OWNER & PILOT
Advantage
A Magazine for Owners and Pilots from Skytech, inc. Publications

TWENTY YEARS of the PILATUS PC-12

IN THIS ISSUE:

A SLOW BUT STEADY CLIMB

The PC-12 is celebrating 20 years of production. For many people new to aviation, it has always been a proven winner. Best selling turboprop for several years! Highest customer service ranking for the past 12 years! Flying Magazine calling it "The One to Beat" in its class. However, it has not always been that way.

As a Beech dealer in the early 90's, I too stood at the trade shows and scoffed at the big gray turboprop from another country. It only had one engine! Beech had looked at a single engine turboprop in the early 80's and dismissed it as too expensive with no market. Everyone knew you needed two engines to be safe. Those early years were very challenging for both Pilatus and their dealers. But in typical Swiss fashion, they persevered, and made a slow but steady climb.

There are many reasons for the success of the PC-12, but two come immediately to mind. First, Pilatus engineered the finest airplane they could; using the best components and parts, and didn't cut any corners. Next, they handpicked some very credible launch customers; listened intently to their feedback, and quickly made changes when necessary. Their habit of listening to the owners has not changed for the entire production run. The product is under continual improvement, and it shows. The rest is now history, and soon to be repeated with the highly anticipated PC-24 jet.

If you would like more information on the PC-12, or any of the Pilatus products, please give us a call.

Skytech, Inc., publisher of this magazine is an aircraft sales and service company with FBOs in Westminster, MD (DMW), Rock Hill, SC (UZA – Charlotte Metro Area) and Administrative Headquarters in Baltimore, MD (MTN).

Your thoughts, suggestions, comments and criticism are important to us and we will always welcome reader feedback.

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NOT YOUR GRANDFATHER'S MARKETPLACE

We often get asked, "When should I put my airplane on the market? I want to wait until the market goes up." Yes- we often get asked that. At this time, it is customary to issue a prediction for the coming year. It seems there are lots of hopeful forecasts out there. So, we'll join in too. But, before we do let us say, "This is not your grandfather's marketplace!" Airplanes that should have been retired years ago somehow keep going. At the other end of the spectrum, prices for many new-looking, late-model airplanes continue to be slashed. The reasons are much more complex than just saying 'We've gone global.'

How can I tell if my airplane has upside potential? By upside potential, we mean your airplane could very well increase significantly in value at some time in the future. Here's the checklist. Give yourself one strike for each item that fits your airplane. If you have two strikes – some say just one – it is unlikely your airplane will appreciate in value enough to recoup your operating or holding costs.

- Built before 1990, and out of production, Manufacturer is out of business, or non-supportive
- Avionics cannot be updated for intended mission
- Too much deferred maintenance
- Major damage history

A similar checklist can be devised for airplanes with some upward potential. If the answer is yes to two or more, there is a real possibility you will eventually see enough appreciation for some bragging rights. The question is, when?

- Built after 1990, and
- Reasonable amount of time on airframe and engine(s)
- Well maintained
- Recent paint and interior
- Updated panel suitable for intended mission
- Still in production with support from the manufacturer

OUR SO-CALLED FORECAST

We continue to be very optimistic about the future of General Aviation. However, a pronounced turnaround does not appear to be imminent. This is due to a plentiful supply of airplanes and helicopters of nearly all ages. This is exacerbated currently by a limited supply of enthusiastic buyers. We do see some promising areas. Demand for trainers, like the Cessna 172 and 182, is strong and that is reflected in their pricing. At the top, buyers who want a ready-to-go Gulfstream 550 or 650 have been willing to pay more than the previous buyer. It is also possible we have seen some strengthening in early model King Air B200s and Pilatus PC12s. We are not ready to say they've stabilized. That is what 2014 should be, a year of stabilization. And, when looking back over the price history graphs at VrefOnline.com, stability is a very good thing. ■

Summarized from Vref's Market Leader. Available in full format at www.vrefonline.com

BATTERY REHAB

HOW MAINTENANCE CHARGING CAN EXTEND BATTERY LIFE

BY JONATHAN SISK

Aviation batteries are altogether different from their automotive and industrial counterparts, mostly because of weight considerations. To get the required power for engine starts and emergency backup in the smallest, lightest possible package, they are designed with thinner lead plates and a more concentrated electrolyte (higher specific gravity). As a result, the charging voltage for aviation batteries is different, so they can be damaged by general-purpose chargers.

