

# Piaggio's CEO Logli Charts Course For The Future



Carlo Logli, who replaced Alberto Galassi as CEO of Piaggio in May 2014, is making changes at the aerospace concern as he leads the firm toward a leaner, more sustainable future. He realigned department heads, merged two production plants under a new state-of-the-art facility, balanced civil and military ventures and instituted lean

manufacturing methods.

The strategic moves follow the April 2014 buyout by the Mubadala development company, giving the Abu Dhabi firm 98% ownership. Mubadala wanted to streamline production, invest in new technologies and boost profit margins.

Logli closed down old plants in Genoa and Finale Ligure after completing Piaggio's new \$160 million, 540,000-sq.-ft. manufacturing facility at Villanova d'Albenga. He stabilized Piaggio's workforce at 1,200 employees and pressed for type certification of the third-generation Avanti Evo.

With European Aviation Safety Association ([EASA](#)) type certification of EVO in 2014 and [FAA](#) type certification slated for the this year, the production is back on track. Nine to 10 aircraft will be delivered in 2015 and 15 aircraft are scheduled for delivery in 2016.

EVO has several key improvements, including more efficient Hartzell five-blade props that enable them to operate at lower rpm without loss of cruise speed, additional fuel capacity to boost ferry range and an upgraded interior. Magnaghi now supplies the landing gear, slashing overhaul costs for operators. The old, part-time nose wheel steering system, based upon the one installed in a [Learjet 23](#), has been replaced with a digitally controlled, full-time, speed-proportionate nose wheel steering system. Anti-skid brakes, furnished by Eaton, are being installed.

Logli says Piaggio is mulling over an avionics upgrade for Evo, but for now the Rockwell-Collins Pro Line 21 system is being retained.

The collapse of fractional operator Avantair in 2013 caused Piaggio's product support team to come under acute pressure to help restore the failed firm's 50 grounded aircraft to airworthy condition. FAA grounding was based on Avantair's mismanagement and bad service. Piaggio in coordination with FAA assisted in thorough checks and repairs. Thirty of the former Avantair P-180 aircraft now are again flying, says Logli. The silver lining was the resulting improvement in product support. "We're also instituting 24/7 product support with 15 engineers on call to manage service bulletins. We have a new parts warehouse at Genoa with a large spares inventory." The U.S. potentially represents 50% of the market for new EVO's. So product support is critical in North America. The new direction benefits customers not only in the US market but on global scale.

On long term, Logli wants a balance of civil and military programs to smooth out the periodic up/down swings in those sectors. “We want to provide quality and service, cut head count from 1,200 to 1,000 people and grow company revenues to €500 million [\$561 million] annually.”