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Rob Gillies, Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Bombardier Inc., the world's third-largest maker of civilian commercial aircraft, said Monday it has made the biggest sale of business aircraft in its history, potentially worth up to \$7.8 billion if all options are exercised.

Vistajet, a private European company that provides luxury chartered flights, placed firm orders for 56 Bombardier Global jets valued at \$3.1 billion and acquired options for a further 86 Global jets.

"By any standard, this is a historic order for Bombardier. It goes without saying that we are thrilled Vistajet has again chosen to grow their fleet with the industry-leading Global family," Steve Ridolfi, president, Bombardier Business Aircraft, said in a statement.

Shares of Bombardier closed up eight percent on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

Vistajet chairman Thomas Flehr said the purchase is part of Vistajet's goal of making business aviation more accessible to emerging markets. The company operates a fleet of Bombardier aircraft based in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and West Africa.

Deliveries will begin in 2014.

The order for Montreal-based Bombardier follows a contract signed in June with Netjets for up to 275 Challenger mid-size jets and a deal in March 2011 also with Netjets for up to 120 Global series of jets.

The order also comes after Bombardier stock has been hit recently because of delays for the much-touted C-Series single-aisle airline. Bombardier eventually hopes to capture half the global market for 100-149-seat planes and is marketing its touted C-Series single-aisle plane as being 20 percent more fuel-efficient than the comparable Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 family of aircraft.

Bombardier also manufactures trains.

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