Boeing Business Jets Announces Five New Orders

Continuing the momentum it has built throughout this year, Boeing Business Jets today announced it has received five additional airplane orders, increasing its total orders to 25.

The announcement was made by Boeing Business Jets President Borge Boeskov during a news conference at the 1997 National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) annual meeting and convention in Dallas, Texas.

"We are extremely pleased to announce these new orders, which are indicative of the tremendous customer response to the Boeing Business Jet (BBJ) that we've seen all year and that we're continuing to see everywhere we go," Boeskov said.

The five new orders are the first announced by Boeing Business Jets since June, when the organization revealed it had sold 17 aircraft during the first half of 1997. Three BBJs were ordered in 1996.

Of the customers placing orders today, all -- except PrivatAir, a charter operator of executive jet airplanes based in Geneva, Switzerland (see related story) -- chose to remain anonymous, which often is the case in these types of private business transactions.

Other BBJ customers who have chosen to be identified include launch customer and joint-venture partner General Electric Co. (GE), and golfer and global businessman Greg Norman.

"This groundswell of customer activity is confirming that the BBJ offers a superior product with features that are opening up new dimensions in business travel," Boeskov said. "When we formed this joint venture with GE a year ago we predicted sales of about 100 airplanes over a 10-year period; or 10 per year. But the response has been so enthusiastic, we are now looking at a production rate of about two per month for the next three to five years beginning in 1998."

The business jet is a special high-performance derivative of the Boeing Next-Generation 737-700. It combines the size of the 737-700 fuselage (110 feet 4 inches, 33.6 meters) with strengthened wings and landing gear from the larger and heavier 737-800. This tailored combination provides owners with a business-jet platform that has a range of 7,140 statute miles (6,200 nautical miles, 11,480 kilometers) and payload flexibility beyond that of any competitor.

The airplane will cruise at speeds up to .82 Mach -- equivalent to a ground speed of 550 miles per hour, and will be able to serve such routes as New York to Tokyo and London to Johannesburg. It will be powered by the same CFM56-7 engines used on the 737-700 commercial jetliner. The engines are produced by CFM International, a 50/50 joint company of GE and Snecma of France.

With an 807-square-foot passenger cabin, the BBJ has nearly three times as much space as the largest existing executive jets. The interior can accommodate a variety of configurations with space for conference rooms; executive offices; and individual work, rest and exercise areas that exactly match a customer's personal work and travel preferences.

Boeing Commercial Airplane Group will provide airplanes to Boeing Business Jets, which then will fly them to Georgetown, Del., where long-range auxiliary fuel tanks will be installed by PATS, Inc., of Columbia, Md. From there, the airplanes will be delivered to a customer-selected completion center for interior installation and paint.

The BBJ is comparably priced with existing long-range corporate jets. The price for an unfurnished, or "green," airplane is $32 million (1995$). Typically, a completely furnished and equipped business jet will cost approximately $40 million at delivery.

The first BBJ is scheduled to roll out of the Renton, Wash., factory in mid 1998. GE will take delivery of the first business jet in the fall of 1998.

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