



AMPAIRE - FIRM ORDER FOR HYBRID-ELECTRIC ECO CARAVAN INNOVATIVE WINGTIPS PROGRAM BUILDING A NATIONWIDE FLEET

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer



Ampaire has secured a firm order backed by deposits for five of its low-emission, nine-seat Eco Caravan aircraft, plus an option for an additional 20. The buyer is WingTips, an innovative air mobility company operating today in California, Arizona, and Nevada. Both companies anticipate another 175 orders for the Eco Caravan as WingTips expands nationwide, plus 50 of Ampaire's follow-on 19-seat Eco Otter aircraft.

WingTips plans to use these new aircraft on regional routes of 100 to 400 statute miles, flying mainly from convenient general aviation airports. The company uses artificial intelligence to offer individual seats to on-demand charter passengers, and advanced floating fleet algorithms to optimize fleet usage. The company also plans to offer scheduled service on higher volume routes.

WingTips founder and CEO Mike Azzarello, commented: “The Eco Caravan will redefine operating cost through its extreme efficiency. Our objective is to close the gap with the cost of driving while cutting travel time up to 75 percent. Working with Ampaire, we’ll be able to achieve this in a sustainable way. The Eco-Caravan operates within existing airport infrastructure, putting us years ahead of competitors that need major infrastructure investment in order to operate.”

Ampaire CEO Kevin Noertker, said: “Ampaire and WingTips share a vision of reducing the cost and increasing the convenience of regional air travel while addressing a major source of harmful greenhouse gas emissions. The starting point for moving toward zero emissions is with low-emission hybrid-electric aircraft such as the Eco Caravan.”

The Eco Caravan is Ampaire’s first commercial product. It is a Cessna Grand Caravan upgraded with a hybrid-electric propulsion system that retains the range and payload characteristics of the current Grand Caravan. The Eco Caravan can carry up to eleven passengers or 2,500 pounds of cargo.

The aircraft uses 70 percent less fuel on short trips and 50 percent less on longer trips with corresponding emissions reductions. When using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), emissions reduction is nearly 100 percent. Total operating cost reduction ranges from 25 to 40 percent, depending on route structure. The aircraft can operate independently of ground charging infrastructure by recharging the batteries in-flight when desired, as with hybrid-electric cars today.

Ampaire conducted the first Eco Caravan engine runs with a preliminary drivetrain configuration in April 2022, with plans to fly the aircraft in the second half of the year. The company is working with the FAA to achieve supplemental type certificate approval in 2024.

WingTips intends to place the aircraft into service as quickly after certification as possible, according to Azzarello. “The Eco Caravan hits a sweet spot for our operation,” he said, “driving down costs, operating at any general aviation airport, and solving passenger problems on regional legs where driving has become congested and inconvenient.” WingTips has been refining its model in busy California and Southwest markets. Its most popular flights are less than 200 miles and about an hour’s duration from cities such as San Diego, Santa Barbara, Las Vegas, and Phoenix, avoiding the large commercial airports in those areas.

20 JULY 2022

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