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The Boeing Company today announced a firm order from Alitalia -- Linee Aeree Italiane, S.p.A. -- for five Boeing 747-400 passenger airplanes. Deliveries of the airplanes are scheduled to begin in March 2001. When delivered, the five new passenger airplanes will join Alitalia's fleet of 157 airplanes - 118 of which are Boeing airplanes comprising 11 747-200s, eight MD-11s, nine 767-300ERs (extended range) and 90 MD-80s.

These airplane orders have been accounted for in cumulative order totals published previously by Boeing. Until this announcement, the customer for the order was unidentified.

"The 747-400 will be a great addition to our fleet," said Mario Rosso, Alitalia executive vice president, Business and Fleet Development. "With its state-of-the-art inflight entertainment systems, and increased range and capacity, more of our passengers will be able to travel comfortably on non-stop flights from Milan and Rome. These airplanes will serve North and South America, the Far East, South Africa and Australia."

Alitalia currently serves 130 destinations in 63 countries, carrying 25 million passengers and 300,000 tons of freight every year. The airline has more than 50,000 connections throughout the world with a total of 5,000 flights a week.

"We are pleased that Alitalia has chosen the 747-400 to meet its globalization plans," said Seddik Belyamani, executive vice president, Sales and Marketing, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group. "With lower operating costs than any other airplane in the world, and with the greatest combined passenger and cargo carrying capabilities, the 747-400 will generate more revenue for Alitalia than other airplanes in the marketplace."

Known as the "Queen of the Skies," the Boeing 747 ranks as the world's largest and fastest subsonic-commercial jetliner. The 747 is the best-selling twin-aisle airplane in the industry, with 1,318 ordered - including this order.

Over the years, Boeing has built 15 different 747 models. The 747-400, currently the only 747 model in production, entered commercial service in 1989 and has sold more than any other 747 version. More than 500 747-400s are in service today and the 747-400 is the only jetliner able to carry 416 passengers 8,380 miles (13,480 km) in nonstop flagship comfort.

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For further information:

Lewis Brinson
(206)766-2116

Gary Lesser
(425)342-4773
