

# Demand remains high for A330-200 models

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The demand for Airbus A330 models continues to be strong and there is indication that the end of the part out market may trade more aircraft as the American Airlines' 15-aircraft fleet hits the market.

The US carrier has approached the market for the sale of its entire Airbus A330-200 aircraft fleet, sources confirm to *Airfinance Journal*.

The 15-aircraft fleet has been stored for a while, having been operated until the first quarter of 2020, when American phased out its entire A330 fleet and stored it in Roswell in New Mexico.

American Airlines adopted the A330 model for its operations following its merger with US Airways in December 2013.

The US Airways A330 fleet consisted of 15 A330-200s and nine A330-300s.

*Airfinance Journal* understands that the A330-300 fleet was sold for part-out including eight units to VAS Aero Services and the final unit to Aersale.

Five A330-200s were delivered to US Airways in 2009, three in 2010, five in 2013 and three in 2014.

*Airfinance Journal* understands that most aircraft may not be delivered until 2025 as [some -200s are part of enhanced equipment trust certificate \(EETC\) transactions issued by US Airways between 2010 and 2013](#).

*Airfinance Journal's* Deal Tracker shows that two units were part of the US Airways 2011 \$471 million EETC financing. The final payments on the series A equipment notes, series B equipment notes and series C equipment notes were due in October 2023, October 2018 and October 2014, respectively.

Another two units, delivered in June 2009, are part of the US Airways 2010 EETC, with some of the debt initially maturing in October 2024, DT shows.

Four 2013 deliveries were refinanced in the carrier's EETC 2012-2 transaction with the A tranche maturing in December 2024 initially. The \$100 million class C on that transaction had 3 June 2023 as a final expected distribution rate.

The American Airlines A330-200 aircraft are Rolls Royce-powered, while a source confirms to *Airfinance Journal* that the aircraft were all damaged in a hailstorm while parked and are being sold in an "as is" condition.

"It may be possible to make a few good aircraft to lease out from the package – all condition dependent," comments another trading source. He adds: "It's a fair bit of work for potential buyers to do in a short space of time but if the market settles at circa \$300,000 per month, then it's worth the effort."

*Airfinance Journal* understands that bids are due next month.

The part-out market continue to deploy available financing for acquisitions.

Setna iO recently acquired a 12-year old A330-200 aircraft from Aviator Capital for disassembly. The US-based aftermarket parts supplier says the market for current generation assets is in high demand.

Last year Setna iO purchased a 2001-vintage A330-200 from Aviation Capital Group in 2021 to support A330 operators. The unit was previously operated by UK operator Thomas Cook Airlines.

Altitude Aircraft Leasing recently sold three 2005-06 vintage A330-200s for part-out. The aircraft were last operated by Etihad Airways and parked since 2019. The units were the final A330-200s operated by the UAE-based carrier. Airfinance Journal's Fleet Tracker shows that four A330-200s previously operated by Etihad Airways were broken-up in late 2022.

[Deucalion Aviation has acquired Airbus A330-200s equipped with General Electric CF6-80E1A3 engines from Eva Air.](#) The aircraft, which were the final units operated by Asian carrier, are planned for disassembly. One unit, a 2006-vintage, has been assigned for part out, while the other two units will be parted out later this year.

In March, the Taipei-based carrier announced the sale of the three A330-200s for a NT\$1.1 billion (\$35 million) total transaction price.

Airbus, via Airbus Asset Management, has mandated parties for a batch of A330-200 sales, powered with Pratt & Whitney PW4170 engines, that were previously operated by China Southern Airlines.

The 2011/12-vintage are aircraft. Sources say four units have already been flown to Tarmac Aerosave for part-out, with the remaining units following.

"Airbus had intended to convert the China Southern aircraft but due to the demand side of the market a PW powered aircraft was not really attractive," comments one source.

The HNA Group is believed to be in the market with a fleet of more than 10 aircraft. The fleet may get converted into freighters.

The rapid rise of fast-fashion e-commerce retailers such as Shein and Temu is upending the global air cargo industry, as they increasingly vie for limited air-cargo space to woo consumers with rapid transit times.

"Temu, we understand, is looking to lease 12 wide-body freighters. They are scouring the market for any aircraft they can find. We even received a request to our website," Marc Schlossberg, executive vice president of Air Freight at Unique Logistics, told *Reuters* earlier this year.

The source confirms that the HNA Group A330-200 potential cargo conversions may be leased to Temu.

Pricing on A330s is gradually recovering from the low of the Covid period. Earlier this year *Airfinance Journal* reported that monthly rents were definitely above \$300,000 for -200 models.

During the Covid period some placements were achieved at low lease rates such as \$220-230,000 a month range but lessors were undercutting each others with offers as low as \$170-175,000 a month on medium-term leases for midlife aircraft.

One trading source suggests the A330 market may be peaking. He opines that the "naked" aircraft could be difficult to place for the leasing community and requires major investment.

Another source says the aircraft need \$10-15 million per engine investment but slot availability with the engine shops, given the current environment, may be difficult to source.

"In terms of value it's all in the engines," comments a leasing source, adding "The Rolls Royce Trent 700s are in demand but Rolls Royce is 'controlling' the market. The General Electric CF6-80E1's are in short supply but probably a 12-month phenomenon."

Some parties buy A330-200 assets for part-out purposes, other uses the engines for their pool of engines because they may have obligations on other aircraft in their fleet.

One trading source says the market is "very engine dependent" and that is reflected in pricing transactions.

One particular package deal is believed to have sold for \$11 million per aircraft on average but run-out assets could go lower than the \$10 million mark.

According to him, a full restoration of an engine along with life limited parts and landing gears work, can cost \$10 million.

A mid-life fresh aircraft would need an investment of almost \$28-30 million and therefore command lease rates well above \$300,000 a month.

He confirms that lease rates factors are above 1.2% in recent deals.

"What we are finding when we do lease, the prices have come right up. And that is what we could not achieve three years ago. Lease rates are \$300,000 is a minimum when there is an arrangement in place for the airline not to have to accomplish expensive Engine shop visits and the interior is suitable, he tells *Airfinance Journal*.

“The market is really hot to keep the aircraft moving but the interesting thing is how the model has come back as it was assumed to be gone forever,” he adds.

The source reckons current market conditions for the model could stay for another two to three years.

More A330-200 capacity is coming out of Asia with the planned exits of Tianjin and Hainan Airlines next.

Airfinance Journal’s Fleet Tracker shows around 30 transactions since January in the A330-200 market.

Airlines are looking to add capacity to their network.

T’Way Airlines is in the process of taking delivery of its first A330-200 widebody aircraft for planned network expansion including additional routes to Europe. The South Korean carrier had already taken delivery of three A330-300s from the secondary market, which are now being augmented by the five A330-200s being transferred from Korean Air as part of the latter’s upcoming merger with Asiana Airlines.

[Avolon has quickly placed three A330-200s that were previously operated by ACMI provider Heston Airlines to Canadian carrier Air Transat.](#) The 2009-vintage aircraft were delivered in May and June 2024.

Tunisair is rumoured to be in the market for the lease of an additional A330-200 aircraft. The African carrier operates two aircraft of the type since 2015.

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