Icelandair Lines up for New Boeing 757-300

Boeing Commercial Airplane Group today confirmed that Icelandair will be the second customer for the new Boeing 757-300 and the first to use the big jetliner in regularly scheduled service.

Icelandair has announced a decision to purchase four Boeing 757 twinjets, including two 757-300s - a stretched version of the popular 757-200 - and two 757-200s. Estimated value of the four airplanes is $272 million.

Boeing will deliver the first 757-300 to Icelandair in the second quarter of 2001, with the second following a year later. The 757-200s will be delivered in January 1998 and April 1999. All will be powered by Rolls-Royce RB211-535 engines.

In addition, Icelandair has reserved options on eight additional 757s for possible delivery from 2000 - 2006.

The airline, the flag carrier of Iceland, is this July celebrating its 60th year of operations. Currently, it operates a fleet of four 757-200s in trans-Atlantic scheduled services and four 737-400s on European routes.

"Icelandair's experience with the 757-200s has been truly outstanding, and the aircraft are taylor-made for our routes," said Sigurdur Helgason, Icelandair president and CEO. "We believe that the new and even more efficient 757-300s will serve us and our customers extremely well," he added.

Launched by German holiday airline Condor Flugdienst at last year's Farnborough Air Show, the 757-300 represents a 7.1 meter (23 feet, 4 inches) lengthening of the fuselage of the popular 757-200.

The 757-300 will have about 10 percent lower seat-mile operating costs than the 757-200, which already has the lowest seat mile operating cost in its market segment. In Icelandair's configuration, the 757-300 will seat 228, including 26 in the airline's Saga business class.

Range capability of the newest 757 will be 4,000 miles (6,436 kilometers). Like the 757-200, it will be able to carry a full load of passengers between any two points within the continental United States or Europe.

As a derivative, the aircraft will have the same flight deck and operating systems, and very similar structure as the 757-200. Besides lengthening the fuselage, other changes will include strengthened wings and landing gear, and new tires, wheels and brakes. The 757-300 will maintain a common crew rating with the 757-200 and the Boeing 767.

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