Oh, and did I mention that they are expensive? The market size for aircraft batteries is relatively small so little economy of scale. On top of that, add the additional costs for certification, regulation, and product liability. So it is not hard to make a case for taking reasonable steps to preserve your battery's performance and extend its life… not just for safety, but to lower costs.

Premature battery failure has a lot more to do with your aircraft sitting, than flying. Since all batteries gradually self-discharge as soon as their charging voltage is removed, that time in the hangar is tough on batteries. As the battery discharges, sulfate precipitates out of the electrolyte to crystalize on the lead plates. This sulfation is a natural wear process, but as it grows it impedes the electro-chemical reactions required for charge/discharge cycles, and reduces the battery's current capacity.

During periodic inspections, your battery must test to 85% of its rated capacity to remain airworthy. In piston aircraft, battery replacement is many hundreds of dollars. In the turbine world, it is thousands. And for turbine engines, lost battery capacity also means slower and hotter starts. So extending or even doubling your battery life can save a lot of money and limit component wear and tear.

The obvious answer to maximizing battery performance and extending service life is full-time maintenance charging. The proper aviation charger costs less than $200 and will quickly pay for itself. Its operation is completely automatic. So whenever your aircraft is in hangar storage, this low amperage charger is maintaining the battery fully charged and actually dissolving damaging sulfates back into the electrolyte solution to restore and preserve capacity.

Your Skytech service coordinator can provide details and arrange for installation of a quick connect charger harness for your aircraft. ■

To find out more about extending battery life and maintenance charging, scan this QR code or visit the following URL to watch this brief tutorial:

http://www.brainshark.com/audioauthority/BatteryLife

Jonathan Sisk is CEO of Audio Authority Corp, an electronics manufacturer in Lexington, KY. His company manufacturers Ground Power Units (GPU) and has partnered with Skytech's Rock Hill staff to design maintenance charger harness installations for both Piper and Pilatus aircraft.

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Your opinions, suggestions and ideas for new articles and content are important for continuing improvement and growth that will serve all our readers.

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Thank you!

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20 TWENTY YEARS *of the* PILATUS PC-12

The year was 1994. U.S. President Bill Clinton delivered his first State of the Union Address, the Winter Olympics took place in Lillehammer, Norway, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as South Africa's President, OJ Simpson fled from police in a white Ford Bronco, The Lion King was released by Walt Disney, Major League Baseball went on strike…..and a new airplane called the Pilatus PC-12 received it's certification. It seems like yesterday and yet so much has happened in the past 20 years.

In 1994, the General Aviation landscape was much different than today. Single-engine turboprop aircraft were an uncommon site at airports around the country, with the exception of FedEx's Cessna Caravan fleet. Many were skeptical of their worth and questioned just where they would fit into a world so dominated by twin-engine designs. Operating a single-engine turboprop IFR in part 135 operations required that the route of flight allow for descent into VFR conditions should an engine failure occur. To say the deck was stacked against the PC-12's success would have been an accurate statement.

