TEXTRON AVIATION CALLS ON CESSNA, BEECHCRAFT AND HAWKER OWNERS TO TRANSPORT ATHLETES TO THE 2026 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer

Textron Aviation announced the coordination of the ninth Special Olympics Airlift, a monumental event aimed at transporting hundreds of athletes and coaches across country to the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games in Minnesota's Twin Cities. The company is calling on Cessna, Beechcraft and Hawker aircraft owners and operators to come together on Friday, June 19, 2026, and Saturday, June 27, 2026, to enable champions from all corners of the nation to travel to and from the host city, regardless of financial or logistical challenges.

Ron Draper, president & CEO, Textron Aviation commented: "The Airlift is more than just a flight; it's about giving these champions the chance to shine and achieve their dreams on a national stage. Seeing the excitement and anticipation on the athletes' faces as they embark on their journey to and from the Games is incredibly moving. We need Cessna, Beechcraft and Hawker customers to join us in this heartfelt mission, volunteering their aircraft and time to make a profound and lasting impact on the lives of these athletes and their families."

The Special Olympics Airlift, organized by Textron Aviation, mobilizes hundreds of volunteer Cessna, Beechcraft and Hawker pilots and aircraft from across the country to create the world's

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largest peacetime airlift and provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience for Special Olympics athletes.

Since the inception of the Special Olympics Airlift in 1987, Cessna, Beechcraft and Hawker owners have transported more than 10,000 athletes and coaches to various Special Olympics World and USA Games. Owners and operators in every state are needed to donate the use of the following aircraft:

- Cessna Citation jets
- Beechcraft King Air turboprops
- Beechcraft Beechjet and Premier jets
- Hawker jets

Each Airlift event builds on the success of previous years, continually growing in scale and impact. During the 2026 event, participating aircraft known as “Doves” are expected to touch down or takeoff from St. Paul Downtown Airport Holman Field (KSTP) every three minutes throughout a 10-hour period.

The Special Olympics Airlift is made possible by collaboration from influential industry groups such as the Federal Aviation Administration, Minneapolis Saint Paul Metropolitan Airports Commission/KSTP, Signature Aviation, Special Olympics USA Games Local Organizing Committee and Special Olympics North America.

Become a Dove for this monumental nationwide aviation event by visiting airlift.txtav.com.

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