



MARTYN FIDDLER

The Isle of Man *Aviation* Conference Highlights 2026

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Q1 & Q2 *Market Pulse*

Richard Koe

Richard opened IOMAC 2026 with an insightful overview of the global business aviation landscape. Industry fundamentals remain strong, supported by sustained post-Covid demand, though supply chain constraints and broader macroeconomic pressures continue to weigh on growth. Notably, the resilience of new market entrants is evident in multi-year order backlogs.

Regional performance shows clear divergence. The United States continues to drive elevated flight activity, while Europe has seen more muted growth, with a marked contrast between stagnant Western and Central regions and a thriving Mediterranean market. Globally, activity has increased year on year, albeit at a slower pace, with the Middle East experiencing a notable decline.

Demand trends remain bifurcated across aircraft segments, with Ultra Long Range, Super Mid, and Super Light Jets performing strongly, while Light Jets lag in Europe. Fractional ownership continues to expand rapidly, reshaping demand dynamics as charter markets soften.



Crypto for *Jets and Yachts*

Mark Bisset, Paul Doherty, Tyler Betts, Lawrence Power, Graham Williamson

A panel at the IOM Aviation Conference 2026 explored whether cryptocurrency is a lasting shift for high-value transactions. Although adoption in aviation remains cautious, this is largely driven by misconceptions around compliance. In practice, transactions are traceable, regulated, and subject to strict KYC and due diligence requirements.



Crypto's appeal lies in its efficiency, offering 24/7 payments, real-time conversion and lower transaction costs compared to traditional methods. Stablecoins, in particular, are gaining traction as reliable “digital dollars” for payments, with growing use in B2B transactions.

While volatility and regulatory uncertainty still temper appetite, emerging crypto-native clients and improving infrastructure suggest gradual adoption. As understanding improves and risks are mitigated, crypto is increasingly viewed as a flexible, credible option rather than a fringe alternative.

Rotary *Urban Airspace*

Simon Williams, Sebastian Pupek, Miles Riches

A session at the IOM Aviation Conference 2026 explored the future of rotary urban airspace and the evolving role of helicopters in modern mobility. Panellists stressed that helicopters continue to deliver their core value: saving time in increasingly congested cities.

Rather than declining, the sector is undergoing a transition. Helicopters are expected to remain relevant for decades, even as new technologies and concepts such as advanced air mobility develop. However, high operating costs and limited infrastructure continue to restrict wider adoption.

Safety, regulation and public trust were highlighted as essential foundations for growth, with regulators facing pressure to keep pace with innovation. While future concepts like autonomous or multi-operator systems are emerging, progress will depend on significant investment and a step change in how urban airspace is managed and developed.



Next Gen *Voices*

Lindsey Oliver, Victoria Clayden Smith, Daisy Metcalfe, Caeli Plumbley

An all-female panel at the IOM Aviation Conference 2026 explored how business aviation is perceived by the next generation and the barriers to entry. A key theme was the lack of awareness and clear pathways into the industry, with many young people unsure how to begin a career in aviation.

Panellists highlighted the need for stronger engagement between industry and education, alongside more honest, visible representation of career opportunities. While female participation in engineering is improving, it remains below where it should be.

Better use of social media, clearer storytelling around day to day roles, and highlighting young voices were identified as priorities. The session also stressed the importance of setting realistic expectations around working patterns and sustainability. The message was clear: improving visibility and access is essential to attract future talent.



Is Tech *Reshaping BizAv*

Alison Chambers, Adam Twidell, Sylvain Gloux

A forward-looking panel at the IOM Aviation Conference 2026 examined how technology is reshaping business aviation, with a focus on moving from innovation to real-world impact. Advances such as electric and eVTOL aircraft are already influencing expectations around efficiency, sustainability and customer experience.

Real-world trials and early adoption demonstrate that this shift is underway, but scaling remains the key challenge. Infrastructure, battery capability, cost and regulation continue to limit wider implementation, despite significant progress in flight testing and operational performance.

Panellists also highlighted the potential for lower operating costs, increased route flexibility and improved connectivity through smaller, more agile aircraft. The message was clear: technology is no longer theoretical, but its long-term success will depend on integration, investment and industry-wide adaptation.



Dealmaker's *Dilemma*

Brendan Lodge, Aoife O'Sullivan, Ed Griffith, Stuart Metcalfe, Andy Blundell

A lively discussion at IOMAC 2026 challenged the notion that aircraft transactions can ever be truly standardised. While panellists agreed that many deals follow a familiar structure and rely on commonly used documentation, they emphasised that every transaction is shaped by the unique requirements of the parties involved.



As a result, a one-size-fits-all approach is neither practical nor desirable. Instead of pursuing standardisation for its own sake, the panel called for greater focus on identifying where delays, inefficiencies and complications typically arise throughout the transaction journey.

Addressing these pain points directly would help streamline processes without sacrificing flexibility. The discussion also reinforced the importance of assembling the right team at the right time. Experienced professionals can anticipate challenges early, mitigate risk and resolve issues before they escalate into costly obstacles.



