

# Bombardier clings to its last commercial aircraft line

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Bombardier has sold its stake in the C-Series aircraft, seen here in a 2013 picture, to Airbus but says it plans to keep producing Canadair Regional Jets, or CRJs

Canadian manufacturer Bombardier said Tuesday it planned to hold onto

its last commercial aircraft line—the Canadair Regional Jet or CRJ—after recent divestitures of its others.

"We want to keep this line going," company chief executive Alain Bellemare told analysts, noting that there was only one other player, Embraer, selling in this 75- to 100-seat regional jetliner category.

He left open the possibility of partnering with another aeronautics firm, however, as Bombardier looks to upgrade the aircraft and boost sales.

Questions were raised about Bombardier's future as an aeronautics firm following its divestiture, announced last week, of its aging Q Series turboprop line to a Canadian investment fund, and its sale of a majority stake in its CSeries jetliner line to Airbus in July.

At the same time, the company slashed 5,000 engineering jobs or seven percent of its workforce.

"We might look at partnering if it makes sense but the primary focus right now is to strengthen (sales), so that we have a longer term view on this product line," Bellemare said.

"We're going to try to make it work and we will see where it goes," he added.

Bombardier has sold more than 1,900 CRJs since the program was launched in the early 1990s, but demand has fallen to a trickle with only a handful of orders the last quarter.

Last week, Bellemare noted that Bombardier continues to lose money on the manufacturing of the CRJ, and wanted to see parts suppliers reduce costs.

Previously the company decided to give up control of its new CSeries aircraft, now known as the A220, to European giant Airbus in exchange for using Airbus's sales and marketing heft to lift CSeries sales.

The planes and trains maker also still manufactures business jets.

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