

# Boeing and Executive Jet set up fractional-ownership venture

RAMON LOPEZ/NEW YORK

**E**XECUTIVE JET Aviation (EJA) and Boeing Business Jets (BBJ) have formed a joint venture which will introduce Boeing's \$34 million corporate aircraft into EJA's pioneering NetJets fractional-ownership programme.

Acquiring the BBJ, which combines the fuselage of the Boeing 737-700 with the strengthened wing of the larger -800, will take EJA to the next level of fractional ownership, and the Montvale, New Jersey-based firm says that it will help it to expand internationally.

Richard Santulli, Executive Jet's chairman and chief executive, calls the BBJ "a natural complement" to the existing NetJets fleet, which now includes 104 aircraft in service and 170 on order. "It provides the necessary space, range and utility. The BBJ broadens the NetJets fleet and allows us to provide NetJet owners with a full range of airplane sizes to meet their global business transportation needs," he adds.

Financial terms of the venture



BBJ will represent the next level of fractional ownership for EJA

have not been disclosed, and specifics of the deal, including its structure and the initial aircraft order, will not be finalised for another 30-60 days, says Santulli. He sees a "core" fleet of between four and five BBJs owned by the joint venture.

According to EJA, the number of aircraft would grow as owners sign up for flight hours. EJA is responsible for the sale of fractional interests and aircraft management. Boeing will provide the service support.

Santulli makes it clear that the

deal does not affect the planned purchases of Gulfstream IVSPs and Vs. He says it is a "rather good assumption" that formation of the joint venture precludes future purchase of the rival Airbus A319CJ corporate jet.

BBJ, a company established in 1996 by Boeing and General Electric, now holds more than 25 orders from 21 customers.

The first BBJ rolls out of the factory in June 1998. GE, the launch customer with two aircraft, will take delivery of the initial aircraft later that year. EJA will receive its

## American Blimp lines up A-150 production

**A**MERICAN BLIMP, of Severna Park, Maryland, has launched production of the nine-passenger Lightship A-150 having "...clearly identified" customers for the first five airships.

The A-150 was awarded US certification in September, and the first airship has been delivered to The Lightship Group, a joint venture set up between American Blimp and Virgin Lightships, for use on a long-term advertising contract.

The company is aiming the nine-passenger, single-pilot A-150 at what it describes as "growing interest" from the air-tour industry, and expects the Lightship to "...re-open airship passenger service". The craft is powered by two Teclon Lycoming IO-360 piston engines driving five-blade MT propellers.

The A-150 has a 4,200m<sup>3</sup> (150,000ft<sup>3</sup>) translucent envelope, but the Lightship series is available with 3,200m<sup>3</sup> and 4,800m<sup>3</sup> envelopes.

Under the name Spector, the airships are being marketed for surveillance missions, including border and maritime patrol and law enforcement. □

## Rolls-Royce wins Gulfstream service contracts

**R**OLLS-ROYCE'S Canadian maintenance arm has clinched four service contracts with US Gulfstream operators, including a deal to support engines for the aircraft manufacturer itself.

Gulfstream has signed a deal for R-R to repair and overhaul Spey, Tay and BMW R-R BR710 engines under a contract believed

to total around \$10 million over a seven-year period.

Under another order with New-York-based Pfizer, worth around \$2 million, R-R will be required to maintain the company's Tay 611-8 engines, which power its fleet of Gulfstream IV business jets.

A contract with Mobil Business Resources of Fairfax, Virginia, also

valued at around \$2 million, is for the maintenance of the oil-giant subsidiary's Tay 611-8 GIV powerplants.

The final contract, worth \$2.5 million, with California, Van Nuys-based Petersen Aviation, is for the maintenance of the Spey 511-8 and Tay 611-8, which power its Gulfstream IIIs and IVs. □

## Hughes HISAR is used to monitor German traffic

**H**UGHES AIRCRAFT HAS teamed with German company Traffic 2000 to market the Hughes Integrated Surveillance and Reconnaissance System (HISAR) for applications in ground surveillance and environmental monitoring in Europe.

The synthetic-aperture radar (SAR) was demonstrated in Ger-

many in July during a sales tour with a HISAR-equipped Raytheon Beech King Air 200. Hughes says that more than 20h flying over Germany demonstrated the HISAR's ability to monitor road traffic on autobahns and detect oil spills on open seas.

The HISAR radar has four modes: wide-area moving-target

indication (MTI); combined SAR/MTI strip mode, with 6m resolution; SAR spot mode, with 2m resolution, and sea-surveillance mode.

Hughes is offering the HISAR with complementary electro-optical and infra-red sensors suitable for missions ranging from remote sensing to border surveillance. □

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### ■ LEARJET 20 HUSHKIT

Tracor Flight Systems is awaiting certification of its Stage 3 hushkit for Learjet 20-series business jets, powered by General Electric CJ610 turbojets. Marketed by Ottendorf Aviation, the "double-daisy" hushkit reduces sideline noise by more than 8dB, to around 95dB.

#### ■ WINGLETS PROGRESS

Seattle, Washington-based Aviation Partners has so far sold 55 blended-winglet performance-enhancement kits for the Gulfstream II and plans to retrofit the remainder of the GII fleet over the next two years. The \$457,000 modification increases range by 7%.