

FLIGHT DESIGN CONFIDENT OF SECOND QUARTER REVIVAL

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German light aircraft manufacturer Flight Design is hoping to emerge from administration in the second quarter, following “productive talks” with potential investors.

The Wildau-based developer of the CT-series of high-wing, light sport aircraft and the C4 piston-single was placed into administration on 11 February, after unsettled bills "totalling over seven-digit euros" led to what it describes as a “liquidity crunch” at the company.

A court-appointed lawyer is running the venture on a provisional basis, until funding is secured.

Aircraft manufacturing and parts production is continuing at Flight Design’s 23-year-old factory in Ukraine, albeit at a “low level”, says Tom Peghiny, president of independent importer and distributor Flight Design USA. Continued unrest has contributed to the company’s financial woes, he continues, “not because the factory is located near the fighting between the Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed rebels, but because banks have been reluctant to extend or create new lines of credit to the company in this [unstable] environment.”

Asset Image type unknown

Flight Design

Taiwan’s Aero Jones Aviation is continuing to supply aircraft and spare parts for the southeast

Asian and western markets from its Xiamen base.

“As far as our customers are concerned, it is business as usual,” Peghiny says. He admits the soft demand for light aircraft has also been a challenge for the company. “It’s tough out there right now. We are not selling our LSA’s in anything like the quantities we’d like to. That’s why we need to get the funding in place to complete development of the C4.”

The light piston-single is Flight Design’s first certificated aircraft. It made its maiden sortie a year ago and the company was about to begin building the first of two production-conforming prototypes in Germany before it went into receivership.

“The programme is on hold for the time being,” Peghiny says, while noting: “this is a game-changer for the industry and for the company. We have already received around 100 deposits.”

The C4 features a Continental IO-360-AF alternative fuel engine, Garmin G3X Vision Touch cockpit, a unique crash-absorbing cabin structure – called the “safety box” – and a BRS emergency parachute system. “With a price tag of \$230,000, the C4 is around 30% less than competing designs [such as the Diamond DA40] and 50% less than the Cessna 172,” says Peghiny.

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