Boeing Rolls Out World's Longest Commercial Jetliner

The world's longest commercial jetliner -- the 777-300 -- today made its first public appearance at a roll out ceremony marking the completion of manufacturing and the beginning of flight test.

Several hundred airline customers and suppliers joined thousands of Boeing employees outside the factory where the world's longest commercial jetliner in the world is built.

"The 777-300 is a lot longer, but we planned from the beginning to accommodate all three models of the 777 airplane on the same assembly line," said Ron Ostrowski, vice president and general manager of the 777 Program.

"Boeing workers began assembling the -300 in early April, and five months later they rolled out the world's longest commercial jetliner," Ostrowski said. "Their skill and dedication reflect the company's commitment to building the best airplanes in the world."

The 777-300 is the newest and largest member of the Boeing 777 airplane family. It is 242 feet 4 inches (73.8 meters) from nose to tail, making it 33 feet 3 inches (10.1 meters) longer than the 777-200. It carries 20 percent more passengers than the -200, for a total of 328 to 550, depending on the configuration.

The 777-300 also is 10 feet 6 inches (3.1 meters) longer than the 747-400. However, the 747-400 remains the largest commercial jetliner in the world, with a passenger capacity of 420 to 568, a maximum take-off weight of 875,000 pounds (396,890 kilograms) and a range of 8,290 statute miles (7,204 nautical miles, or 13,340 kilometers).

The maximum takeoff weight on the 777-300 is 660,000 pounds (299,370 kilograms). It has the same fuel capacity -- 45,220 gallons (171,160 liters) -- as the longer-range 777-200 Increased Gross Weight airplane, and will serve routes up to 6,560 statute miles (5,700 nautical miles, or 10,500 kilometers).

The 777-300 satisfies airline demand for an airplane that can replace early versions of the 747. The 777-300 has nearly the same passenger capacity and range capability as the 747-100/-200 models, but burns one-third less fuel and has 40 percent lower maintenance costs. The overall benefit for the airlines is cash operating costs one-third below the early model 747s.

The 777-300 Program was launched in June 1995 and achieved firm configuration in October 1995. Boeing set an aggressive goal to enter the airplane into service 32 months after firm configuration, with the first one scheduled for delivery to Cathay Pacific Airways of Hong Kong in May 1998.

"We have chosen the Boeing 777-300 because its capacity, operating economics and range fill an important niche in our fleet requirements," said Peter Sutch, chairman of Cathay Pacific Airways. "This aircraft will help Cathay Pacific grow by giving us the ability to add greater capacity to high-frequency, regional routes."

Customers for the 777-300 also include All Nippon Airways, Japan Airlines, Korean Air, Malaysia Airlines, Singapore Airlines and Thai Airways International.

"The airlines of Asia are relying on the 777 family to deliver unsurpassed performance and capability while transforming air travel to, from and within Asia," said Larry Dickenson, vice president - Asia-Pacific, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group. "We commend Cathay Pacific's leadership and appreciate their confidence in being the launch customer for the 777-300."

Typical routes for the 777-300 would include Tokyo-Singapore, Honolulu-Seoul or San Francisco-Tokyo. Engines for the airplane are certified to 90,000 pounds of thrust and are available from Pratt & Whitney, Rolls-Royce and General Electric.

The Boeing 777 airplane family has captured more than 67 percent of the market share for airplanes in its class, since the program was launched in October 1990. As of Aug. 15, Boeing had delivered 85 777s to 13 airlines and had 323 announced orders for the airplane from 25 airlines worldwide.

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