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Arkia Israeli Airlines, based in Tel Aviv, has placed an order for two 757-300 airplanes, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group (BCAG) confirmed today.

The package, valued at \$250 million, also includes two options for 757-300s, the newest member of the 757 family and the longest single-aisle twin-engine jet Boeing has ever made. Powered by Rolls-Royce engines, the first airplane is scheduled for delivery in the first quarter of 2000.

"The capabilities offered in the 757s fit directly into our plan of expanding our borders and offering more international charter flights," said Arkia President and Chief Executive Officer, Professor Israel Borovich. "The new airplanes will offer our passengers a new level of service and comfort."

The 757-300, scheduled to make its first flight Aug. 2, is a stretched version of the 757-200. The 757-300 has the lowest seat-mile cost in its market segment.

"Based on its range, fuel efficiency and operating economics, the new 757-300 will be a very popular airplane in the region," said Tom Basacchi, BCAG vice president - Europe. "Arkia has been a great supporter of Boeing over the years and we are delighted with their commitment to our newest member of the 757 family."

Arkia is the largest charter operator in Israel, and through its leasing subsidiary, owns a fleet of 23 Boeing airplanes, which are operated by airlines around the world.

Launched in September 1996, the 757-300 has 17 orders.

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