years. Offers, innovation, and vision. However, there's a major BUT. The huge BUT that I must share with you is Francesco Sferra is a Experimental Test Pilot at Costruzioni Aeronautiche TECNAM. It had a major effect on me and many others in the audience. A test pilot who has flown the aircraft and has experience in its details. One of the special events during CARIBAVIA 2025 was the presentation of the Tecnam P2012 STOL operated by StBarth Executive. StBarth static display. I was hoping to do the interview on the plane, but had to give up,

as there was so much interest. The aim of static is to show people around the plane, so I had to settle for an interview with Francesco at Gustavia marina. Here's the essential:

T.O. Can you tell me why TECNAM took the decision to support CARIBAVIA 2025?

F.S. Because we just completed the development of the P2012 STOL. We just set up the first operation with P2012 STOL in the Caribbean. And we have a momentum ongoing that we want to support in this region.

T.O. I guess you've been to many different aviation events. Why CARIBAVIA is different? Because the founder, the Captain, the Commander, he says that CARIBAVIA is like no other. Why?

F.S. Well, it's a man-made, like no other, business in the Caribbean. And it belongs to the Caribbean culture, also how it is made. So, it has to stay in this place, it refers to this place. And we have to play by the rules of the Caribbean. I'm Italian, we usually say : when you're in Rome, do as the Romans do. In the Caribbean, do as the Caribbeans do.

T.O. We've seen the aircraft on the static display. There were too many people willing to see the aircraft, so it was impossible to film something, to talk with people and so on. After 1,000 hours your aircraft is operating, what do you have as feedback from the operator, from clients? What can you tell?

F.S. So, Air Inter Isles, or Air Inter Îles, as they say, StBarth Executive is operating three aircrafts. All the three of them with a minor difference in hours, because they're staggering a little bit, they're approaching the 1,000-hour milestone. The aircraft looks like a brand new from delivery. They have faced the entering service of an almost brand new platform. And if you think about it, they've flown an average of 100 hours per month per aircraft. It is flawless for a brand new platform. This is probably even better than what they would have expected to start with. Some of the challenges that are natural to this area, like the support, spare parts, and all of what comes with an airplane, a new airplane getting to a new market, we have faced it with a strong response by Tecnam, a strong response by Continental. And today, one of the proof of that was their appointment today , as a Tecnam service center, the first Tecnam service center in the Caribbean region.

T.O. You made a very important announcement at the event - you will have your own MRO center. Can you tell more?

F.S. So, this is kind of the end state of a new customer entering our network. When they start operating, we could work with an established MRO. We could steer them towards something that's already existing. Or we could support whatever they have already in place, just by adding the technicalities, the specificity of the product line that they are using. In this case, the Tecnam version. We decided to go this path, and we think it is the best path to follow for an operator like StBarth Executive, because it gives them autonomy, it gives them a better positioning. They are already doing all of the homework that's required for a service center to be successful on the territory. They know the territory, they know the market, they know the people, they are well integrated in the network, and this is ideal for us to support the upcoming demand for this product.

T.O. As far as I've heard, the operator, StBarth Executive, they are more than happy, and they have brilliant feedback for your aircraft. What comes next? Because the announcement was made, that's pretty cool. What we are interested to hear, how many aircraft are coming to the market? What is the development? If you take a look for the next year, something is planned?

F.S. Yes. This is after five years that we have a product on the market. It's almost a cornerstone for the program, because you start seeing the first used aircraft entering the market. This is the shortest turnaround for an investment in aviation for five, six years. That's short. That is happening, that is ongoing. Luckily, it's ongoing well. We see the aircraft repositioning themselves according to good planning, according to what's on the market. We just started, you can see, one year ago, with P2012 STOL. We have several Traveler Continentals that are on the market and are reaching the market. This is an important area that we have targeted and it's becoming a strong technical market for a period like this Guyana. We have established a new dealership for the Central and South American market. We're going to present it at the fair in Colombia. New P2012 Continental in Ecuador. We just achieved the Type Certificate for Colombia. So there are plenty of ongoing news for this area of the world.

Now, the program is ongoing and keeps momentum in the rest of the world. For example, today we just confirmed the MEDEVAC in the Seychelles. We have the MEDEVAC that's starting in Hawaii. We have the Taiwanese special mission operation with the ISR that's going to grow. So, there are more orders coming. In Europe, we're going to have shortly deliveries in Germany of two Traveler Continentals.

There is a lot already planned and ongoing and this is in the short term. We're talking between today and the year end. In the medium term, this is the time where the options of the additional aircraft in the agreement of the airplane that will replace the one sold on the news market will take place and that is going to be an important medium part of 2026.

From our company side, one of the responses is to be ready, a little step, maybe we are ready to make another one with an increase in production, with a faster response in order to grant one of the key points for this program which has been to deliver an airplane always within six months from order.

T.O. My last question : you told that there is no stock of Tecnam aircraft. So, basically, clients who are willing to sign and buy, they're coming, they're telling what they need exactly as an aircraft for their business. Are you sure that with your success, you will be able to deliver that much of aircraft that the market will demand?

F.S. So, I have to use the words of my CEO : « This is a good problem to have ». Luckily, we have a company that's very agile and flexible. As we have been able to move resources, for example, from other production lines to the P-Mentor line, that grew an incredible success globally. Now, I'm speaking on behalf of our CSO, Walter Da Costa. That's his product. If we talk about people, we are flexible and able to do the same at any time. So, we have the capability. We can have a short reaction time, especially from how the company is set up and how our production line is set up. Given that we control most of the production, given that we rely on our manpower, raw material, energy, and production time, we can basically control everything except a few items like engines, avionics, or propellers. And that makes it, I'll never use the word easy, but accessible, a shift in production for the people.

T.O. I can tell you from tonight's event, you have a wonderful aircraft. StBarth Executive, they have a chance to have it. I hope that next time CARIBAVIA will be hosted somewhere in the Caribbean, there will be much more operators already owning your aircraft.

F.S. We hope so too. And StBarth Executive, of course, is our great representative in this area. We are very happy to have them and to partner with them in this specific location. I will see you at the next CARIBAVIA.



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