



At a cruising speed of 300 knots, the Socata TBM 700 is the world's fastest single-engine turboprop

Aero 2005

General aviation rendezvous

The AERO international trade exhibition for general aviation, held every two years at the Friedrichshafen airport, logged a significant increase in attendance by both exhibitors and visitors in 2005.

The AERO trade fair has meanwhile become a global player in the general aviation industry. This year's fair once again demonstrated competence both as a platform and as a meeting point for general aviation, bringing together an international product showcase and trade visitors from around the world. Specialists from the international aviation industry as well as a number of private pilots from Germany and abroad once more showed keen interest in what AERO had to offer.

But pilots flying in for the event had a tough time even getting to Friedrichshafen for the opening day. Low-hanging clouds on the shores of Lake Constance initially prevented a

number of light private aircraft attempting to approach under visual flight rules (VFR) from landing at the airport. Dozens of private aircraft, among them that of the Planet AeroSpace editorial staff, had to circle the airport by way of specially established compulsory reporting points until the cloud base had lifted sufficiently to make a VFR approach possible. Other aircraft were diverted temporarily to nearby alternative airfields.

However, conditions cleared up nicely for the second day of the fair, which helped to turn this year's AERO into yet another blockbuster event for the trade-fair company. A total of around 45,000 visitors were counted over the four days the event lasted (21-24



Cirrus Design displayed the high-end "gts" version of its SR22. Cirrus CEO Alan Klapmeier waxed enthusiastic about AERO



ties overall, a fact confirmed by a survey of exhibitors, several of whom commented favourably on the convenient airport location of the venue. Exhibitors' representatives emphasized the international flavour of the trade fair, which was also a media event: the presence of 667 journalists from 27 countries, including media representatives from New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the US, China and Japan underscored the strong international interest in the show. Alexis von Croy

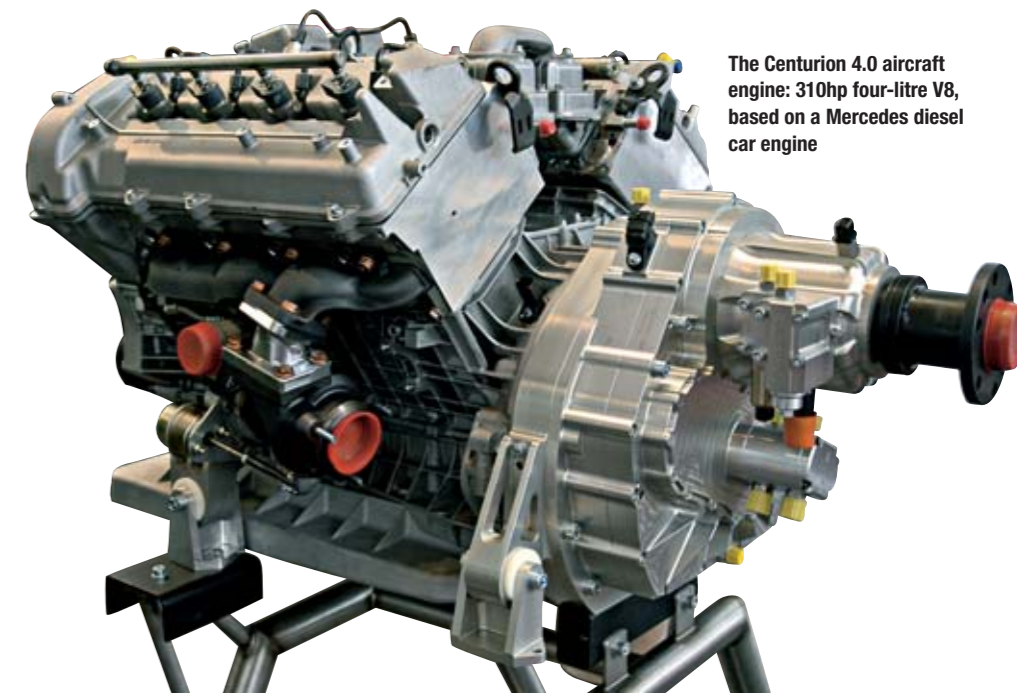


The FK9 ultralight with SMART engine: extremely quiet – and environment-friendly thanks to its catalytic converter

April), including pilots who had flown in from all over Europe – as evidenced by the wide variety of private aircraft, from power gliders to business jets, that could be seen parked in spaces alongside the runways.

The trade fair's executive director Rolf Mohne was able to look back on positive results at the end of the exhibition. "International acceptance of AERO has once again grown considerably," he said. The aviation trade fair enjoyed yet another significant increase in the proportion of visitors and exhibitors from abroad. "In addition to its role as a comprehensive presentation platform, AERO has very definitely become a communication platform. We intend to further expand on this aspect and the image it projects for the fair," said Mohne, obviously already looking ahead. In the coming years, AERO plans to gain further ground as a product showcase and meeting point for partners from business and industry, as well as from clubs and associations.

From business jets, gliders, ultralights, through to avionics, maintenance, supplies and accessories, the trade fair covers the entire spectrum of general aviation. Europe's premier general aviation gathering this year provided 543 exhibitors with excellent facili-



The Centurion 4.0 aircraft engine: 310hp four-litre V8, based on a Mercedes diesel car engine

Images: Alexis von Croy