British Airways Chooses Boeing 777 For Long Haul

British Airways announced plans to purchase up to 32 777-200s, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group (BCAG) confirmed today. The order includes the 777-200ER (extended-range) jetliner - the most capable 777-200 model to date.

The order for 16 firm airplanes and 16 options is valued at nearly $5 billion. With this order, British Airways has ordered a total of 45 777-200s and a total of 306 Boeing airplanes. In a move intended to meet the changing demands of the airline's fleet requirements, some of these airplanes will be substituted for five firm 747-400s currently on order. Deliveries of the 777-200 jets are scheduled to begin in January 2000 and continue through 2002.

The 777-200ER will require engines capable of 90,000 pounds of thrust. British Airways is reviewing offers from Pratt & Whitney, Rolls Royce and General Electric to provide engines for these long-range 777s. The airline is expected to announce its choice of an engine manufacturer once it has completed its evaluation. The British Airways 777-200ERs will be equipped to carry 256 passengers in a three-class configuration as well as 16 tons of cargo.

British Airways and Boeing have been partners since the airline placed its first order for a 707 in October 1956.

"British Airways is a long-time valued Boeing customer and our largest customer outside of the United States," said Ron Woodard, president - Boeing Commercial Airplane Group. "We are delighted that British Airways chose the 777-200 to meet the increasing demand they are experiencing for frequent point-to-point service in the long-haul market."

British Airways will use the 777-200 airplanes across their long-haul network to develop new routes and add more flights on established ones. British Airways serves 169 destinations in 80 countries.

"The 777-200ER is a magnificent airplane that will serve the needs of British Airways well into the next century," Woodard said. "Like so many airlines worldwide, British Airways recognizes the superiority of the market-leading 777 in terms of range, speed, interior flexibility and passenger comfort."

Since its launch in October of 1990, the wide-bodied twinjet has been the market leader in its category. In every respect, the design of the 777 responds to market needs and reflects customer preferences. The result is an airplane offering spaciousness and flexibility found in no other jetliner and many features to enhance reliability and productivity - all with lower operating costs. The 777 provides the most payload, range capability and growth potential in the medium-size airplane market.

The skills and resources of a number of international aerospace companies contributed to the award-winning design and production of the 777. Firms in Europe, Canada, Asia and the United States provided components and portions of the structure to Boeing.

The Boeing Company has been working with European supplier partners for more than 30 years. Today Boeing's team consists of more than 460 major suppliers in 19 European countries. The company expects to spend more than $14 billion with European suppliers over the next five years - supporting more than 90,000 jobs in Europe annually.

In 1997, Boeing spent nearly $2.3 billion with more than 200 aerospace suppliers in the UK. These suppliers are located throughout the country and work with Boeing on both commercial and defense projects.

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