Thankfully, those hurdles didn't faze Pilatus, who years prior developed the concept for a totally new aircraft – one that would combine a level of performance, size and operating efficiency into a package never seen before, and be designed to the latest FAR 23 regulatory standards. An aircraft that can tackle multiple missions, with incredible runway performance, is as environmentally friendly as possible, and has a cargo door with separate passenger cabin access. Understandably, a single-engine design would burn less fuel and leave less of an audible footprint on airports and their surrounding communities. Pilatus was well versed in single-engine turboprop aircraft…only their forte prior to the PC-12 was military. Airplanes such as the PC-6 Porter or the PC-7 and PC-9 trainers were all very well respected leaders in their markets. The PC-12 was the first aircraft from Pilatus designed with General Aviation squarely in mind, and as such, pressurization and executive cabin appointments were added to the list of necessary features. A proof of concept prototype was approved in 1990. On May 31, 1991, the first PC-12 (HB-FOA) took to the air for the very first time. After more than 600 hours of flight testing, the PC-12 received its Swiss certification on March 30, 1994, and the U.S. certification followed on July 15th.

1994

- PC-12 is certified
- Early models serialized with upgraded generator wiring, anti-ice system and Engine Instrument System (EIS)

1996

- Optional gross takeoff weight increased from 9,040 lbs to 9,920 lbs

1997

- New pilot & co-pilot seat (Series 4)

1998

- Gross takeoff weight becomes standard equipment (S/N 181)
- Small winglets
- New heated windshield (Standard equipment S/N 401 and on)

1999

- New auto-start with relay installation (disconnects after 52% NG)

FILLING OUT THE GLOBE

One look around today's aviation landscape tells you that the design promised by Pilatus 20 years ago has not only lived up to its expectations, but in many ways far exceeded them. Listing all the applications PC-12's are used in reads like a virtual directory of aviation itself. From business to personal, airline to charter, or cargo to military – there's not much a PC-12 isn't doing today. It's a testament not only to the precise design and exacting factory standards set forth by Pilatus, but also the superb support network established to maintain the PC-12 in all reaches of the globe. A support network that in 2013 received its 12th consecutive top ranking in the ProPilot industry survey. And what do buyers today list as the most influential features that attracted them to the aircraft? Well, that would be exactly those same attributes promised to the public all those years ago: a large comfortable cabin, operating economy, range/payload and mission versatility.

One aspect that shouldn't be overlooked in the success of the PC-12 was Pilatus's willingness to subject the aircraft early on to extreme usage across the globe with various launch customers. These operators allowed Pilatus to fine tune the PC-12 while operating in real-world conditions that can't be duplicated in a factory. From the Royal Flying Doctors in Australia who regularly operate out of remote unpaved landing strips in excessive heat, to the Canadian Mounties who operate in equally as remote areas in bitterly cold and snowy conditions- the PC-12 proved to be fit for duty.

"THE DESIGN PROMISED BY PILATUS 20 YEARS AGO HAS NOT ONLY LIVED UP TO ITS EXPECTATIONS, BUT IN MANY WAYS FAR EXCEEDED THEM."

As a fleet, the PC-12 has now amassed over 4 million flight hours, with several aircraft surpassing the 20,000 hour mark and counting. The largest operating country of the airplane has been and continues to be North America followed by Europe, Australia and Africa.

General Aviation as a whole has come a long way since 1994. The number of new single-engine turboprop deliveries today far overshadows those of twin-engine designs. Even the hours flown by the respective fleets are converging. It won't be long before single-engine aircraft surpasses twins in most measurable categories – or at least the favorable ones – and the PC-12 is playing a large part in that role.

THE NEXT 20 YEARS

Since 1994, Pilatus has taken a proactive approach to improving the PC-12 – both for current owners as well as new models such as the latest and greatest PC-12 NG. A timeline depicting many of these improvements can be seen below. However, it's worth noting that many small improvements take place all the time that go largely unnoticed by the untrained eye, but none-the-less contribute to the ongoing advancement of the product. This is a trend that is sure to continue.

