TRANSFER DEADLINE DAY SPARKS SURGE IN PRIVATE JET USAGE

News / Business aviation

Football's transfer deadline day results in a mad dash for clubs to complete last-minute deals, ensuring their squads are strong enough to compete at the highest level, but it's also a busy period for private jet charter operators, says Luxaviation UK.

The role of a private jet charter operator is to fly the players as swiftly and comfortably as possible to their destination, meeting the requirements of the player's agent and club.

George Galanopoulos, managing director of Luxaviation UK, says: "It is vitally important that every request is met and carried out efficiently, as even the slightest delay could sabotage any potential deal. Seeing as they are world-class athletes, they are not interested in the champagne and five-course meals many associate with luxury private jet travel. We typically receive requests from athletes and their management staff for freshly pressed juices, superfood salads and lean meats or fish. This is especially the case if we are flying a footballer to attend a medical with their new club.

Galanopoulos continues, "Given the nature of the transfer window, adhering to last-minute requests is a common occurrence. For example, as a result of some major issues with a scheduled commercial flight, we flew a club's scouting department to sound out a potential

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new recruit. The club's staff contacted us a few hours before they were due to attend a match the player was competing in and we were able to fix them up with a suitable aircraft and get them to the match on time. This simply would not have been possible with a commercial airline."

When it comes to the aircraft themselves, the most commonly used to ferry footballers are the Cessna Citation II and Citation XL. A Citation II has space for up to seven passengers and is able to cover a distance of more than 1,600 nautical miles. A Citation XL can accommodate up to nine passengers and comfortably covers up to 1,900 nautical miles. From the London airports, the most popular destinations on transfer deadline day are typically Barcelona, Madrid, Milan and Munich. A flight on a Citation XL from London to Madrid can cost up to £11,940 with Luxaviation UK, whereas a flight on a Citation XL from London to Milan can cost up to £10,360.

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