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Part I: Special Focus: F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013

Introduction



F-AIR COLOMBIA is an international event of the Aerospace and Defence industry that takes place on a bi-annual basis in the Republic of Colombia, specifically at the Jose Maria Cordova International Airport, in Rionegro (Antioquia).

This year, the sixth version of the event, namely F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013, opened its doors on July 11, 2013 and was organised by the Colombian Civil Aviation Authority, the Colombian Air Force and CORFERIAS - the International Business and Exhibition Centre of Bogota.

The exhibition can be fairly characterised as a success. 208 companies exhibit from 25 different countries (Israel, Brazil, United Kingdom, U.S.A., Colombia, Netherlands, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Chile, Spain, Russia, Czech Republic, Canada, France, Venezuela, Germany, Argentina, Republic Of Korea, Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Uruguay). Additionally, 54,063 people attended the event; 3,000 were visitors from the commercial sector, 6,425 were from the defence sector and 3,425 from the academia.

During the event 472 Business meetings were carried-out and 46 strategic alliances were formed. Finally, it is worth mentioning that 109 aircraft were on display during the exhibition.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	ACTUAL
EXHIBITORS	COMPANIES	181	208
	INFORMATION KIOSKS	27	
	BRANDS REPRESENTED	220	220
AIRCRAFT	CIVIL AIRCRAFT	22	109
	MILITARY AIRCRAFT	35	
	GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT	15	
	AEROBATICS AIRCRAFT	37	
AIR SHOWS	NO. OF AIR SHOWS		27
GENERAL PUBLIC ATTENDEES	NO. OF ATTENDEES		54,063
COMMUNICATION MEDIA	NATIONAL	213	233
	INTERNATIONAL	20	
FREE-PRESS PUBLICATIONS	NATIONAL	343	443
	INTERNATIONAL	100	
	PRINTED (NATIONAL)	6	6
TRADE/INDUSTRY VISITORS	NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL		3,000
DEFENCE SECTOR VISITORS	NO. OF ATTENDEES		6,425
ACADEMIC SECTOR VISITORS	NO. OF ATTENDEES		3,425

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	ACTUAL
PUBLIC ENTITIES	NO. OF ATTENDEES		428
CONFERENCES - SEMINARS	NO. OF CONFERENCES - SEMINARS		36
PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	ISRAEL, BRAZIL, UNITED KINGDOM, U.S.A., COLOMBIA, NETHERLANDS, MEXICO, PERU, ECUADOR, PANAMA, CHILE, SPAIN, RUSSIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, CANADA, FRANCE, VENEZUELA, GERMANY, ARGENTINA, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, EL SALVADOR, URUGUAY.		25
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS (UNITED KINGDOM, U.S.A., COLOMBIA, NETHERLANDS, MEXICO, PERU, ECUADOR AND PANAMA).		31
	EXHIBITORS CONNECTED		46
	BUSINESS MEETINGS CARRIED-OUT		472

F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013: A Successful Exhibition



With a majestic air show accompanied by the roar of the aircraft and the impressive air acrobatics of the Colombian Air Force, the sixth version of F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013 opened its doors on July 11, 2013 at the Jose Maria Cordova International Airport, in Rionegro (Antioquia). The opening ceremony included the presence of the General Commander of the Armed Forces, General Alejandro Navas Ramos, the Armed Forces Commanders, the Director of the Civil Aviation Authority, Santiago Castro and other representatives and exhibitors, as well as international special guests, including twelve Air Force Commanders from the Americas and military, naval and air attaches.



The exhibition took place from the 11th to the 14th of July, 2013. F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013 promoted the development of the Aeronautics Industry through the commercial exchange of goods and services in the civil and defence aviation industry and the defence and military sector, as far as technical maintenance, airport equipment and aerospace technologies, airport safety and support services, infrastructure, surveillance and navigation systems.

This international event provided a window for the country to the world, as important advances in science and technology, as well as the Colombian Air Force's special projects were showcased. One such was the T-90 Calima, the first aircraft manufactured in the country using local workforce, namely a training aircraft in which future Air Force officers can be trained under the support of the Air Force Academy "Escuela Marco Fidel Suárez", located in the department of Valle del Cauca.

Furthermore, the event allowed people that work in the aeronautical field to meet and network with each other, creating business opportunities in favour of the national and regional industry. Visitors enjoyed the air show demonstrations on display, carried-out by national and international crews and with a wide variety of aircraft.

F-AIR COLOMBIA has developed significantly since its 1st ever edition and it can be fairly stated that is currently one of most important defence exhibitions of the continent. This year more than 200 companies participated in the event, originating from 25 countries from around the world.

F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013: The "CCE Space Day"

The Colombian Air Force (COLAF), as the Executive Secretary of the Colombian Space Commission, invited various satellite manufacturers to attend the F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013 and exhibit their products and capabilities.

