



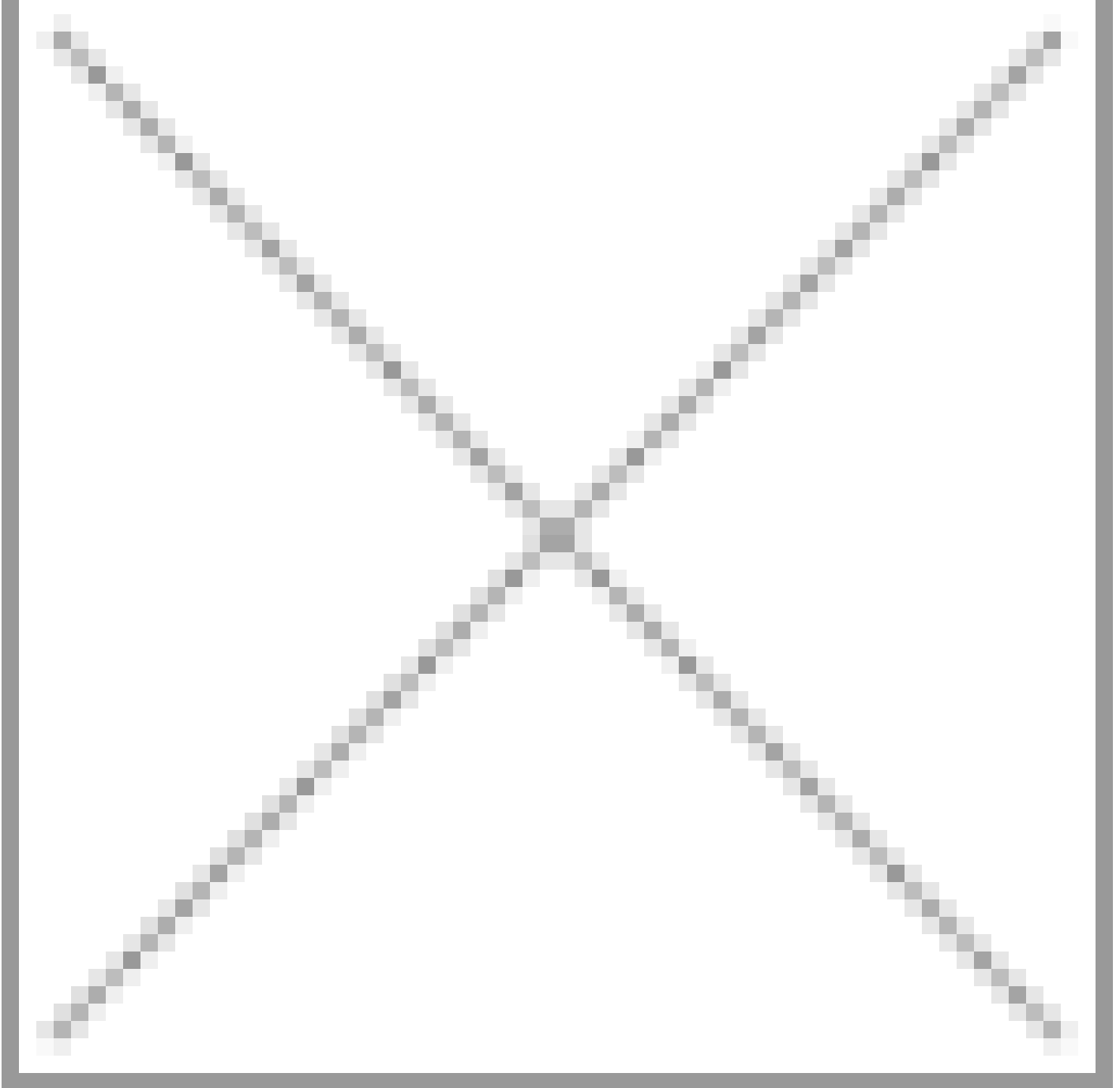
QATAR EXECUTIVE ADDS SECOND ACJ319

News / Business aviation



Qatar Executive, the business jet arm of Qatar Airways, has added a second Airbus ACJ319 to its fleet, bringing the number of such aircraft it manages to two.

“In total we have now two 40-seat A319 aircraft ready for charter for worldwide travel, and we expect to receive a significant amount of bookings, not just for the busy summer season but, starting in June, during Ramadan, which is a popular time to perform Umrah [a pilgrimage to Mecca at any time of year, in contrast to the more significant Hajj, which falls in certain months of the Islamic calendar] in Saudi Arabia,” a Qatar Executive spokesperson told AIN.



Qatar Executive made waves at EBACE last year with the announcement of its intent to purchase up to 30 aircraft from Gulfstream, an increase from the original order of 20, announced as part of a memorandum of understanding first agreed in October 2014. The increased orders and options are for a combination of Gulfstream's new G500 and G600, for which Qatar Executive is the launch customer, and the flagship G650ER. The first G650ER was delivered in the last quarter of 2015, and a second arrived this March.

The G500 made its first flight in May 2015, and Gulfstream expects to receive type certification from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and European Aviation Safety Agency in 2017. The G600 flight test program may now begin a little earlier than expected around the end of this year, with entry-into-service projected to be in 2019.

The Qatar Executive fleet today consists of three Bombardier Challenger 605s, two Global 5000 Visions, two Global 5000s, one Global XRS and two Gulfstream G650ERs.

In recent years, Qatar Executive (Booth J059) has expanded its service portfolio and also substantially grown the aircraft management business. In addition to its wholly-owned fleet of Bombardier and Gulfstream aircraft, the company also manages three owned jets for clients in the Middle East.

“The service we provide to aircraft owners is tailored to each individual’s requirements, but generally includes taking care of the entire flight operation: the trip planning, the allocation of highly-experienced pilots and flight attendants up to the organization of catering and all ground arrangements including fueling, hangar parking and cleaning of the aircraft in Doha and worldwide,” explained the spokesperson.

Some customers offer their aircraft for charter whenever they do not use them, while others prefer to have their aircraft exclusively at their own disposal, he said.

QE is planning to open a new Qatar Executive terminal at its home airport in Doha in the final quarter of this year.

“Our new full-service private aviation hub will cater to the growing number of private jets flying into Qatar, and create a memorable travel experience for our VIP guests as well as other operators through its elegant design, exclusive offer of services and genuine hospitality, for which we are renowned worldwide,” said the QE spokesperson.

The Doha-based company is growing its flight operations and pilot workforce. It currently employs 40 pilots and is looking to recruit further type-rated first officers and captains for the entire fleet. It serves direct customers as well as private jet brokers, who book flights for clients through a dedicated sales team, which is on constant standby. Passengers can be airborne in as little as four hours after a booking is made, with only a 10-minute check-in, at its dedicated business aviation facilities, required before take-off.

Connecting from Qatar Airways’ commercial airline service to charter services is also possible, especially from North America. The operator sees a trend towards more long and ultra-long range travel so, at a time when the delay in the Global 7000-8000 program has put Bombardier at a disadvantage, the Gulfstream fleet’s availability has boosted business.

“Our fleet strategy is built around providing our customers with aircraft which are young and modern, as well as leaders in cabin comfort, size and range,” said the spokesperson. “To successfully serve the markets we target around the world, we need aircraft that can reach the main global business centres in the shortest possible time. They also need significant passenger baggage payload and maximum cabin comfort, and it’s that combination which attracted us to Gulfstream. There are a number of design features about the G650ER that make it very attractive for our passengers. It has the largest panoramic windows of any aircraft within its category, low cabin noise levels, low cabin altitude and outstanding payload-carrying capabilities.”

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