Boeing Continues to Improve 737 MAX Performance

737 MAX efficiency increases by an additional 1 percent

Enhancements in maintenance information technology to further benefit customers

RENTON, Wash., Oct. 29, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Boeing (NYSE: BA) 737 MAX program continues to make steady development progress since reaching Firm Configuration on the 737 MAX 8 in July. Engineers have completed an assessment of the airplane's performance confirming an additional 1 percent fuel-efficiency improvement over the 13 percent already promised to customers.

"Program and airplane performance just continues to improve," said Keith Leverkuhn, vice president and general manager, 737 MAX program, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "We have been very disciplined in our approach and continue to realize more benefit for our customers as we retire risk on the program and get further into development."

Airlines that will operate the 737 MAX now will realize a 14 percent fuel-efficiency improvement over today's most fuel efficient single-aisle airplanes. At longer ranges, the improvement will be even greater.

"This recent fuel-efficiency gain will widen the performance gap in the single-aisle market, reinforcing the 737 MAX's position as the value leader," said Leverkuhn.

The 737 MAX will feature several new systems that will improve the management of maintenance information. For example, some Built-In Test Equipment (BITE) information will be brought into the flight deck. Today, maintenance technicians access this fault data in the forward electronic equipment bay of the airplane. By bringing this data up to the flight deck, maintenance issues can be resolved faster.

The MAX also will include an enhanced onboard network system comprised of a digital flight data acquisition unit (eDFDAU) and network file server (NFS). These systems will provide a centralized data collection system with more storage capacity, doubling the maintenance data available during flight. The system will be capable of connecting the airplane in flight to airplane operations on the ground enabling airlines to better prepare for potential dispatch issues.

"We are enhancing the capability of the 737 MAX to meet the future needs of a digital world," said Michael Teal, chief project engineer, 737 MAX. "Recognizing that the Next-Generation 737 is already the most reliable single-aisle airplane with 99.7 percent of flights departing on time, we are being very deliberate about any changes we make to the airplane systems on the 737 MAX to make the airplane even easier to operate and maintain."

Some of these systems such as the eDFDAU and NFS are under development for initial delivery on the Next-Generation 737 prior to the 737 MAX. Many of these systems were tested during the 737 ecoDemonstrator program last year, showing the value they will provide to airlines operating the 737 MAX.

"Through careful testing and selective application on the Next-Generation 737 before MAX enters service, we can ensure these systems are ready to enhance the management of our customers' fleets," said Teal.

Engineers continue to make progress on the detailed design of the airplane. Recently the team completed the Firm Systems Definition, which defines the hardware locations for the systems on the airplane.

"Throughout the design process we'll continue to look for opportunities to improve operational performance, schedule and cost for our customers," said Leverkuhn. "We are on track for first delivery of the 737 MAX in the third quarter of 2017."

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