

Caussarieu's VolDirect Makes IFR Breakthrough

On June 19, 2013, largely unnoticed by the 3,000-plus journalists attending the 2013 Paris Air Show, an event took place on the Daher-Socata stand that marked a significant milestone in European business aviation. On that day au Bourget, the French civil aviation authority, DGAC, issued the first Air Operators Certificate permitting single-engine public transport flights in IFR conditions. Previously, passenger-carrying SE-IFR flights had been forbidden throughout the European Union.

Applauding the 20-year lobbying campaign that had preceded that milestone event was Frédéric Caussarieu, CEO of Rennes-based VolDirect, which since 2012 has operated a TBM 850 single-engine turboprop. The company is also the first French commercial operator approved to employ iPad 3 electronic documentation instead of printed aeronautical charts.

"[It was] a long road but it does really help to create a secure operation and it does really create a much more competent organization," he says.



"Now that we have this AOC we can expand... to more areas from which we are going to operate, with more aircraft, and more business."

VolDirect was founded in 2009, when Caussarieu, a former executive at several large telecommunications companies, and Jean Paul Legendre,

an entrepreneur and head of a large construction company and property development business that required him to travel frequently throughout Europe, got together after noting the absence of an effective aviation service business



Frédéric Caussarieu, CEO of Rennes-based VolDirect (right) pioneered single-engine commercial IFR.

in Brittany. Their company, which offers on-demand charters, now employs six people.

"I graduated from an engineering university in telecommunications and computer science," Caussarieu told *ShowNews*. "When I got my first job, back in 1980, I went to the nearest aero club in Brittany and spent most of my salary on flying lessons. I got my instrument rating in 1985, and my FAA and EASA professional pilot licenses in the 2000s. In between, I flew 2,500 flight hours in my own airplanes – a Piper PA-28, Socata Trinidad and a Cessna 414 twin – for my business and personal needs. The next natural move has been to upgrade to the TBM."

The AOC process involved four VolDirect staff and took over two years, but Caussarieu says he "would not turn back to what it was before, even if I was aware of the length of the road that we had to go through to get the private operation to the commercial and public."

"The TBM is easy to fly, comfortable, fast and extremely reliable," Caussarieu says. "You feel safe in such an airplane, whatever the weather and the trip. It is really a professional tool. TBM usage had been extended to a few more local businesses, but the demand had been so high that turning into commercial transport [with SE-IFR approval] was the only way to go forward."

The future? "VolDirect's plans are to grow, with additional airplanes located in new business areas, leveraging on cost-efficient single-engine turboprop planes," Caussarieu says. "In the long run, fuel efficiency will be a major challenge for this industry, and the TBM has a key advantage compared to the more traditional twins and jets."

Daher-Socata is at [Stand 6540](#).—Mike Jerram

EuroAirport Basel Teams Up with Avfuel



EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg-based FBO and VIP handling provider Air Service Basel ([Stand 1212](#)) has partnered with Avfuel Corporation ([Stand 4634](#)) to offer its branded aviation fuels and pilot programs, and to take advantage of Avfuel's operational and training systems.

"Basel is a major European cultural and business destination, making it a key location for operators of private and corporate aircraft," said Avfuel VP, marketing Marci Ammerman. "This partnership allows both entities to build on and expand each others' strengths and offer these operators the highest-quality products, services and systems available." Among the new offerings flight

departments will now have access to at Air Service Basel are Avfuel Contract Fuel, facilitating the purchase of jet fuel at less-than-retail rates at over 3,000 locations around the globe; AVTRIP Rewards, which awards points for fuel uplifts at its FBOs; and flight planning services arranged through Avplan Trip Support. Air Service Basel's state-of-the-art facilities include spacious and secure hangar parking, along with ample apron space, for aircraft up to Boeing 737/BBJ and Airbus A319 size. Its on-site maintenance center is staffed by skilled, factory-trained technicians qualified to service a wide range of business aircraft for airframe, engines, avionics and electrical work.