Hapag-Lloyd Takes Delivery of 50th Boeing Airplane

Hapag-Lloyd, the major German holiday charter airline, took delivery last Monday of its 50th new Boeing jetliner, a Boeing Next-Generation 737-800. The airplane was one of three new 737-800s the Hannover-based carrier received that day. This brings the current Hapag-Lloyd fleet to a total of 34 airplanes, including 26 737-800s.

All three jetliners departed Seattle Monday within 30 minutes of each other for the Hapag-Lloyd main base in Hannover. Upon arrival, they joined up in a three-airplane formation for a low-level fly-by of the Hannover airport prior to landing.

Part of The Preussag Group, the largest travel and tourism company in Europe, Hapag-Lloyd plans to use the new 737-800s on routes from several German cities to holiday destinations in the Mediterranean and the Canary Islands.

A long-time Boeing operator, Hapag-Lloyd was formed in late 1972 and began operations in 1973 with 727-100s. Hapag-Lloyd has been buying new Boeing jetliners since 1978, when it ordered three Boeing 727-200s. Hapag-Lloyd then went on to purchase 737-400s, 737-500s and, in later years, became the launch customer for the Next-Generation 737-800.

"For more than 20 years, we have partnered with Boeing to provide our passengers with the most comfortable, reliable transportation in the sky," said Wolfgang Kurth, managing director of Hapag-Lloyd. "Boeing has produced an aircraft that has best met our needs and which allows us to retain our competitive advantage in the inclusive tour marketplace. We look forward to continuing our successful commercial partnership with them for many years to come."

Kurth said the airline is extremely pleased with 737-800's performance, low fuel consumption, and low maintenance costs. It is an airplane that has substantially lowered the company's per seat operating costs.

"The delivery of these three jetliners underscores the success that Hapag-Lloyd and Boeing have shared with the 737-800," said Toby Bright, vice president - Europe and Russia. "We are delighted at the airline's continuing commitment to the airplane. The Preussag Group - of which Hapag-Lloyd is an important member - is a leading force in the European inclusive tour industry. We are happy that they have chosen this airplane as the foundation for their fleet."

Hapag-Lloyd was the first airline in the world to order Boeing Next-Generation 737-800s. The carrier's order for 16 737-800s in November 1994 launched the 737-800 program. This was followed by reorders for 11 additional 737-800s, plus additional options.

The airline, which operates the largest 737-800 fleet in Europe, was the first carrier in the world to fly the 737-800 equipped with blended winglets when it provided one of its 737-800s as a certification-test airplane for the blended winglet technology. Hapag-Lloyd is scheduled to put its first 737-800 with winglets into service later this spring.

The winglets are expected to significantly improve the 737-800's already low fuel consumption, emissions, and takeoff noise levels. The fuel consumption of Hapag-Lloyd's 737-800s currently is as low as 2.3 liters per 100 seat-kilometers.

Building a quieter, more fuel-efficient airplane was a top priority for Boeing engineers designing the Next-Generation 737 family. The new, advanced-technology wing design on the models helps improve fuel efficiency. The model's new CFM56-7 engines produced by CFMI, a joint venture of General Electric Co. of the United States and Snecma of France, meet community noise restrictions well below current Stage 3 limits and below expected Stage 4 limits. Emissions also are reduced beyond required standards.

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