2014 marks more than just the 20th anniversary of the PC-12, it also marks the 75th anniversary of Pilatus Aircraft Ltd., and the year in which the company's next revolutionary aircraft will be first rolled through the factory doors. The PC-24 Super Versatile Jet follows in the same footsteps as the PC-12, promising to deliver a cutting edge aircraft, with incredible performance, precision design and many of the same features that made the Pilatus name famous. As a company, Pilatus is running at full speed with not only their General Aviation product line, but also enjoying fantastic success in the military training market. Financially secure and independently controlled, Pilatus is committed to the future programs and continued growth of the PC-12. So what will the aviation landscape look like as we move through the next 20 years? Who knows for sure, but it's safe to say that what once was a hidden gem in the Alps to much of the aviation world will have a large part to play. ■

2000	2001	2003	2004	2005
• Optional second Pitot/ Static System provides pilot & co-pilot with totally independent systems (Became standard with Series 10, S/N 401 & on)	• New overhead panel (S/N 321, 401 and on) • New Engine Instrument System (EIS) that includes Engine Condition Monitoring	 • Goodrich steel brakes replace Goodrich carbon brakes (S/N 476 and on)	• Engine Accessory gearbox chip detector (S/N 540 and on)	• New cabin LED lights

The View from the Left Seat of the World's Oldest Pilatus PC-12 Dealer

Rob Sammartino
Pilatus Sales - South
20+ years at Skytech

For the past 20 years I have had the pleasure to have my aviation wagon hitched to the same two horses – Skytech and Pilatus. And what a ride it has been. Although separated by an ocean, a language, and six time zones, the two companies share a strikingly similar approach to business. Both have been guided by the same stable hands for the past 20 years, and both companies are privately held - allowing them to plan around the long product cycles of the aviation industry. Most importantly, both are run by aviation enthusiasts whose primary goal is to produce product and provide service they would be proud to offer to their own family and friends.

And while similar, both companies have evolved in many ways over the past 20 years. In 1994, Skytech operated one sales and service location with less than 45 employees. Our sales office contained an arsenal of spiral notebooks, landlines and FedEx packages. We made daily trips to the photo store to pick up pictures that were later stapled to specification sheets for overnight service. And specifying new PC-12s was easy – because there was one paint scheme and one color combination available. It was a Dallas Cowboy fan's dream – silver, blue and white. We trained in the aircraft because there was no simulator, and Pilatus US was staffed by 4 individuals with head-quarters in Vero Beach, FL – and parts distribution handled out of Skytech's facility at Martin State Airport in Baltimore. Our primary competitors were Beechcraft and Cessna – although they would not admit it at the time….

Meanwhile, our business partners in Switzerland were busy explaining why they chose to build such a big machine with only one engine, and why their aircraft had a (red) cross on the tail…..

….Enter 2014 and I am making preparations to pick up SN 1471 from Pilatus' US headquarters outside Denver, Colorado with a return flight to Skytech's second full service location in Rock Hill, SC. By my count this is the 1259th PC-12 produced by Pilatus and will have been prepped by 70 diligent employees whose quality standards are among the highest in the industry. This new PC-12 NG will contain more computing power than was found in Skytech's single location in 1994, and was specified using an i-pad to sort through the 6 BMW designworks interior selections and 10 BMW paint schemes – with unlimited color choices.

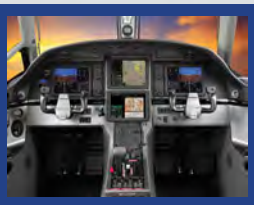
This trip will represent the 77th new PC-12 delivery for Skytech and each one has its own special place in our memory banks. While each delivery represents the end of a process for manufacturing, it more importantly marks the beginning of a new relationship - and opportunity to prove our strong commitment to customer support.

