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BWIA West Indies Airways today took delivery of its first Boeing Next-Generation 737-800, becoming the first 737-800 operator in the Latin America and Caribbean regions.

The delivery flight also transported 5,000 pounds of medicines and relief supplies to Trinidad, where they will be transferred to an airplane bound for Caracas, Venezuela. In partnership with BWIA and Northwest Medical Teams International of Portland, Oregon, Boeing coordinated the shipment of supplies through its International Relief Delivery Flights program to help the people of Venezuela following the recent devastating mudslides.

BWIA is scheduled to take delivery of five more 737-800s - on lease from International Lease Finance Corporation (ILFC) - in 2000.

"This aircraft is our future. The Next-Generation 737 meets the BWIA market mission now and for the next decade," said BWIA President and CEO Conrad Aleong. "Our customers deserve new aircraft technology, improved on-board comfort and in-flight entertainment, and most of all, on-time reliability. Our employees selected this airplane to be the flagship for their future. We are all satisfied with and proud of their choice. We look forward to a long and strong relationship with Boeing, ILFC and CFMI, the engine manufacturer."

The Next-Generation 737 is the newest and most advanced single-aisle airplane family. The airplane's completely redesigned passenger cabin continues to win praise for its spaciousness, comfort and design.

The Next-Generation 737 features a larger wing for increased distance and fuel efficiency, new systems and avionics, higher cruise speed and new engines.

The Boeing 737 is the best-selling commercial jetliner of all time. To date, customers worldwide have ordered more than 1,350 Next-Generation 737s. More than 1,000 737s are in the air at any time; one takes off somewhere in the world every 5.5 seconds.

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