American Trans Air to Acquire 47 Boeing 737s and 757s

The Boeing Company today confirmed that American Trans Air (ATA) has signed an intent to order 30 of The Boeing Company's newest jetliner models. The Indianapolis-based carrier - the nation's 11th largest - plans to purchase 10 Boeing 757-300s and 20 Boeing Next-Generation 737-800s. ATA plans to lease an additional 17 737-800s - 12 from International Lease Finance Corp. and five from GE Capital Aviation Services.

"We have worked together with the leasing companies and engine manufacturers, Rolls-Royce and CFM International, to offer American Trans Air a far-reaching customer solution that will allow them to modernize their fleet and expand their operations into important markets using our single-aisle family of jetliners," said Seddik Belyamani, executive vice president - Sales and Marketing, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group. "The success of this campaign is a strong indicator of how carriers can benefit from a complete and capable family of jetliners."

"This agreement heralds an innovative and comprehensive financing package that meets ATA's requirements," said Tom Motherway, president, Boeing Capital Corporation (BCC).

BCC, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Boeing Company, provides custom financing and leasing solutions for commercial and business aircraft, and commercial equipment.

"I'm particularly pleased that GECAS and ILFC also played such a pivotal role in the overall ATA fleet solution," Motherway added.

ATA will be the North American launch customer for both the 757-300 and the 737-800 equipped with new, advanced-technology winglets. The 757-300 entered service in 1999 and established a new aviation record for first-year reliability. The Next-Generation 737-800 entered service in 1998 and is part of a new family of 737s that are the most advanced jetliners in their class. In February, Boeing began offering customers a "blended" winglet as an option on 737-800s, which allow operators to save fuel and increase range or carry additional payload.

"The Boeing 757-300 gives ATA the seat count, range and operating efficiencies we require in our highly competitive business," said John Tague, chief executive officer, American Trans Air. "In addition, we're extremely pleased that the high-technology winglet on the Next-Generation 737-800 will give us the exceptional performance we need to fly out of Chicago for service to the east and west coasts."

With the new 757-300, ATA will be able to take advantage of the same-type pilot rating for Boeing 757-200s already in operation in its fleet. The two versions can be easily interchanged on routes as demand fluctuates.

The 757-300 and 737-800 have much in common. A maximum cruising altitude of 41,000 feet (12,496 meters) for both the 757 and Next-Generation 737, give passengers a smoother ride. Airlines benefit by being able to fly above bad weather, congested routes and less capable airplanes. The 757-300s have another common tie with the Next-Generation 737s: Boeing offers the same newly designed, 777-style interiors on both models.

"Passengers aboard either airplane will enjoy the same level of comfort," Belyamani said. "These interiors are designed for 21st century travel."

By adding the 757-300s and 737-800s to its fleet, ATA will be introducing the latest advanced-design airplanes into the 160-seat to 289-seat market.

The 757-300 recorded a 99.6 percent reliability rate in its first year of service with launch customer Condor. The 757-300 can fly 3,467 nautical miles and carry 243 passengers in a typical two-class configuration.

The Next-Generation 737 family was launched in 1993. Boeing designed an all-new wing and added a new high performance engine to extend the 737 range, add cruising altitude and increase its speed. Although many 737 features were changed, what didn't change was the simplicity and reliability of the most successful commercial jet in history. For airlines, that translates into lower maintenance costs, fewer schedule interruptions and lower costs for spares. The benefits for passengers include fewer flight delays, fewer missed connections and lower fares. The 737-800 can fly 3,065 nautical miles and carry 162 passengers in a typical two-class configuration. The new, eight-foot-tall winglets enable the airplane to fly farther, burn 3 percent to 5 percent less fuel, or carry up to 6,000 pounds more payload.

More than 1,000 757s have been sold to date, and the Next-Generation 737 remains the fastest-selling jetliner in aviation history.

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