Air France Places Major Order for Boeing Longer-Range 777-300s

Order will satisfy growing long-haul seating requirements

Air France has confirmed its selection of the Boeing longer-range 777-300 as the airplane that will satisfy its increasing capacity requirements for long-haul routes. The French carrier is purchasing 10 airplanes with options for 10 more. The first airplane is scheduled for delivery in October 2003.

"This decision is very coherent with our choice in 1996 to purchase the 777-200ER whose operational, technical and economical performance has now been proven," said Pierre Vellay, Air France corporate vice president, New Aircraft & Fleet Development.

Air France operates 11 777-200ERs, with 12 more scheduled for delivery during the next few years.

Expected growth in international traffic is due in part to Air France's partnership with Delta Air Lines, Korean Air and Aeromexico in the global Skyteam Alliance. The economical, high-capacity longer-range 777-300 jetliner will fulfill the requirements resulting from this growth.

"We're thrilled that Air France has declared its confidence in the new 777s as the answer to its long-range needs," said Seddik Belyamani, executive vice president, Sales and Marketing, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group. "And we are confident Air France will receive outstanding financial returns on its investment."

Purchasing another member of the Boeing 777 family offers Air France an element of simplification in pilot training; maintenance procedures, manuals and inspection requirements; and reduced spares inventories. It also provides a well-designed, harmonious fleet, which is being modernized and upgraded. A further benefit for Air France is economics: fuel burn is considerably lower for the twin-engine longer-range 777-300 as are seat-mile costs.

The differences between the 777-200ER and the longer-range 777-300 are in passenger and cargo capacity, and engine thrust. The 777-200ER capacity is 270, while the new longer-range 777-300 capacity is 348. In addition, the new longer-range 777-300 holds more cargo - 20.8 tons versus 12.7 tons on the 777-200ER.

The plane will be powered by a GE90-115B engine with a thrust of 115,000 pounds - the highest engine thrust in aviation history (as compared to 94,000 pounds on the 777-200ER). General Electric (GE) has been improving the engine's design features for almost three years, ensuring a timely, low-risk development program. Detailed design work on the engine is under way. The GE90-115B is derived from the successful GE90 family of engines that has been in service since 1995.

The engine is distinguished by swept composite fan blades, and a high-efficiency, high-pressure compressor. FAR/JAR33 type certification of the GE90-115B by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and the European Community's Joint Airworthiness Authorities is targeted for 2002, with the GE90-115B-powered 777 to be ready for entry into service in 2003. further engine information, click here.

The longer-range 777-300 offers the same level of comfort and spaciousness for air travel with its passenger pleasing and award-winning interior as previous 777 models.

The new acquisition contract includes an agreement with Boeing and its Airplane Services division, which allows Air France Industries to offer a global support and "Customized Fleet Service" to any customer.

Also included is an agreement with General Electric that extends cooperation between GE and Air France in the field of engine maintenance.

The longer-range 777-300 was launched in February 2000, along with the longer-range 777-200 jetliner. Rollout of the first airplane is set for late 2002. Flight testing of the longer-range jetliners is expected to begin in early 2003 with certification and first deliveries set for later that year.

Boeing anticipates a market demand for more than 500 of the new longer-range 777 airplanes, with about 45 percent of those going to Asian operators. Customers so far include Japan Airlines, EVA Airways, All Nippon Airways, GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS) and International Lease Finance Corporation (ILFC).

For detailed information on both models of the new longer-range airplanes, please click here.

The relationship between Boeing and Air France goes back more than 55 years. The airline currently operates 97 Boeing airplanes of various models. For more information about Air France, please click here.

###

For further information:

Kathleen Hanser
206-766-2911
Lori Gunter
425-294-6100
Jean Marc Fron
(French, Brussels)
32(2)777-0747