INMARSAT TO ROLLOUT EUROPEAN AVIATION NETWORK (EAN) INFLIGHT WI-FI IN THE BUSINESS AVIATION MARKET

News / Business aviation

Award-winning solution developed with Deutsche Telekom will offer unprecedented connectivity to business jets, with commercial service expected by early 2019

Inmarsat (LON: ISAT), the world's leading provider of global mobile satellite communications, announced today that its European Aviation Network (EAN) inflight wifi solution will be available for the business aviation market by January 2019.

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EAN is the world's first inflight wifi solution that integrates connectivity from a satellite, operated by Inmarsat, and an LTE-based ground network, operated by Deutsche Telekom, covering all 28 member states of the European Union, as well as Switzerland and Norway.

The unique combination of a satellite and 4G LTE-based ground network offers lightning fast, low-latency performance over land and water. It can therefore meet highly demanding internet use, such as working with remote business desktops, streaming high-definition videos, enjoying online gaming and sharing images, with service levels that compare to mobile broadband on the ground.

Aircraft connect with the network using award-winning small, ultra-lightweight, low drag hardware that is cost-effective to install and operate, making EAN ideal for small to mid-sized business jets, in addition to larger sized jets.

The business aviation rollout follows EAN's successful introduction in the commercial airline market, with major launch customers already announced and installing the service on aircraft, plus ongoing discussions with other interested carriers across the continent.

Philip Balaam, President of Inmarsat Aviation, said: "EAN is a game-changer for the business aviation market, offering gold standard inflight wifi to a broad spectrum of aircraft, from small turboprops to larger platforms such as the Citations, Learjets and Phenoms. It really is ideal for any business jet whose mission keeps them predominantly in Europe.

"Our projections show that the European business aviation fleet will grow beyond 5,000 aircraft in the coming years. We expect a strong uptake for EAN by offering a variety of data plans to meet every budget. Work has already commenced with a large business aviation launch customer for the service and planning for our first STC is underway."

EAN's integrated satellite and ground network is fully operational, with a number of flight trials successfully completed across Europe, demonstrating that the next-generation service meets its design performance in practice. The evaluations were conducted with partners Cobham, Thales and Nokia using a CESSNA 550 Citation II provided by Dutch company NLR.

Designed to meet the needs of European's congested skies, EAN recently won the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) Award for 'Best Inflight Connectivity Innovation'.

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