


Luxaviation UK keen on charter-friendly aircraft to grow



Luxaviation UK Challenger 650, © Luxaviation UK

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luxaviation 	Type	Base	Aircraft
	Business/Private Charter	Stapleford	14

Luxaviation UK (LNX, **Stapleford**) has transitioned to a more balanced strategy between aircraft charter and management, but will continue to look for charter-friendly airframes, chief executive officer George Galanopoulos told ch-aviation in an exclusive interview during Air Charter Expo 2025. The British member of **Luxaviation Group** prioritises personalised quality as it grows, but Galanopoulos expects that the operator could double its fleet to 30-40 units without compromising its standards.

"Luxaviation UK was probably the odd one out from the group in that we were very character-focused. This has slightly changed, and now we have a balance between managed aircraft that are not really available for charter, or have very low availability for charter, and then have aircraft that are very much charter-friendly. We really like the charter-friendly ones. We are charter people. But at the same time, we take aircraft for management on other registers as well," Galanopoulos explained.

The operator's British-registered and charter-available fleet currently comprises one **Phenom 300**, one **Citation XLS**, one **Citation XLS+**, one **Citation Excel**, one recently added **Challenger 650**, two **Legacy 600s**, one **Legacy 650**, one **Praetor 600**, and one **Global 6000**. It also manages additional aircraft privately in the UK as well as in San Marino and Portugal. It expects to add a **Challenger 604** to its fleet shortly.

The operator is very enthusiastic about the Sammarinese T7-register, as it allows a mix of private management and charters, which can be an attractive option for both operator and owners. For example, the incoming Challenger 604 used to be privately managed on the T7-register by Luxaviation UK before the owner decided to make it available for charter, the executive explained.

"At the moment, we stand at about 20 aircraft. I can't see any problem having 30 or 40 and still maintaining that personal contact, as long as our infrastructure is right," the executive said.

Fleet growth

Galanopoulos stressed that Luxaviation UK has no priorities in terms of OEMs and would add aircraft from any of them. However, he pointed out that the family offering the best value for money for most owners is the

Challenger series.

Luxaviation UK resumed charter operations with the family on September 1, 2025, when its first **Challenger 650**, G-VNOR (msn 6073) entered into revenue operations on the company's AOC. The 9.2-year-old aircraft is configured for up to 12 passengers and was registered in the United Kingdom on August 1. This Challenger 650 was **the sole unit of the variant** in the corporate fleet of German industrial conglomerate **Robert Bosch**, which earlier this year replaced both it and a **Challenger 605** with two brand-new **Challenger 3500s**.

The operator confirmed that the Challenger 650 will be available for charter. "The Challenger 650 is a great fit for our clients, offering a luxurious travel experience with the performance to cover everything from regional hops to transatlantic journeys. It's an exciting and timely addition to our fleet, especially for those planning a last-minute summer getaway," Galanopoulos said.

Luxaviation UK had formerly operated a **Challenger 604** and a Challenger 605, earlier variants of the Challenger 650, in the United Kingdom, both retired in August 2022.

"I expect there will be a couple of more [Challengers] coming. It's a fair value for money aircraft. It's got range. You can do London-New York. It's an older aircraft, but if it's well-maintained, with a nice interior and exterior, you will not know the difference from a new one," Galanopoulos said.

The operator owns the Citation Excel in its fleet, but it has no plans to buy any more aircraft. "I cannot see how anyone can make any true money with anything bigger than an Excel. That is the limit. With bigger aircraft, the business model doesn't work," Galanopoulos opined. He candidly said that ownership of a larger jet will never be profitable, but by chartering the aircraft, Luxaviation UK can "make the pain less painful" for the owners.

Market environment

Galanopoulos said that after the boom for private aviation during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2023 and 2024 were slower years. Demand started to resurge in May 2025. At the same time, the supply of charter aircraft is not as limited as it used to be, which helped the market normalise and grow.

While acknowledging the strong anti-business-aviation sentiment in UK politics, Galanopoulos said that demand out of the country remains strong, including for the ultra-long-range Global 6000 on Luxaviation UK's AOC.

The British register remains attractive predominantly to British-based owners, he conceded. However, he stressed that the teething post-Brexit issues have largely been solved and Luxaviation UK has no major issues accessing European markets based on block permits, with relatively limited exceptions.

Despite being a member of Luxaviation Group, the UK operator retains significant operational independence. The group centralises certain functions, including procurement, agent deals, and maintenance, as this allows it to capitalise on the benefits of economies of scale. But in terms of customer relations, the personalised service provided by an individual operator remains an important asset.

"People like personal service. I know our cost base can drop a bit because of the centralised purchasing, but we don't want our owners to be one of 200. We want every owner to feel special. As a group, we are quite unique because we have all the benefits of a big group, but we still get that family business service. Our UK owners deal with me only. And that always will remain. Operating independently as individual entities gives us that personal service for the client, which is vital," Galanopoulos explained.

Going forward, the anti-business-aviation sentiment remains an important challenge for the industry, although Galanopoulos opined that this discourse has weakened in recent months across Europe. This connects with another challenge, which is training the next generation of pilots and mechanics. Galanopoulos said that the industry should think more actively about bolstering its image, to attract more people both as customers and future employees.

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