LIGHT JET NEWCOMERS TO EXPLOIT SECTOR RENAISSANCE

News / Business aviation

Two highly-anticipated newcomers to the light business jet segment entered service in December, allowing their developers to hand over aircraft by the end of 2015 and prepare to exploit the anticipated rebound in the sector over the next 12 months.

Honda Aircraft began deliveries of its HondaJet to undisclosed private owners on 23 December – two weeks after securing certification for the $4.5 million type after a 13-year development effort.

Honda has secured around 100 orders for the GE Aviation HF120-powered aircraft and says a number of units are in various stages of production at its -Greensboro, North Carolina-based headquarters.

Pilot training on its full--motion, Level D HondaJet flight simulator, designed by FlightSafety International, is also in full swing on the campus.

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Meanwhile. Embraer handed over the first superlight Legacy 450 on 22 December to Orlando, Florida-based technology -company LMG.

This milestone came four months after the seven-seat, 2,670nm (4,750km)-range aircraft secured US type certification. This was followed a week later by delivery of the first European-registered Legacy 450.

The privately-owned aircraft – registration OO-NEY – arrived in Antwerp, Belgium on 6 -January, to be managed by -business aviation services provider SmartAir.

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SmartAir

Late last year, the Brazilian -airframer extended the range of baseline Legacy 450 by 10%, to 2,900nm. It hopes the upgraded aircraft – which is scheduled to enter service in the third quarter –

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will bolster its position in the competitive superlight sector.

Within this niche, Embraer is competing with established brands such as the Cessna -Citation XLS+ and Bombardier Learjet 75, as well as the -eagerly-awaited Pilatus PC-24, which is earmarked for -service entry in 2017.

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