In addition, as part of the sixth version of the International Air Show, F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013, an initiative titled "CCE Space Day" was organised for the first time. This consisted in a visit by a delegation of the Technical Committee of the Colombian Earth Observation Satellite project - SOTCol, to the stands of prominent space companies which accepted this invitation, such as Astrium (France), Deimos (Spain), IAI Space Division (Israel), ITP-SENER (Spain), Lockheed Space Systems (USA), Surrey Satellites Technology (UK), Sequoia Space (Republic of Colombia) and Thales Alenia Space (France).

As a result, the F-AIR COLOMBIA's positioning and recognisability in the aerospace industry, is now indisputable. With the presence of the eight (8) satellite manufacturers and the "CCE Space Day" initiative, this sixth version of the International Air Show, F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013, took a big step in transforming this event into a world famous aeronautics and space event.

F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013: The outcome

The sixth version of F-AIR COLOMBIA was successfully concluded, with a spectacular air show carried-out by the F-18 aircraft of the Royal Canadian Air Force, along with the Arpia helicopter aerobatic team of the Colombian Air Force (COLAF) and the presence of 45,000 visitors, at the Jose Maria Cordova

International Airport in Rio Negro (Antioquia). During the fair approximately 60 million USD in terms of business deals were negotiated. This highly positive outcome resulting from the activities of the event places the Colombian Air Force and the Republic of Colombia in a prominent position in the aviation industry of the continent.

Some of the main attractions the aviation enthusiasts enjoyed during this important event included insight into technological advances in the aeronautical industry and the capabilities of the Colombian Air Force, as well as the country's aviation industry, such as the production of the T-90 Calima training aircraft.

The sixth version of the International Air Show, F-AIR Colombia 2013, successfully highlighted the professionalism and the advanced training capabilities of the Colombian Air Force, reflected in each of the aerial demonstrations, as well as the capabilities of the nation as a whole as far as innovation and technological projects development in the aerospace domain.

The Colombian Air Force, through such events, aims to continue to strengthen relationships with the Air Forces of the American continent, remaining at the forefront of new challenges in the aerospace industry.

Conclusion

F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013 was the most successful edition of the 6 versions carried-out so far, in terms of both the number of participating countries (25) and that of the attending organisations from across the globe (200). In addition, the event achieved one of the highest ever attendances on behalf of the general public (approximately 54000 visitors). Business deals of the order of 60 Million USD were negotiated during the event and dedicated initiatives were carried-out in the direction of giving it a stronger 'space' character. As a result, F-AIR COLOMBIA has established itself as one of the most prominent aerospace and defence events of the continent and a highly recognised exhibition in the related industry worldwide.



Apart from the section focused on F-AIR COLOMBIA 2013 the EPICOS' newsletter also provides a section with top international news provided by worldwide acknowledged news' providers. Through this section EPICOS announces the latest industrial developments for a large variety of high technology industries in the form of articles, videos, press releases, electronic newspapers etc.

American, US Airways to drop airport slots for merger

American Airlines and US Airways on Tuesday agreed to give up valuable airport slots to low-cost airlines to proceed with their merger, settling an antitrust lawsuit with the Justice Department.

The Justice Department cleared the merger, which would create the world's largest airline, after the two agreed to give up slots and other rights at seven key airports.

American's parent, AMR Corp., and US Airways will divest the slots and gates to "low-cost" airlines "in order to enhance system-wide competition in the airline industry resulting in more choices and more competitive airfares for consumers," the department said in a statement.

The two airlines will have to cede a significant number of takeoff and landing slots at two of the busiest airports on the East Coast -- New York's La Guardia and Washington's Reagan National.

They will also give up gate and other rights at Boston's Logan International, Chicago's O'Hare, Dallas Love Field, Los Angeles International, and Miami International, as well as at La Guardia and Reagan National.

"This agreement has the potential to shift the landscape of the airline industry," Attorney General Eric Holder said in the statement.

"By guaranteeing a bigger foothold for low-cost carriers at key US airports, this settlement ensures airline passengers will see more competition on nonstop and connecting routes throughout the country," he said.

The proposed agreement was joined by six states and Washington DC, which also sought to block the merger on antitrust grounds. The deal still requires court approval.

AMR Corp. and US Airways welcomed the removal of the last major barrier to the \$11 billion merger announced last February.

"This is an important day for our customers, our people and our financial stakeholders. This agreement allows us to take the final steps in creating the new American Airlines," said Tom

Horton, chairman, president and chief executive of AMR, and incoming chairman of the combined company.

Doug Parker, chairman and CEO of US Airways, and incoming CEO of the combined airline, said: "We are pleased to have this lawsuit behind us and look forward to building the new American Airlines together."

Despite the divestitures, the companies said, the new American is still expected to generate more than \$1 billion in annual net synergies beginning in 2015, as was estimated in February.

US Airways shares were down 1.6 percent after the announcement, while AMR shares, traded over the counter as the company emerges from bankruptcy reorganization, gained 18.3 percent.