So yes, we are spoiled by the improvements made to the PC-12 over the past 20 years- and the expansion of the worldwide dealer support system . We marvel at the focus required to make a great aircraft continually better, and the restraint it takes Pilatus to react appropriately to market shifts. We have watched our competitors come (and mostly) go. We have seen two recessions, a real estate boom/bust and tech bubble /burst. Through it all, two things remain constant for Pilatus and Skytech – a passion for aviation and a commitment to our customers. And that has made the difference. ▪

2006

- Series 10A (PC-12/47) in production

2008

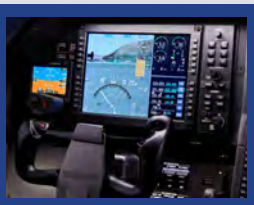


- Series 10E (PC-12/47E) in production (S/N 1001 & on)
- Honeywell Primus Apex
- Higher thermodynamic rated engine delivering 15% more power (1,845 ESHP max takeoff & 1,745 ESHP climb/cruise)

2010

- Curser Controller Device (CCD) is for quick & precise operation of the avionics in turbulent conditions

2012



- SmartView Synthetic Vision System Introduced

2014

- Connected Flight Deck Enables wireless downloads via iPad

Dave Conover
Pilatus Sales - North
30+ years at Skytech

As we reflect on the 20th anniversary of the Pilatus PC-12 and the 75th anniversary of Pilatus, I think back to March of 1994 when we embarked on our first factory visit to the Pilatus factory to tour the production facility and execute the distributer agreement for sales and service in the eastern US. Being familiar with the other single engine turboprops on the market at that time, and having done extensive research on this new "Swiss product", we approached the visit with great expectations along with a myriad of questions. Not the least of which – "is it really that big", "can it really do all that","is it easy to fly" and "will the company cultures of Pilatus and Skytech interface well"?

Our first impression of the Pilatus facility was that it was a compact campus located in the middle of one the most picturesque locations in the world. As we entered the facility, it was immediately clear that Pilatus was very different. The facility was immaculate, very well organized and the combination of Swiss engineers interfacing with very high tech tooling was resulting in precision manufacturing. Additionally, while touring the factory and seeing the various models of aircraft at different stages of production, you could feel the pride and commitment to quality at every stage of the process. At this point in time, Pilatus had already been building high quality aircraft, predominantly military trainers, for over 50 years. They had clearly established systems and procedures to build exceptional quality aircraft that they backed up with incredible product support.

The commitment Pilatus places on product support was quickly apparent when Pilatus and Skytech teamed up to create a North American parts and support operation. We based it out of our Martin State location to provide a supply of parts and consumables to keep the new PC-12 fleet flying and not waiting for parts to cross the ocean. Additionally, Pilatus again stepped up to support the early aircraft by sending a team of engineers from Pilatus to work along with Skytech to bring PC-12's from all over North America to our Martin State service center to "serialize" the initial block of aircraft up to current production levels – all at no cost to the owners. Since Skytech was originally founded as a service organization, these early actions by Pilatus confirmed every impression we had from that first visit. In fact, over the years as Pilatus has made incremental improvements and upgrades to the PC-12, they have provided a path for existing owners to upgrade their ships – whenever it is feasible.

Over the last 20 years and over 1260 deliveries throughout the world; Pilatus has repeatedly continued to focus on building an innovative, highly technical, versatile aircraft while providing a level of product support that is unparalleled. Additionally, Pilatus has provided training and insight to Skytech and the other dealers in the network to follow their 75 year tradition of providing their "Swiss Quality" support. This combination has enabled the PC-12 to maintain extremely high residual value and very high customer loyalty.

The current production PC-12NG represents the combination of Pilatus' ingenuity along with input from their customers to create the near perfect balance of performance and functionality. Through it all, Pilatus has always listened and remained nimble enough to react to customer needs while navigating a very challenging worldwide marketplace. In comparison to many other aircraft manufacturers, Pilatus is financially very stable and continues to invest in both their factory and product lines. Their most notable new endeavor is the new PC-24 "Super Versatile Jet" that will roll out this summer.

