

2026 Commercial Fleet & MRO Forecast Now Available from Aviation Week Network

Global Passenger Demand Drives Aviation Growth as Airbus Gains Market Share Despite Supply Constraints and Rising Engine MRO Costs

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, October 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Aviation Week Network](#) today unveils its comprehensive 2026 Commercial Fleet & MRO Forecasts, delivering a 10-year view of the air transport sector's trajectory. Developed through independent projections and data analysis by Aviation Week Intelligence Network's (AWIN) specialized forecasting teams, the research reveals that commercial aviation continues its upward momentum despite ongoing industry challenges.

New aircraft delivery projections moderated in the near term compared to previous outlooks while second half projections foretell record heights. With firm order backlogs at their highest levels, over 17,500 firm orders means that OEMs' prospects remain bullish for most of the decade. Peaking at over 2,200 annual deliveries, delivery rates accelerate as OEMs are anticipated to increase production to meet the demand of air carriers and overcome supplier, quality, and certification issues. New delivery numbers are impressive, but a higher percentage of these aircraft are now slated to replace aging fleets around the globe, especially in North America. The net effect of the new delivery projections and readjusted retirement dates means a global in-service growth rate of 3.0% over the decade.

Record low aircraft retirements in the recent past caused by insufficient new aircraft inventory have not only left airlines flying older aircraft and engines but impacts to aftermarket MRO costs are being felt throughout the industry. MRO aftermarket demand rises to \$1.6 trillion globally after growing at a 3.2% CAGR, not counting inflation. With increased utilization and longer-lived engines and airframes, engine maintenance is expected to yield \$853 billion in demand coming from 107,000 overhaul events, tens of thousands of life-limited-parts replacements, and unscheduled replacement parts activities needed to address new generation engine problems



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over the decade.

“Strong global passenger demand has kept operators flying older aircraft longer than in the past because OEMs haven’t been able to meet new delivery needs fast enough. This trend reverberates throughout the forecast period as the fleet composition reflects the thousands of individual business decisions made today and, in the past,” said Brian Kough, Senior Director, Forecasts & Aerospace Insights, Intelligence & Data Services, Aviation Week Network. “Supply chain, labor, quality control, and certification issues affecting OEMs have hampered their ability to ramp up fast enough. Combined with engine durability issues with our most popular new narrowbodies and MRO provider constraints, the result is older aircraft covering the gaps over the next few years resulting in additional costs for operators and for airlines. The forecast outcomes still have a strong positive outlook but these issues bear watching as our support systems need to heal and grow to achieve optimal efficiencies.”

Narrowbody aircraft represent 75% of the projected 21,000+ global deliveries. The analysis indicates that Airbus maintains its lead over Boeing in narrowbody deliveries, with the A320 family expected to exceed the 737 in-service fleet by approximately 3,000 aircraft by the conclusion of 2035. The anticipated wave of aircraft retirements is unlikely to materialize in the immediate term, as commercial operators maintain cautious positions regarding new-generation aircraft delivery schedules. However, approximately 3% of the total fleet, an historically significant percentages of fleet, is expected to be reached by mid-decade.

The 2026 Commercial Fleet & MRO Forecast findings detail market demands and industry trends accounting for not only the impact of economic and macro trends on global fleets and MRO, but capture new costs and industry trends globally, regionally, and across all aircraft families. By combining current fleet counts and stats, projected aircraft fleet changes, in-house flight data derived utilization projections, and segmented MRO cost analytics, the forecast delivers critical strategic insights for the commercial market sector.

See the data firsthand at Aviation Week Network's booth #2151 at MRO Europe, where attendees can meet with the forecasting team for detailed discussions.

The 2026 Business Aviation and Helicopter Fleet & MRO Forecasts are also now available. The 2026 Military Fleet & MRO Forecast will be available soon.

For more information on Aviation Week Network’s 2025 Fleet & MRO Forecasts or to subscribe, contact Melissa Crum, melissa.crum@aviationweek.com go to <https://aviationweek.com/fleetforecast>

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