American won approval from the bankruptcy court in September to go ahead with the merger.

Source: 2013 AFP, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Low-cost airline Flybe to cut 500 jobs

Struggling low-cost British airline Flybe said Monday it plans to axe another 500 jobs as it pursues a round of cost-cutting measures.

The job losses are expected to save the airline £26 million (\$41.5 million, 31 million euros) per year from next year, on top of previous initiatives to save £40 million this year and £45 million in 2014-15.

The carrier's new chief executive, Saad Hammad, has also pledged to review unprofitable routes and bases and improve the way aircraft and crew are deployed.

The company said: "This will require tough decisions to be taken over the coming months and, regrettably, this proposal may result in the loss of around 500 jobs spread across the business."

Flybe said the exact nature of the job losses was still being determined, but consultation with unions and staff associations will start shortly.

The carrier, which acts as an alternative to train travel on many British inter-city routes, currently employs around 2,700 people, with some 650 staff having already left since last January.

The British Airline Pilots' Association said it was shocked by the announcement.

Its general secretary Jim McAuslan said: "Pilots are working with Flybe to secure the future of the airline, which is vital to connecting the country and driving growth and prosperity outside of London."

The airline's half-year results today showed its passenger numbers increased by 5.6 percent to 4.3 million, while it returned to profit with a surplus of £13.8 million.

Hammad, who joined Flybe in August, said: "It was clear to me that the existing phase one and two cost savings were necessary, but we simply needed to do more and to do it immediately.

"The business needed action now and so today we are explaining our next phase which encompasses a review of everything we do and how we do it."

Source: 2013 AFP, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Lufthansa reports passenger numbers up in October

Lufthansa, Germany's number one airline, said on Tuesday that its passenger numbers were higher in October, as demand increased across all regions.

Lufthansa said in a statement it carried 9.671 million passengers in October, 2.4 percent more than during the same month last year.

At the same time, capacity increased by 1.8 percent so that the so-called seat-load factor, which measures the number of seats filled on flights, increased by 1.6 percentage points to 80.5 percent, the statement said.

Lufthansa -- which also owns Austrian Airlines and SWISS -- said the number of passengers on Lufthansa-only flights rose by 3.0 percent to 7.127 million last month.

Austrian Airlines passengers edged up by 0.9 percent to 1.038 million and the number of passengers flying with SWISS crept up 0.5 percent at 1.507 million.

"The airlines reported improvements in all regions. European traffic saw the steepest rise," Lufthansa said.

The volume of freight transported by its Lufthansa Cargo unit increased by 0.7 percent to 150,000 tonnes last month, the statement added.

Source: 2013 AFP, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Singapore Airlines Q2 net profit up 78 percent

Singapore Airlines (SIA) said Tuesday its net profit in the second quarter rose 78 percent year-on-year but warned that intense competition and a strong local dollar will put pressure on yields.

Net profit for the three months ended September was Sg\$160 million (\$128 million) on revenue of Sg\$3.90 billion, the airline said in a statement.

It said the rise was "mainly attributable to the higher operating profit, share of profits from associated companies and gains from the sale of aircraft".

However it cautioned that "the operating landscape for the airline industry remains challenging amid continued global economic uncertainty".

While advance bookings for the coming months are likely to be higher than the year before, "ongoing promotional activities necessitated by intense competition and a strong Singapore dollar are expected to place pressure on yields," SIA added.

Its cargo arm SIA Cargo reported a narrower operating loss of Sg\$31 million from Sg\$50 million in the same period last year, but said the freight business remains subdued.

"Cargo demand is expected to remain flat due to weak international trade volumes and excess capacity in the market," SIA said.

SIA is facing stiff competition from Middle Eastern and other Asian carriers as well as from budget airlines which have grown in number in Asia.

The airline reported a net profit in the year ending March of Sg\$379 million, up 12.8 percent, boosted by the sale of aircraft, spares and spare engines.

Source: 2013 AFP, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

US clears American, US Airways merger with conditions

The US government on Tuesday cleared the proposed merger between American Airlines and US Airways after they agreed to give up slots and gates at seven key airports.

American's parent, AMR Corp. and US Airways will divest the slots and gates to "low-cost" airlines "in order to enhance system-wide competition in the airline industry resulting in more choices and more competitive airfares for consumers," the Justice Department said in a statement.

The two will have to give up rights at Boston's Logan International, Chicago's O'Hare, Dallas Love Field, Los Angeles International, Miami International, New York's LaGuardia and Reagan National in Washington.

"This agreement has the potential to shift the landscape of the airline industry," Attorney General Eric Holder said in the statement.

"By guaranteeing a bigger foothold for low-cost carriers at key US airports, this settlement ensures airline passengers will see more competition on nonstop and connecting routes throughout the country," he said.

The agreement would settle an August antitrust lawsuit against the merger brought by the Justice Department, six states and Washington, the District of Columbia. It requires court approval.

Source: 2013 AFP, Agence France-Presse (AFP)