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Different mode of travel debuts in Worcester – 6/20/08

(Danica Pecirep, NECN: Worcester, Mass.) - A new type of aircraft landed at Worcester Regional Airport Thursday - it's called an Eclipse 500 Very Light Jet or VLJ.

Pilot: For business travelers or folks who want to go on vacation - we can save them a lot of time and do it as economically as the airlines and often better than them.

Dana Dellacroce flies VLJ's for Massachusetts based Linear Air.

"It's one of the first in the country to make personalized jet service affordable - because not only are VLJ's lightweight - they're also fuel-efficient - making them cheaper to operate."

Pilot: It burns very little fuel compared to most jets on the market - it can cruise up to 41,000 feet at about 425 miles per hour.

At this time, Linear Air operates only four Very Light Jets, like this one, but within the next five years, they predict they'll have as many as 300 in the air.

Pilot: I expect in the next five to ten years you are going to see the market flooded with VLJs.>

Made from aluminum, they're designed to give customers the freedom to travel the skies quickly and conveniently.

"It can fly to a lot of airports that some of the larger jets and aircrafts can't get into because it only needs xxx runway space which until recently was unheard of for jets."

Thursday, it was one of many aircraft designs on display at an event called the Business Aircraft and Jet Preview.

Airport Director: It showcases the airport to the flying public and people who might have an interest in either having an aircraft based here or taking charter flights from here.

There aren't many customers in Worcester yet - but those who know about VLJ's say it's only a matter of time.

Pilot: In the future, you are going to see this mode of travel increase 10 to 20 fold - especially at the time when airlines are shrinking it makes a lot of sense for business travelers to get from their meetings and what not.