China Eastern Airlines Takes Delivery of Boeing MD-90s

China Eastern Airlines received its first two Boeing MD-90 advanced technology twinjets today, marking the beginning of a new relationship for both the airline and the airplane maker. China Eastern is a leading airline serving the People's Republic of China on international and domestic routes from its base in Shanghai. The MD-90s are the first two of nine that will be delivered to the carrier.

The new airplanes moved under their own power, into a nose-to-nose position, as a backdrop for a colorful ceremony that was accented by a traditional Chinese lion dance. The jetliners were accepted by Xu Min Zhu, vice president of China Eastern Airlines. He was joined by Dick Pearson, vice president and general manager of Douglas Products Division of Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, in dedicating the airplanes.

"We expect these MD-90s to be excellent additions to our domestic fleet," Mr. Xu said. "They are very important to China Eastern's continued success in service to Chinese air travelers."

"The MD-90 is ideally suited to help China Eastern Airlines meet the projected growth in the Chinese air transportation system," added Pearson. "We are very proud of this partnership with China Eastern and that our MD-90 will play a prominent role in the airline's operation, continuing the success built by the MD-11 and MD-80."

The MD-90s are a part of China's Trunkliner program that includes a total of 40 MD-90s, 20 of which are being built at the Douglas Products Division in Long Beach. The remaining 20 are being produced by the Shanghai Aircraft Industrial Corp. In addition, significant fabrication and sub-assembly production is under way in Chinese factories in Chengdu, Xian and Shenyang.

China Eastern Airlines' MD-90s are configured to accommodate 157 passengers in a two-class arrangement. The cabin features four-across first class seating and five-across economy class seating with a patented full-grip lighted hand rail located along the lower edge of the large overhead baggage racks.

The MD-90 is powered by a pair of International Aero Engines V2525-D5 turbofans, rated at 25,000 pounds of thrust. Combined with the airplane's design, the engines help make the MD-90 the quietest jetliner in its class. The fuel-efficient MD-90 also produces exhaust emissions that are well below strict international standards.

The new airplanes are targeted for use in one of the most heavily traveled regions of China, Anhui province, where China Eastern has a well-established customer base. The MD-90s can operate over a non-stop range of 2,400 statute miles (2,085 nautical miles, 3,860 kilometers).

China Eastern Airlines was founded in 1988, when the air travel industry in China was decentralized. The first MD-82 delivered to China in 1983 is part of the China Eastern fleet, which totals 13 MD-80s and six MD-11s.

China Eastern, an independently run company, is the first airline in the history of the People's Republic of China to go public, with 35 percent of its stock offered on the Hong Kong and New York stock markets.

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