It is hard to believe that it has been 20 years since my first visit to Pilatus, and I am proud and honored to have been able to experience the evolution of the PC-12 as well as the partnership that Skytech and Pilatus share. It probably goes without saying that our early expectations we had on that first visit have been vastly exceeded and the answers to all of our initial questions have all been a resounding YES. I can't wait to look back after the next 20 years! ▪

Skytech representatives visit the Pilatus factory in Stans, Switzerland

Left to right: Rob Sammartino (Pilatus Sales South), John Foster (President), Mike Fitzgerald (Executive VP), Dave Conover (VP & Pilatus Sales North)

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1031 LIKE-KIND EXCHANGE

FAA Part 91 business aircraft can be depreciated over a 5 year life for federal income tax purposes, generating significant income tax savings to the taxpayer. When a depreciated aircraft is disposed of, however, a gain will likely be recognized as the fair market value of the aircraft exceeds the remaining tax basis of the aircraft. This gain (recapture of depreciation) is taxed as ordinary income at the highest income tax rate. In the unlikely event that your aircraft appreciates and exceeds the original purchase price, this portion of the gain will be taxed as capital gains.

Below is an example of the federal income taxation when a fully depreciated aircraft is disposed of:

Purchase Price	$1,000,000
Depreciation Expense	($1,000,000)
Net Tax Basis	0
Net Sale Price	$400,000
Taxable Gains - Ordinary Income	$400,000
Income Tax Due - 39.6% tax rate	$158,400

With a sale price of $400,000, the after-tax proceeds will be $241,600.

Section 1031 of the Internal Revenue Code allows a taxpayer to set up an exchange, so that the taxable gain on the disposition of an aircraft can be deferred when a replacement aircraft is replaced.

General rules:

- Replacement aircraft to be purchased within 180 days of the sale of the relinquished aircraft
- Replacement aircraft has to be identified within 45 days of the sale of the relinquished aircraft
- Sale proceeds from the relinquished aircraft cannot be accessed by the taxpayer
- Proper exchange agreement and notifications have to be prepared
- Only like-kind property can be purchased (Part 91 aircraft and Part 135 aircraft are not considered like-kind.)

The simplest form of a like-kind exchange is a trade-in, where you trade-in your current aircraft to a broker or dealer and receives a replacement aircraft. However, it is not very common in the business aviation community where a broker or dealer is able to accept your current aircraft as a trade-in. By properly structuring and executing a like-kind exchange, a taxpayer will be able to enjoy the deferral of the taxable gains on the sale of the relinquished property.

Below is the continuation of the above example and a replacement aircraft is acquired for $1,500,000:

Relinquished Aircraft Purchase Price	$1,000,000
Depreciation Expense	($1,000,000)
Net Tax Basis	0
Net Sale Price	$400,000
Deferred Taxable Gains - Ordinary Income	$400,000
Purchase of Replacement Aircraft	$1,500,000
Less Deferred Taxable Gains	($400,000)
Tax Basis of Replacement Aircraft	$1,100,000

The $400,000 from the sale of the relinquished aircraft is available towards the purchase of the replacement aircraft. Depreciable basis of the replacement aircraft is adjusted to $1,100,000, reduced by the deferred gains on the sale of the relinquished aircraft.

By structuring a like-kind exchange, the taxpayer defers the payment of $160,000 of federal income tax on the sale of the

continued on next page >>>>>

>>>>> continued from page 9

relinquished aircraft.

The rules become more complicated when the aircraft is encumbered, or when the replacement aircraft is purchased prior to the sale of the relinquished aircraft (a reverse like-kind exchange will be required.)

