NBAA visitors will he keen to check expected modifications to the Beechjet 400A (above). Canadair has improved the Challenger (right) as it develops the Glohal Express

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ny survey of the histories of
business aircraft will reveal a
preponderance of milestones in
the months of September and
October — launches, first flights, certifi-cations and deliveries. This is a tribute to the importance to the industry of the annual, autumnal, National Business Air-craft Association (NBAA) convention. The 1993 NBAA show, to be staged in the Georgia World Congress Center, At-lanta, from 21-23 September, is expected to earn its place in the history books, with the launch of at least one, and possibly two, new business jets.
It is no longer de rigueur to launch at an NBAA show. Gulfstream Aerospace launched the Gulfstream V at the 1992 Farnborough air show, but nevertheless saved the unveiling of a full-scale mock-up of its new long-range business jet for the NBAA show just a few weeks later. Striving for an artificial deadline im-posed by a public event also has its pitfalls, as Cessna Aircraft found when it narrowly missed achieving US certifica-tion of its Citationjet by the 1992 NBAA show, despite a round-the-clock effort to complete the work ahead of schedule. Cessna, leaning towards caution, de-clined to impose the NBAA deadline on the first flight of its high-speed Citation

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X, the company's most ambitious project to date. The prototype will be rolled out on the eve of the show and the date of the first flight, now planned for the fourth quarter of this year, will be announced to convention attendees.
The show's powerful influence over industry planning puts companies with new projects under pressure to make a major announcement or face the question: "Why not?" — or worse: "What's wrong?". At the 1992 event, Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) acknowledged the exis-tence of an Astra 4 project, and Dassault admitted to studying a long-range Falcon

9000, although neither business jet was ready for a formal launch.
This year, IAI and its marketing arm Astra Jet, are strongly tipped to launch the "medium-large" Astra 4 formally at the Atlanta show. The Astra 4 will be placed in direct competition with Dassault's Fal-con 2000 (launched at the June 1989 Paris air show, but likely to be cert-ificated around the time of the 1994 NBAA convention).
The greatest pressure will be on Cana-dair, which very publicly unveiled its Project Global Express at the 1991 NBAA show. Advanced design is well under way,

engines have been selected and reservations taken, but the long-range business
jet is not yet launched formally. Parent company Bombardier will consider a launch at a board meeting on 15 Septem-ber and Canadair may yet have news to set the 1993 show alight.
Even if a launch is delayed, Canadair is expected to announce its selection of a risk-sharing partner to supply the Global Express wing. Gulfstream will announce a revenue-sharing partner to supply the
GV empennage and reveal the identity of
Vought Aircraft's Asian partner in reve-
nue-sharing development of the long-
range business-jet's wing.
New launches are the life-blood of the

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