

Regional jet demand now centred on 90-plus seaters: report

By: Mary Kirby Philadelphia Oct 19, 2011

Demand in the regional jet market is now centred on the 90-seat and larger aircraft, as the heyday for 50-seats "and even the 70-seat jet market" has come and gone, predicts research firm Forecast International in its latest market report.

Irrespective of scope clauses in major airline pilot contracts, which generally bar the operation of 90-seaters by regional affiliates, the 90-plus seat passenger aircraft segment "will experience the most dynamic growth in the regional aircraft market", said Forecast International. It explained: "Independent regional carriers, low-fare airlines, and major network airlines will buy large regional jets in quantity. A combination of air traffic growth and the need for operating efficiency is dictating that carriers, when able, move to larger aircraft to accommodate rising passenger demand rather than fly smaller aircraft at greater frequencies. At the same time, many routes currently served by narrow body airliners can be more efficiently served by 90-125 seat regional jets."

It comes as little surprise to the industry that a glut of 50-seat jets - which populate the fleets of North American regional airlines - are expected to enter the used market over the next decade. "There is really no desire on the part of North America operators to fly them [50-seat jets]," said Forecast International senior aerospace analyst Ray Jaworowski in an interview with FlightglobalPro. But while replacement aircraft will likely include 70-seat aircraft, either jets and/or turboprops, a gradual shift to even larger aircraft - in the 90-plus seat range - will continue, he said.

The forecast presented in Forecast International's study indicates that 4,198 regional aircraft will be produced during the 2011-2020 time period. Of this amount, some 2,117 aircraft will be in the 76-130-seat range, while 1,667 units will be required in the 51-75-seat range, predicted the company.

Source:

<http://www.flightglobal.com/news/articles/regional-jet-demand-now-centred-on-90-plus-seaters-report-363649/>