Another area of planning involving a like-kind exchange is state sales and use tax liability. A common misconception of a like-kind exchange is that it will allow a taxpayer to pay sales tax on a net trade-in value between the relinquished and replacement aircraft. However, most states will not allow a trade-in credit when the sale of the relinquished property and the purchase of the replacement property do not occur simultaneously, or when a third party is involved in a reverse like-kind exchange. Consulting an aviation tax specialist when navigating the 1031 landscape is a wise and prudent decision that can easily pay for itself. ■

Aviation Tax Consultants (ATC) assists aircraft purchaser in acquiring aircraft in a tax efficient manner. Our services include the elimination or reduction of sales tax at the time of purchase, maximizing income tax savings, controlling the cost of personal use of the aircraft, avoiding passive activity loss rules and complying with Federal Aviation Regulations. Cooperation with client's current tax and legal advisors is welcome and encouraged.

Daniel Cheung
CPA, Member

2014 BONUS DEPRECIATION UPDATE

The House Ways and Means Committee approved legislation (H.R. 4718) that will make permanent bonus depreciation for new aircraft on May 28, 2014. The full House will vote for the bill and it is expected to pass by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

The Senate Finance Committee debated the EXPIRE ACT (S. 2260) which will provide a 2-year extension of bonus depreciation for new aircraft. The full Senate failed to pass the bill due to procedural disagreements and objections from Senate Republicans.

As of press time, the Senate has not rescheduled a vote for the EXPIRE ACT. The major hurdle before final passage of bonus depreciation legislation will take place in conference of House and Senate representatives when the two versions of the bill will merge into a single bill.

There is no consensus as to whether bonus depreciation will be renewed and passed by Congress and enacted into law. Political insiders predict that a compromise bill can be passed before the Congressional August summer recess. ■

PILATUS

PC-24 UPDATE

SPRING / SUMMER 2014

As the PC-24 program marches towards certification, we'll detail the progress and key points of the aircraft in a new column dedicated to the all-new Super Versatile Jet from Pilatus. For our first edition, we start with commentary from Skytech's President: John Foster.

So now it is official. No, not that Skytech is the PC-24 Dealer from South Carolina to Pennsylvania, plus Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio. That was set in stone a while back. It is official that the highly successful Dealer Service and Sales model spawned by the PC-12 will be duplicated for the world's first Super Versatile Jet (SVJ).

Using a Dealer model to sell and service business jets is a bit unusual, but then Pilatus is not your typical aircraft OEM. And it starts with where the airplanes are built – what clean-sheet business model would propose to manufacture airplanes in the middle of the Alps? Pilatus turns geography into a basic attribute, in that you empirically know two things about a Pilatus product: it climbs like an ape and it lands on virtually any short, somewhat flat surface. That was well-proven with the PC-12 in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, and whether or not that short surface is actually an airport is helpful… but really not material. And very shortly that can be done with a heavy-hauling, long-range, cargo door-equipped jet.

But the Pilatus business model permeates much more than aircraft performance. Two decades ago Pilatus established a stocking Dealer relationship with a select group of independent businesses. Their common thread was their ability to support the new PC-12 product in a one-stop shop: airframe, turbine engines, avionics, autopilots, de-ice systems, propellers, you name it. These new Service Center / Dealers became so specialized and so adept that, when coupled with Pilatus' underlying technical and supply-chain expertise, the PC-12 has topped almost every customer support survey for over ten years. It's become clear that not only does the Pilatus model work, it has elevated the service component of the business to a new level. And we're poised to elevate it again.

The advent of the PC-24 allows us to redeploy that same unique and successful business model. Strategically placed maintenance facilities with soup-to-nuts support capabilities dot the United States. Eight Dealer–owned facilities are enhanced by 18 more Authorized Service Centers. That's more than double the number of, say, Citation Service Centers. It is also interesting that the Gulfstreams, Embraers, and Cessnas of the world spend a lot of marketing money to tell you all about their mobile support aircraft and personnel. The funny thing is Skytech implemented mobile support with dedicated aircraft 25 years ago; we just spent the money on the airplanes and equipment and not the advertising. I don't want to oversimplify it, but to some extent all we are going to do to support the new jet is put a different set of tools and parts in the Service airplanes. The 24 / 7 / 360 system itself has been in place for decades.

