KLM Lifts Boeing Next-Generation 737 Orders Above 1,000

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines announced plans to purchase four 737-900s, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group (BCAG) confirmed today at the Farnborough International Air Show. With this order, the Next-Generation program tops the 1,000 mark.

KLM also becomes the first European airline to purchase the 737-900, the newest member of the Next-Generation 737 family. The airline, which operates 36 737s - the 737-300 and 737-400 - and has announced orders for eight 737-800s, will take delivery of the 737-900s in the summer and fall of 2001. The package is valued at approximately $230 million.

The 737-900, powered by CFM56-7 engines, is the longest of the Next-Generation 737s and is designed to accommodate up to 18 more passengers than the 737-800. KLM will operate its 737-900s with a 170-seat dual-class interior, featuring a five-abreast business class.

"The 737-900 will be ideal for our high-density European routes," said KLM President and Chief Executive Officer Leo van Wijk. "We face fierce competition from all fronts, and this airplane - because of its low operating cost, high reliability and environmental benefits - will allow us to maintain our mission of offering a high-quality product at a competitive price. This new model has high commonality with our 737-800 and will increase our group's operational flexibility without added complexity and cost."

KLM recently won the Best-Managed Major Airline of the Year award from Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine. The KLM/Northwest Airlines alliance was selected as the Airline of the Year in 1997 by Air Transport World magazine.

"KLM is a very valued customer of Boeing. We are honored by KLM's commitment to our family of airplanes," said Harry Stonecipher, president and chief operating officer - The Boeing Co.. "The 737-900 is tailor-made for the intra-European market. The 737-900 has the lowest unit-costs of any aircraft in its class and I am convinced it will be a tremendous asset in KLM's operation."

The Next-Generation 737 program is the most successful commercial jetliner program in history, with 1,003 orders since the program was launched in November 1993. The Next-Generation 737s build on the strengths that have made the 737 the world's most successful airplane, while incorporating improvements designed for the 21st Century. Boeing has won more orders for the 737 family alone than the company's biggest competitor has won for its entire product line. The 737-900 program was launched in November 1997 and has received a total of 40 orders.

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