Authorities Approve Longer-Range 737-700 For Boeing Business Jet

Boeing Business Jets announced that an enhanced version of the 737-700 received Federal Aviation Administration and Joint Aviation Authorities approval on Oct. 29, several days earlier than the expected approval date of Nov. 2. This version of the 737-700 will be the platform for the Boeing Business Jet.

Borge Boeskov, president - Boeing Business Jets, attributed this early approval to a great team effort by Boeing and General Electric. GE is the partner in the joint venture that markets this high-performance derivative of the Next-Generation 737-700.

"This is another important milestone in the BBJ program," Boeskov said. "After just returning from the National Business Aviation Association convention in Las Vegas, where we announced 11 new orders, this set of approvals from the FAA and the JAA is more great news."

Boeing Business Jets' current order book stands at 46. Nine are committed to the Boeing NetJets fractional-ownership program, a joint venture between Boeing Business Jets and Executive Jet. Executive Jet is owned by Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

The Boeing Business Jets joint venture was launched in 1996 by Boeing and GE. The BBJ, specifically designed for VIP and executive customers, combines the size of the 737-700 fuselage (110 feet, 4 inches) with the strengthened wings and landing gear used by the larger and heavier 737-800.

The airplane has a range of more than 7,000 statute miles (6,085 nautical miles; 11, 270 kilometers) - nearly twice the range of a conventional 737-700 - and can cruise at speeds up to Mach 0.82, equivalent to a ground speed of 550 miles per hour.

Boeing Commercial Airplanes provides airplanes to Boeing Business Jets, which delivers them to PATS Inc. in Georgetown, Del., for installation of supplemental fuel tanks. From there, the airplanes are flown to customer-selected centers around the world for interior installation and exterior paint. Five such centers include 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. Other completion centers are available and may be used at the discretion of the customer.

The unfurnished or "green" airplane is comparably priced to existing executive jets, selling for $33.8 million. A completely furnished and equipped BBJ costs approximately $40 million to $45 million.

The first BBJ is being used by Boeing as a demonstrator model. After 18 months, it will be incorporated into the Boeing fleet.

BBJ deliveries are scheduled to begin by the end of 1998.

The Boeing Company is the largest aerospace company in the world. It is the world's largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft, and is the nation's largest NASA contractor. Company revenues in 1997 were $45.8 billion.

Boeing has customers in 145 countries and employees in more than 60 countries and 27 states. Worldwide, Boeing and its subsidiaries employ more than 234,600 people. More than 14,000 Boeing commercial airplanes have been ordered and more than 12,000 delivered. Of these totals, more than 4,000 of these orders and more than 3,000 of these deliveries have been model 737s, the airplane upon which the Boeing Business Jet is based and the world's best-selling and industry's most reliable commercial jetliner.

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