For several of our Service employees - who were part of the Beechcraft group in its heyday - this is Back-To-The-Future. Beech Dealers were once the backbone of the turbine and jet support system for their entire worldwide network. Some have made the argument that the entry of Beechcraft into bankruptcy actually started when Beech disposed of the Dealer & Service Center network. A more recent analysis of the dealer –versus-direct model led Honda to ink Dealer Sales and Service contracts for the new Hondajet.

And why not? Like our Swiss partner, Skytech is a small but resourceful, privately-held business. And, also like Pilatus, Skytech's total control of the customer experience allows us to be nimble, responsive and extremely customer-centric. There is a high probability we will know you on sight, or at worst our employees will know your employees. That happens when you have long-term employees like Skytech enjoys, and it makes it easy to tailor our services to your needs. Or your whims.

Dealer input – actually your input augmented with our experience as users of our own products – shows up all over the PC-24. As evidence of that we can now say that we have been under a binding Non-Disclosure Agreement since 2006. Coupling those inputs with the aforementioned business model is clearly reflected in the price. Ignoring for a moment the Cargo Door, the huge Heated and Pressurized storage space, the Short / Rough Field Performance, the built-in APU, etc., etc., what that means for you is that Swiss craftsmanship gets coupled with local support to yield a price at least 30% lower than any jet with a comparable cabin. In a word, that's called value. Like you just dug out your own unique Swiss Crystal from deep in the Alps. ▪

Skytech, inc.
Experience the Skytech Advantage
200 Airport Drive
Westminster, Maryland 21157

NOT JUST ANOTHER MANDATE

BY DAVE CONOVER

Beginning January 1st, 2020, the backbone of the FAA's NextGen ATC system will go online requiring all aircraft operating in U.S. controlled airspace to have an approved ADS-B transmitter installed. It is estimated that this latest mandate will affect over 165,000 aircraft. Once the ADS-B requirement takes effect, the current ATC Radar system will start to become obsolete and the ATC system will begin to shift to the ADS-B satellite derived aircraft location system.

ADS-B, which stands for Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast, provides much more precise data on an aircraft over traditional transponders. Unlike traditional ATC radar communicating with a transponder, ADS-B is independent of any outside interrogations and transmits in real-time, aircraft identification, position, altitude and velocity approximately every second. This detailed "picture" provides enhanced safety and efficiency for ATC to better separate aircraft and coordinate spacing in every facet of flight. Additionally, ADS-B functions in remote areas where ATC radar may not be unavailable. The ADS-B system is based on a network of ground based towers that are on track to be fully deployed by the end of 2014. Since the system is required on all aircraft, the same detailed position reporting is obtained on VFR or IFR aircraft. Thus, ATC is provided with a complete picture of all aircraft in the air whether they are talking to them or not!

The basic ADS-B requirement is for every aircraft to have an ADS-B "out" capability. The FAA has designed the system to also provide an ADS-B "in" feature. An equipped aircraft with ADS-B "in" will be able to see the same real-time picture of traffic as ATC and also be able to obtain FIS-B services which include; text weather, weather graphics, Notams, ATIS, etc. all transmitted for no charge.

The equipment required for ADS-B varies depending on the specific aircraft type and the airspace it will occupy. Basically you will need to have a WAAS GPS that connects to the ADS- B transmitter. Some transponders will be able to be retrofitted and some will not, so contacting your avionics shop to determine the best path to choose is essential. Also, if you are planning any type of GPS or panel upgrade in the near future, having the discussion about ADS-B is certainly worthwhile. Especially since the ground network is well on the way to becoming fully functional so you can start receiving some of the benefits now.

Since ADS-B is the backbone of the NexGen ATC system, and provides substantial safety benefits while improving the efficiency of our airspace, it appears highly unlikely that the deadline will change. With a large number of aircraft to be retrofitted, keeping this upgrade near the top of the list is probably the prudent thing to do. ▪