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Beechcraft King Air 350i Makes EBACE Debut, Now Operating in Europe



BY TEXTRON AVIATION

Belgian charter operator first to put new turboprop into service in European skies

Hawker Beechcraft Corporation (HBC) today debuted its new Beechcraft King Air 350i turboprop at the 2010 European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE). Deliveries commenced in December 2009 for the King Air 350i, which sets the standard in cabin comfort, connectivity and flexibility while delivering unmatched fuel efficiency and the lowest operating cost per seat. HBC received European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Type Certification for the twin-engine aircraft in December and recently made its first delivery to a European customer, Belgian charter operator Philippe Bodson.

“We are pleased to have on display the 350i – a state-of-the-art version of an aircraft with a rich tradition of reputable service throughout the region and around the world,” said Sean McGeough, HBC president, Europe, Middle East and Africa region. “The King Air 350i matches its predecessors in fuel efficiency and mission flexibility while offering a modernized cabin that beats many large business jets with a much higher price tag.”

Bodson, founder and general manager of the private charter company ASL, operates the King Air 350i out of Antwerp. ASL offers corporate charter service to approximately 100 European destinations in Europe and North Africa with the 350i and several other King Air models that are part of the company's fleet of 14 aircraft.

“We are very glad to have the first King Air 350i in service in Europe,” said Bodson, who started ASL in 1998. “We know the value of the aircraft and it is a very good thing to promote to our customers. The 350i is also particularly good for special missions, like those to small airfields that cannot be done by other aircraft. The spacious and modern cabin of the 350i accommodates up to nine passengers and is the perfect solution for the short and medium ranged missions. It offers a very high price quality ratio and the aircraft attracts specific clients who choose this concept above a jet on these routes.”

The King Air 350i is the first business aircraft on the market equipped with the new Rockwell Collins Venue™ cabin management system (CMS). The system supports multiple Personal Entertainment Devices, including CD, DVD, Blu-ray Disc™ and MP3 players, Apple iPods®, Sony PlayStation® and Microsoft Xbox 360™ gaming consoles, laptop computers, digital and video cameras, USB data-storage devices and future HDMI® devices.

The new CMS features a 15.3-inch swing-out monitor in the forward entertainment cabinet with wide-screen display showing digital high-definition video and entertainment. High-definition screens at each seat can be added. Nine programmable switch panels control the CD, DVD, Blu-ray Disc and MP3 players, audio and video jukebox, 3-D Airshow moving map and flight information. Cabinets are also equipped with standard USB charging ports and docking stations for travelers' wireless devices.

In addition to the CMS enhancements, the King Air's trademark flexibility has been stretched even further through the 350i's new state-of-the-art Beechcraft FlexCabin capability, which enables owners to reconfigure or remove aft club components to meet the specific needs of each mission.

The sleek interior design of the King Air 350i spotlights the unparalleled cabin capabilities. The updated interior includes all-new headliner, seat tailoring and tables, electrochromic window darkeners, LED lighting, increased legroom and optional seat warmers. Additionally, the King Air 350i includes an optional vanity in the aft lavatory area that incorporates a variety of toiletry storage areas, running water, automatic LED lighting and dual mirrors, and is located next to the King Air 350i's in-flight accessible baggage area for total passenger privacy and convenience.

The King Air 350i is also now the quietest King Air. Cabin sound levels have been reduced to an average of 78 dBA, equal to or better than competitive business jets. Hawker Beechcraft Corporation is a world-leading manufacturer of business, special mission and trainer aircraft – designing, marketing and supporting aviation products and services for businesses, governments and individuals worldwide. The company's headquarters and major facilities are located in Wichita, Kan., with operations in Salina, Kan.; Little Rock, Ark.; Chester, England, U.K.; and Chihuahua, Mexico. The company leads the industry with a global network of more than 100 factory-owned and authorized service centers. For more information, visit www.hawkerbeechcraft.com.

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