

On prop: GECI reveals order book boost

GECI International (static S33) has notched up 47 orders at the show for its Skylander SK-105 twin-engine turboprop from a quartet of southeast Asian airlines and an unnamed west African distributor, while its smaller Reims F406 stablemate has been given a boost following the acquisition of three of the types from the Mali government for special missions.

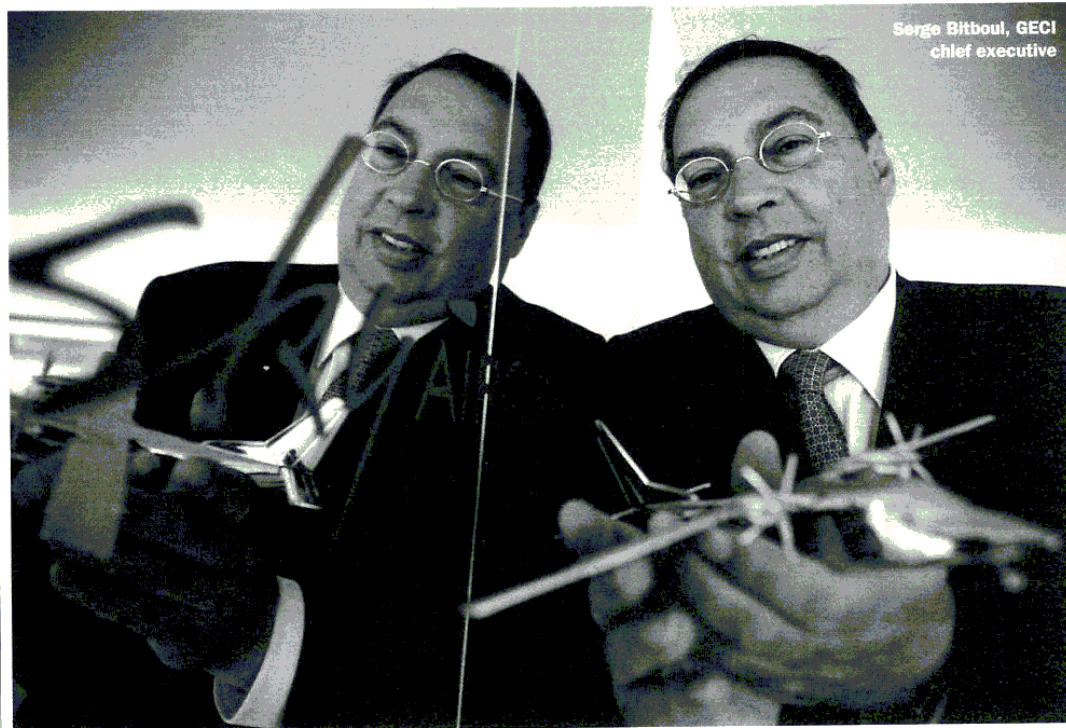
Indonesian airline PT Sky Aviation has placed an order for 10 Skylanders – made by GECI subsidiary Sky Aircraft – with an option for 10 more. West Air of Malaysia has acquired 12 of the 19-seaters – eight firm and four options. Kan Air of Thailand has snapped up two with an option for three more and Laos scheduled and charter carrier Phongsavanh Airlines has bought five aircraft – including three options.

“The Skylander is perfectly suited for operations within southeast Asia where short, rough air strips are common,” said

Serge Bitboul, GECI chief executive. Sky Aircraft cut the metal for the first Skylander last year at its base in Chambley-Bussières in the Lorraine region of France after making major design changes to increase the economic speed, improve take-off and landing performance, and offer greater range with maximum payload.

Powered by two 1,100shp (820kW) Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-65B turboprops and equipped with a Cobham glass cockpit, the high-wing, unpressurised Skylander can seat up to 19 passengers and carry up to 2t of freight. Envisaged uses span commuter, passenger/cargo combi, freight, paratroop transport and aerial ambulance operations. GECI is also planning a VIP variant, which is expected to account for up to 10% of Skylander sales.

Meanwhile, Gama Support Services has signed a memorandum of understanding with the GECI to become its approved maintenance and repair centre for the F406 in the UK.



L-3 receives Skylander avionics contract

L-3 Communications (static exhibition F186) has won an avionics deal for the Skylander SK-105 utility aircraft as a subcontractor to the main cockpit systems

supplier, Cobham Avionics.

The New York-headquartered company will provide the traffic collision avoidance system, flight data and cockpit voice recorders, the digital

flight data acquisition unit and the Stormscope weather mapping system.

The equipment will be supplied through its aviation products division, a joint

venture with Thales.

The first flight for the 19-seat twin turboprop is planned for mid-2012.

Type certification expected by the end of 2013.