

19th December 2008 Shoreham Airport

Capital's new Blackhawk set to prey on VLJs..!

Exeter based Capital Air Charter has taken delivery of the first ever commercially registered Blackhawk B200 aircraft in Europe.

This 9 seater executive aircraft, a heavily modified version of the popular Beechcraft King Air B200 twin turboprop, is faster, more fuel efficient, and has a longer range and shorter take-off and landing capacity than ever before.



Capital's new Blackhawk on the tarmac at Shoreham Airport

The King Air B200 has always been able to carry more people at lower cost on typical European routes than comparative executive jets, but because of its relatively low cruising speeds, some pundits had predicted it losing out as a result of the advent of new VLJ (Very Light Jets), cheap twin jets promising to carry 3-5 passengers around Europe at high speed and low cost.



Jim Allmon, President and CEO of Blackhawk Modifications (L), hands over the new Blackhawk Aircraft to Malcolm Humphries, MD, and Chief Pilot of Capital Air Charter

The new Blackhawk aircraft, with updated Pratt & Whitney turboprop engines, BLR winglets, Raisbeck streamlining modifications and Frakes exhausts, climbs more quickly to cruising altitude, and once there cruises at speeds of well over 300 knots. This means that as well as providing more seats, space, comfort and baggage carrying capacity than comparative aircraft, flight times now compete directly with VLJs and other more traditional executive jets such as for example the Cessna Citation series.

The new aircraft is already well proven in the US and is incredibly popular with owners and charter operators there. Like one or two canny private owners in mainland Europe who have had the upgrades, Capital's aircraft has had the Blackhawk modifications carried out by MCA Aviation at Shoreham Airport, under the watchful eye of Dave Marsh, Principal Surveyor of the Civil Aviation Authority in order to ensure full compliance and this will be the first on the European Commercial Register.

Malcolm Humphries, MD and Chief Pilot of Capital Aviation, said “We are very proud to be the first commercial operator in Europe with this fabulous new aeroplane. The King Air has always been a great aircraft, the Blackhawk is now the perfect European executive transport.”

Although this is the first aircraft of its type available for charter in Europe, performance projections are excellent. For example, a trip from Exeter to Cannes would have taken 2 hours 50 minutes in the King Air B200; the new Blackhawk will get up to 8 passengers there in just 2 hours 15 minutes, with no difference in price!

Jim Allmon, President and CEO of Blackhawk Modifications Inc, commented “The backbone of Blackhawk’s success is a solid understanding of what aircraft operators need. We are delighted that a company with the pedigree of Capital Air Charter has seen the clear benefits of this development in engine technology; and are helping us continue to arouse excitement in the turboprop fleet worldwide.”

In these difficult financial times, when many companies are looking carefully at their European travel budgets, and wondering how they are going to persuade their shareholders that the gleaming executive jet on order or sitting in the hangar is justified, Capital Air Charter’s new Blackhawk looks like a lot of common sense!

Press Contact: Andrew Humphries: 07515 394223 andrew@strength5.co.uk

About Capital Air Charter

Capital Air Charter has been operating for over 19 years, and is now one of the largest private air charter companies in the country. Based at Exeter Airport, the company employ over 30 pilots and ground crew, with 9 aircraft based at various locations in the UK. Operations encompass European private air charter, emergency medical transfers and urgent freight operations. www.capitalaviation.co.uk

About MCA Aviation

MCA Aviation based at Shoreham Airport has been maintaining business and corporate aircraft for over 25 years. Already certified by Hawker Beechcraft, Raisbeck and Pratt & Whitney, MCA have been appointed European Distributor and Installation Centre for Blackhawk Modifications Inc. www.mcaaviation.com



Joe Frakes, Frakes Exhausts; Jim Allmon, Blackhawk Modifications Inc; Malcolm and Lisa Humphries, Capital Air Charter; and Malcolm Craft, MCA Aviation, welcome Capital's new Blackhawk aircraft to Shoreham Airport.

About Blackhawk Modifications Inc

Blackhawk Modifications is the leading turboprop aircraft engine upgrade company in the world, specializing in King Air series aircraft as well as Conquest 1 and Cheyenne series. Headquartered in Waco, Texas, Blackhawk has now equipped over 200 turboprop aircraft with the Pratt & Whitney XP engine upgrade since 2000 and continues to certify new engine upgrades and value adding enhancements designed to increase the usefulness and safety of the turboprop fleet. www.blackhawk.aero