

Making the Dream of Flying a Reality



Qu Jingwen

EDITORS' NOTE *Qu Jingwen is a professorate senior engineer who has been working in the aviation field since 1986. He has been responsible for R&D and manufacturing projects related to Y11, Y12, H425, EC/HC120, H410, and Z15/EC175 aircraft, as well as large amphibian aircraft. He has worked as Dean of AVIC Harbin Aircraft Design Institute, Chairman and President of AVIC Harbin Aircraft Group, Vice President of AVIC Helicopter Company, and now as the President of China Aviation Industry General Aircraft Co., Ltd. He has been awarded second prize for National Technology Progress; honored with the personal first-class merit of the State Commission of Science and Technology for the National Defense Industry, the Heilongjiang provincial first prize for Science and Technology; and "The Young and Middle-aged Experts with Outstanding Contributions" of the State Commission of Science and Technology for the National Defense Industry, as well as of provincial and municipal class. He is also one of "The Top Ten Young Managers" who obtained governmental subsidies from the China State Council.*

COMPANY BRIEF *The purpose of AVIC General (caiga.cn.; China Aviation Industry General Aircraft Co. Ltd) is acquiring and upgrading the performance of Cirrus Aircraft. China Aviation Industry General Aircraft Co., Ltd was founded by Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC) and three other corporations, based in Guangdong Province.*

What is the mission of AVIC General and how is it positioned today?

AVIC General focuses on the general aviation industry with "advocating an aviation culture, and making flight real" as its mission. As a general aviation solution provider, we have established a vision of "being a first-class aviation company in the world and to be the leading one in the domestic market." The nature of the globalization of the general aviation industry drives us to expand

An Interview with Qu Jingwen, President, China Aviation Industry General Aircraft Co., Ltd.

our footprint for development and cooperation to a global market. The global emphasis in on the developed countries such as the United States, where general aviation resources in technology, management, and the market are largely concentrated today. We are strategically working with our U.S. counterparts on multiple levels. AVIC acquired 100 percent ownership of Cirrus Aircraft in June 2011, which marked a significant achievement in the evolution of AVIC General's global development strategy. Initiatives related to retaining its management team and key employees, earmarking financial aid for operations and new products research and development, and enhancing corporate governance and control have been undertaken. Cirrus's advantages in branding, sales and marketing, and service are being emphasized. New technology and product development have been accelerated, sales have expanded, and costs have become more competitive. With all of these efforts, Cirrus Aircraft operational performance has gradually improved to the point where it became profitable in 2014. Cirrus Aircraft's leading market position has been successfully maintained in the global small private aircraft market. Three years after AVIC's acquisition, Cirrus Aircraft has entered a new chapter and is moving ahead on a healthy track.

How do you evaluate the acquisition and cooperation between Cirrus Aircraft and domestic companies?

Founded in 1984, Cirrus Aircraft is a leading global small aircraft manufacturer. We clearly anticipated that all related parties would pay close attention to Cirrus' development after its acquisition by a Chinese company. Thus, we encouraged Cirrus Aircraft's management to spare no efforts in communicating our strategy to clients, suppliers, industrial counterparts, local government, and others. In the end, we got great support and recognition.

As Cirrus's business has grown and its sales footprint and new products development has expanded, we have expanded our Duluth facilities and increased the size of our staff by more than 400 employees – from around 470 to more than 870 – in the past three years in the United States. Most of them are experienced engineers.

Recently, AVIC General supported Cirrus Aircraft in setting up a completely new customer experience center (Vision Center) in Knoxville, Tennessee, to further grow its service business. Generally speaking, acquisition of Cirrus Aircraft has become a win-win example of Sino-U.S. industrial cooperation.



The rapidly developing Chinese general aviation market is bringing new opportunities for Cirrus Aircraft. We are building an SR2X aircraft assembly line to increase Cirrus Aircraft global production capacity to satisfy the demand in China and Southeast Asia. AVIC General domestic companies will also participate in Cirrus Vision SF50 batch production. In addition, we are aggressively facilitating AVIC general domestic companies and Cirrus Aircraft co-develop small aircraft.

With China positioned to become the most important general aviation market in the future, what other international cooperation is AVIC General becoming involved in?

Besides acquiring Cirrus Aircraft, AVIC General took an active part in setting up two joint venture companies with Cessna Aircraft Company to produce the Citation XLS+ in Zhuhai, Guangdong and to produce the Caravan 208 B in Shijiazhuang, Hebei. Through international cooperation, not only is AVIC General improving its product portfolio and expanding its management capabilities but it is also providing more aircraft and solutions for the Chinese and global markets.

Taking flight has always been a human dream. The goal of AVIC General is to make aircraft as widely accessible and utilized by people as computers and cars are today, and to make private flying available to families throughout the world. It is our hope to take more people up to sky and to make the dream of flying a reality for them.

We adhere to the notion of "no competitors, only partners" in the course of pursuing extensive cooperation in global markets. At the same time, in our home market, we will continue leading the Chinese general aviation industry in serving, fostering, and developing the Chinese general aviation market – a huge "blue sea" of opportunity. We believe we will help more and more Chinese families to own their private aircrafts and more and more people to fly freely. ●