

## Boeing Next-Generation 737 Takes to the Skies

---

# Boeing Next-Generation 737 Takes to the Skies

The first Boeing 737-700 made its first flight today, with Boeing Capt. Mike Hewett and Ken Higgins at the airplane's controls.

At 10:05 a.m. PST, the airplane -- painted in the traditional Boeing red, white and blue paint scheme -- took off from Renton Municipal Airport in Renton, Wash., as hundreds of Boeing employees and their families watched and cheered. After heading north over Lake Washington, the pilots flew the newest member of the 737 family north over Tatum, east to Spokane and then back to Western Washington for landing at Boeing Field in Seattle.

"This flight is a historic moment for The Boeing Company and a major milestone for the most successful jetliner program in commercial aviation history," said Ron Woodard, president Boeing Commercial Airplane Group.

During the 3 hour, 35 minute flight, Hewett and copilot Higgins conducted a series of tests on the airplane's systems and structures. Using flight-test equipment on board the aircraft, information from the tests was recorded and the pilots transmitted verbal data back to Flight Test personnel working at the control room at Boeing Field. The same team of specialists later will analyze the data.

From 17,000 feet, Hewett said everything was going great.

"We've got a winner! This plane is fantastic," Hewett said. "I think 737 pilots around the world are going to feel right at home in this cockpit."

Since the Next-Generation 737 product line was launched in 1993, 24 airlines worldwide have ordered a total of 523 new 737-600/-700/-800 jetliners, setting a new aviation industry sales record before rollout of the first airplane.

"The Boeing Company develops the most reliable airplanes in the industry," said Woodard. "The Next-Generation program demonstrates our dedication to expand the Boeing airplane family with derivatives that offer unmatched value to our customers."

Jack Gucker, 737/757 derivative vice president, was on hand to greet the pilots at landing.

"This is an exciting moment! It marks the transition from the manufacturing process to the design validation program," Gucker said.

"Somewhere around the world a Boeing 737 takes off every six seconds. This first flight of the No. 1 737-700 just added to this amazing record."

The three newest 737 models will fly higher, faster, farther and with lower operating and maintenance costs.

The Next-Generation flight-test program consists of 10 airplanes, including four 737-700s, three 737-800s and three 737-600s. Each model's flight-test program is planned to last approximately seven months and will consist of more than 2,300 in-flight test hours. The 737-700 offers 128 to 149 seats and is equivalent in size to the current 737-300, but with greater range. The 737-800 is the second member of the Next-Generation 737 family and will roll out in June 1997 followed by first flight in July and certification in early 1998. The fuselage for the first 737-800 -- a stretched version of the current 737-400 and capable of carrying 160 to 189 passengers - currently is in the final stages production at the Boeing Wichita, Kan., facility. Later this week employees will load the fuselage on a railcar and transport the fuselage to Renton for final assembly including wings, engine and flight controls installation.

The 737-600, equivalent in size to the current 737-500, provides seating for 108 to 132 passengers. Currently, more than 40 percent of this model's "product definition" is released, with rollout planned for December 1997, first flight in January 1998 and certification in July 1998.

Southwest Airlines launched the 737-700 in November 1993 with an order for 63 airplanes and will take first delivery in October 1997. The 737-800 was launched in September 1994 with an order for 16 airplanes from Hapag-Lloyd of Germany. Hapag-Lloyd will take delivery of the first 737-800 in early 1998. SAS, or Scandinavian Airlines System, launched the 737-600 in March 1995 with an order for 35 airplanes and added six more in October of that year. Deliveries to SAS will begin in mid-1998.

Modifications to the Next-Generation 737's wing and engine will provide improved fuel capacity, fuel efficiency, speed and range. The total wing area will be increased by 25 percent to 1,340 square feet (125 square meters), providing 30 percent more fuel capacity for a total of 6,878 U.S. gallons (26,136 liters).

The airplane's range will be approximately 3,000 nautical miles (3,454 statute miles or 5,556 kilometers), an increase of up to 900 nautical miles over current-production 737s. This will allow U.S. transcontinental flights and increased 737 route capability throughout the world.

The 737-600/-700/-800 models are powered by new CFM56-7 engines produced by CFMI, a joint venture of General Electric of the United States and Snecma of France. The CFM56-7 will have a 10-percent higher thrust capability than the CFM56-3C engines that power today's 737s.

On a historic note, the first 737-100 made its first flight nearly 30 years ago. Since then, almost 3,600 of the popular twinjets have been ordered, making it the best-selling jetliner ever. In addition to commercial airplanes, Boeing also offers a business jet derived from the 737-700. With auxiliary fuel tanks, the business jet can fly more than 6,000 nautical miles. The business jet is sold and marketed through Boeing Business Jets, a joint venture formed this summer between The Boeing Company and the General Electric Co.

###

---