Boeing 717-200 Beating Program Performance Targets

The Boeing 717-200 is exceeding fuel burn performance targets, the company announced today. Fuel consumption data from the 717-200 flight test and certification program show fuel burn improvements by as much as five percent.

"Through a combination of more efficient engine operations and reduced drag on the airframe, the 717 is using less fuel than our original aggressive targets," said Jim Phillips, vice president and general manager of the 717 Program. "This is great news for our customers and for other airlines who will be adding the 717 to their fleets."

Phillips estimated that the improved performance of the 717 could mean savings equivalent to five percent at cruise altitude and 2.5 percent during climb. Together, these improvements would yield approximately three percent fuel savings on a typical 300-500 nautical mile mission and a savings of four percent at 1,000 nautical miles.

"Fuel is a big cost for airlines," Phillips explained, "and every percentage point savings translates into better earnings for the operator. This validation of even better performance by the 717 airframe and the BMW Rolls-Royce engine should convince airlines that no other airplane can compete with the 717 in its class."

The Boeing 717-200 - designed for short-haul, high-frequency airline use - is the only new 100-seat passenger jet now in flight test and production. The 717 is scheduled for joint certification by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and Europe's Joint Airworthiness Authorities this summer. The first delivery to AirTran Airways, launch customer of the 717-200, is scheduled for September.

"When the 717 enters service," Phillips said, "operators will find it's the cost-effective tool they need, and airline passengers will find jetliner spaciousness and comfort on even the shortest routes. It's a winning combination."

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