

Boeing Business Jets Auxiliary Fuel Tank System Certified

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The long-range auxiliary fuel tank system for the Boeing Business Jet (BBJ) was awarded its Supplemental Type Certification (STC) this week from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

PATS, Inc., of Columbia, Md., received FAA approval of an STC for their auxiliary fuel system provisions on Boeing Business Jets on February 24, 1999 and received the STC for the fully operational fuel system on May 20, 1999.

The auxiliary fuel tank system was designed, built and installed by PATS, Inc. at their new Georgetown, Del., installation facility. The auxiliary fuel system was designed specifically for the BBJ and includes supplemental fuel tanks in both the forward and aft cargo holds. The system can accommodate various combinations of forward and aft fuel tanks; from one tank holding 520 additional gallons to nine tanks holding more than 3,800 additional gallons of fuel. BBJ customers select which tank arrangement they prefer based on their operational requirements.

After delivery in Seattle, BBJs are sent to PATS for fuel tank installation, and then on to an owner-selected completion center for interior installation and paint. Tanks installation on a BBJ normally takes three weeks, but can be installed in two weeks if necessary.

The auxiliary fuel system for the BBJ is a derivative of the PATS systems that have been installed on 727, 737, 757, 767, MD-82/-83 and other aircraft since 1976. While the design is not new, it has been extensively revised to increase flexibility for multiple-tank arrangements and improve operational characteristics for the BBJ.

Boeing has worked with PATS throughout the development of the BBJ system to ensure it meets Boeing Business Jets requirements.

DeCrane Aircraft Holdings, Inc., -- a major provider of cabin management products for the high-end corporate aircraft industry -- purchased PATS, Inc., on January 22, 1999.

A BBJ equipped with a PATS nine-tank fuel system recently completed the longest ever 737 nonstop flight around the perimeter of the United States. The airplane flew for 13 hours 51 minutes 42 seconds and traveled 6,252.5 nautical miles (7,200.4 statute miles) (11,580 kilometers).

The BBJ is a derivative of the Boeing Next-Generation 737-700, combining the -700 fuselage with the strengthened wings and landing gear of the larger and heavier 737-800. Boeing Business Jets is a joint venture between The Boeing Company and General Electric Co. Begun in July 1996, the venture had received 46 BBJ orders as of April 30, 1999.

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