# Boeing Business Jet Makes Successful First Flight

Boeing Business Jets, a joint venture launched in 1996 by Boeing and General Electric Co. (GE), today marked the beginning of a new era in business air travel with the first flight of the Boeing Business Jet (BBJ).

The BBJ is a special high-performance derivative of the Boeing 737-700 specifically designed for corporate and VIP applications. It combines the size of the 737-700 fuselage (110 feet, 4 inches or 33.6 meters) with strengthened wings and landing gear from the larger and heavier 737-800. The airplane took to the skies from Renton Municipal Airport in Renton, Wash., at 9:13 a.m. PDT, with Capts. Mike Hewett and Mike Carriker at the controls. After heading north over Lake Washington, the pilots flew west to the Olympic Peninsula to conduct a series of flight tests. After two hours and two minutes, the airplane landed at Boeing Field in Seattle.

"For more than two years, we and our customers and suppliers have been looking forward to this day," said Boeing Business Jets President Borge Boeskov. "In 1996, we made a commitment to create a product that would bring new dimensions of space, utility, comfort and product support to the business jet marketplace. Today, that product has arrived for all the world to see. There should be no doubt whatsoever that Boeing and GE are fully committed to this market."

During the flight, Hewett and co-pilot Carriker conducted a series of tests on the airplane's systems and structures. Using flight-test equipment on board the airplane, information from the tests was recorded and transmitted back to Flight Test personnel working in the control room at Boeing Field. The same team of specialists will analyze the data later.

"It was a great flight," Hewett said. "Private and corporate pilots will be very pleased with the performance and handling of this airplane."

With today's flight, the BBJ begins an eight-week flight-testing and certification program. Since it is a derivative of the Next-Generation 737-700 and -800 models, much of the flight testing and certification requirements will have been accomplished during the flight-test programs of each of those models. The BBJ is scheduled to conduct more than 70 hours of flight tests prior to certification.

The BBJ has a range of more than 6,000 nautical miles and an 807-square-foot interior that offers 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. It will be powered by the same CFM56 engines used on the Next-Generation 737 commercial airplanes. The engines are produced by CFM International, a 50/50 joint company of GE and Snecma of France.

Boeing Commercial Airplane Group will provide airplanes to Boeing Business Jets, which will then deliver them to Georgetown, Del., where PATS Inc., will install supplemental fuel tanks. From there, the airplanes will be flown to one of five customer-selected completion centers for interior installation and paint. The five centers are Associated Air Center in Dallas; The Jet Center in Van Nuys, Calif.; Raytheon in Waco, Texas; Lufthansa Technik in Hamburg, Germany; and Jet Aviation in Basel, Switzerland.

The BBJ offers nearly three times the interior space of existing long-range business jets, yet is comparably priced. The price for an unfurnished or "green" airplane is $33.75 million (1998$). A completely furnished and equipped business jet will cost approximately $40 million to $45 million at delivery.

###

For further information:
Bill Cogswell
253-931-5834
cell 206-999-5340
pager 206-986-5808
Barbara Murphy
425-865-7974
cell 206-930-0197
pager 206-645-6096