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Deliveries for Boeing Next-Generation 737 jetliners reached a significant program milestone when the 100th airplane was delivered to Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) today.

"It is rare for a commercial jetliner program to deliver so many airplanes so quickly following initial certification," said John Hayhurst, vice president and general manager - 737 Program. "No program in history has delivered a mix of three different models so rapidly."

SAS, which to date has ordered a total of 55 Next-Generation airplanes, accepted delivery of the milestone 737-600 airplane in a brief ceremony at Boeing Field.

"The Next-Generation 737 program's outstanding sales and performance success in such a brief period of time has been nothing short of amazing," Hayhurst added. "Overcoming production difficulties to produce 100 airplanes in approximately nine months is a tremendous record-breaking accomplishment for our employees - they deserve all of the credit."

Since its introduction in November 1993, the Next-Generation 737 product line - 737-600/-700/-800/-900 models - has smashed aviation industry sales records and become the fastest-selling commercial jetliner program in history. Next-Generation airplanes also are rated one of the best investments among operators in terms of residual value, operational success and value for dollars spent.

Each Next-Generation 737 builds on the strengths that have made the 737 the world's most successful airplane, while incorporating design enhancements for improved performance and reduced operating and support costs. For example, an improved wing design, which is 25 percent larger than the classic 737 wing areas, provides 30 percent more fuel capacity. Boeing also has instituted an advanced Common Display System into the Next-Generation flight deck, allowing airline customers to configure the displays similar to existing Boeing jetliners.

Additional design enhancements include the use of advanced and lightweight corrosion-resistant materials, simplified leading- and trailing-edge flaps and landing gear, increased range and improved avionics and engine performance.

Hayhurst explained that the evolution of the Next-Generation 737 product line serves as a model for meeting airline customer needs and providing efficient 21st century flight operations. "From the start, our customers helped us design a family of airplanes that are efficient, simple and flexible enough to meet both operating requirements and future market demands. The fruit of that teamwork is reflected in the rapid Next-Generation 737 sales and delivery pace."

Boeing Next-Generation 737 models have one of the highest reliability ratings -99 percent on-time gate departure - among commercial aircraft in service today. With 1,057 announced Next-Generation orders, total orders for the entire 737 family now exceeds 4,000 airplanes. More than 800 737s are in the air at any given time and one takes off every six seconds.

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