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Harbin Embraer bucking the trend

Harbin Embraer has bucked the worldwide trend to forget 50-seater jets when it comes to new purchases by notching 66 orders for the China-built ERJ145. Twenty have been delivered to China Southern Airlines, China Eastern Airlines and Grand China Air. The remainder will go into service in the next three years.

“China really is the only place where new 50-seat regional jets are being sold,” said Forecast International’s senior aerospace analyst, Raymond Jaworowski, who gave increasing services to secondary cities there as the main reason for the sales.

Harbin Embraer’s China managing director, Guan Donguan, pointed to the fact that regional aircraft account for just 7.1% of China’s total fleet, compared to 43% in the U.S. and 36% in Europe. “That suggests there is further room for development,” he said.

Exports are not expected to be part of the picture at Harbin and assembly of no other models is planned. Localisation of parts and component manufacture is being gradually introduced.