

Braathens Chooses Next-Generation Boeing 737-700s

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Braathens S.A.F.E, Scandinavia's largest 737 operator, announced today it will expand its existing fleet of Boeing 737-400 and -500s with Next-Generation 737-700s.

The Oslo-based airline has purchased six 737-700s valued at \$255 million. Deliveries begin in 1998 and continue through 2000. In addition, Braathens has reserved options for up to 10 additional aircraft.

"This announcement builds upon our strong relationship with Boeing and the 737 family," said Erik G. Braathen, president and chief executive officer. "The 737-700 will provide the benefits of fleet commonality we enjoy with our current 737 aircraft and help us keep to our business strategy of providing customers with a high quality, comfortable product at an affordable price."

With improved seat "pitch," or leg room, the Braathens 737-700 will carry 134 passengers in a one-class configuration. The new twinjets will be used for increased service in Braathens' short-range domestic Norwegian network.

"We're delighted with Braathens' decision to purchase the 737-700," said Ron Woodard, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group president. "We worked hard during the development of the Next-Generation 737 family to ensure that these airplanes would meet the needs of customers looking to build their fleets for the challenges of the next century."

Those challenges include liberalization of the European airline industry later this year and strict noise regulations. Designed for efficient, low-cost operation, all members of the 737-600/-700/-800 family are equipped with quiet, fuel-efficient CFM56-7 engines, which are designed to make the airplanes good community neighbors, particularly at airports such as Oslo's Fornebu/Gardermoen that are close to metropolitan centers.

With today's announcement, total 737 orders stand at 3,612 -- 523 of which are for the Next-Generation 737 family.

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