Paris-Bound Boeing 717 Sports New Paint For European Tour

The Boeing 717-200 airplane that will perform flying demonstrations at the upcoming international Paris Air Show has rolled out of the company's paint hangar glistening in its red, white and blue Boeing livery.

The newly painted twinjet will be repainted in the colors of launch customer AirTran Airways before it is delivered in September.

Boeing Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Phil Condit, called the 717 "the best solution for the growing 100-seat airplane market."

"Results from our flight test program confirm our views," Condit said. "The 717 is exceeding our performance expectations in areas such as fuel burn, where we are seeing improvement of as much as five percent through a combination of efficient engine operations and airframe design. The savings will translate into better earnings for our customers and is further indication that the 717 stands alone in its class.

"We believe the 717 is a great airplane that complements our existing family of airplanes and will further enhance the full range of Boeing products and services," he added.

The 717 has been specifically designed for the short-haul, 100-seat passenger market, with low acquisition, operating and maintenance costs. It is the only new airplane in its class currently in flight test and production.

Following the Paris Air Show in June, the airplane will embark on a 10-day customer tour in cities throughout Europe, performing demonstration flights for airline executives, pilots and other guests.

Cities currently scheduled for customer demonstration flights are Zurich, Switzerland; Helsinki, Finland; Berlin; Madrid and Palma, both in Spain; Athens, Greece; Rome; Milan, Italy; and London. Boeing also is making plans to fly the 717 into airports in other cities in Europe.

Participating in the tour will be the 16-member team of 717 supplier-partners, including four based in Europe. These are BMW Rolls-Royce, the engine manufacturer; Alenia, which provides the fuselage; Fischer Advanced Composite Components, the interior manufacturer; and Labinal, which provides wiring.

The interior of the Paris-bound airplane is arranged in a complete two-class configuration to show customers and other guests its spacious and comfortable seating characteristics.

Four 717s currently are making good progress in flight testing and moving toward joint certification by Europe's Joint Airworthiness Authorities and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration later this summer. Eight more 717s are in various stages of final assembly at Long Beach.

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