Boeing Business Jets Announces Four New Orders

Boeing Business Jets today announced it has received four new orders, increasing total orders to 29.

The announcement was made by Boeing Business Jets Vice President Tom Lindberg at a news conference at the 1997 Dubai Air Show in the United Arab Emirates.

"Today's order announcement reflects the continuing popularity the Boeing Business Jet is enjoying among customers throughout the world," Lindberg said. "Customers are confirming the requirement for the new dimensions in space, comfort, utility and support the BBJ brings to the corporate jet marketplace."

The four new orders are the first announced by Boeing Business Jets since the National Business Aviation Association convention in Dallas, Tex., in late September. There, the organization announced five new orders. Including today's announcement, 1997 orders for Boeing Business Jets total 26. Three BBJs were ordered in 1996.

According to Lindberg, the market for the BBJ has been split, with approximately 40 percent of the customers based in the United States and the remaining 60 percent based internationally.

"Approximately 25 percent of the current BBJ customer base is located in the Middle East where the BBJ's performance capability makes it a perfect airplane for flights into Europe and to the United States," Lindberg said.

The new customers choose to remain anonymous, which often is typical in these types of private business transactions. BBJ customers who have chosen to be identified include launch customer and joint-venture partner General Electric Co. (GE); golfer and global businessman Greg Norman; and PrivatAir, a Geneva-based private jet-charter operator.

Today's announcement comes on the heels of an announcement late last month that Boeing Business Jets and Executive Jet Inc., of Montvale, N.J., had formed a joint venture to provide customers with fractional-share ownership of Boeing Business Jet airplanes. For many individuals and corporations, fractional ownership of business aircraft is a cost-effective alternative to acquiring an airplane. The Boeing-Executive Jet fractional-ownership program provides access to a BBJ for individuals and corporations who have a requirement for a large, long-range business airplane but who cannot yet fully utilize their own dedicated airplane.

Lindberg said the BBJ fractional-ownership program will start in the United States and gradually expand to fit in with Executive Jet's current activities in Europe and their planned expansion into the Middle East market.

"This has been a remarkable year for the BBJ," Lindberg said. "The program's momentum of growth, success and customer response has been well beyond anything we expected."

The business jet 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 boosts the jet's range to 7,140 statute miles (6,200 nautical miles, 11,480 kilometers) and payload flexibility beyond that of any competitor.

The BBJ's 807 square-feet passenger cabin can be configured to include executive offices and boardrooms, 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 $33.75 million (1997$). Typically, a completely furnished and equipped business jet will cost approximately $40 million at delivery.

The first Boeing Business Jet is scheduled to roll out of the Renton, Wash., factory in mid-1998, with first delivery following in the fall. The BBJ production rate will rise to two per month in 1999, with the possibility of adding to that if market demand continues at its current pace.

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