Boeing Jetliner Orders Soar Beyond 15,000

A surge in orders this fall has pushed net total orders for Boeing commercial jetliners above the 15,000 mark, a milestone matched by no other commercial jetliner manufacturer in history.

Pan American World Airways was the first airline to place an order for Boeing jetliners, with a split order for 20 Boeing 707s and 25 Douglas DC-8s on Oct. 15,1955. Boeing and Douglas were competing manufacturers then, but were joined through the 1997 Boeing / McDonnell Douglas merger.

Since then, Boeing has grown from those two pioneering models to the most modern and complete range of airplane products and services in the industry. Eight of every 10 commercial jetliners flying today with 100 seats or more were born in Boeing factories.

"This milestone is a testament to our customers, whose trust, guidance and confidence helped us become the preferred provider of commercial airplanes and services," said Alan Mulally, president - Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group. "This is also a tribute to the employees of Boeing and our extended enterprise around the world, from the beginning of the Jet Age to the present, who possessed the vision, passion, dedication and skill to build the world's best jetliners."

A 74-airplane order confirmed last month by GE Capital Aviation Services caused cumulative orders to soar beyond 15,000. The package included orders for 59 Next-Generation 737s, five Boeing 777-200ERs and 10 Longer Range Boeing 777s. With nearly 500 net jetliner orders already placed in 2000, demand for Boeing Commercial Airplanes has increased 25 percent over 1999's total. Cumulative net orders for Boeing jetliners as of Nov. 1 were 15,080.

The route to the 15,000th order was characterized by intense competition, a changing regulatory environment, and even a few surprises. Among them:

- When the first Boeing 747 was being developed, airlines believed that supersonic transports would meet most of the demand for long-range travel, leaving the 747 to spend the balance of its service life as a freighter. Instead, the Boeing 747 became one of the most successful passenger transports in history, with more than 1,300 orders to date. Only 14 SSTs entered service.
- The Boeing 737 was launched amid concern that the market for airplanes of its size and range was limited, and that Boeing had entered the market too late, since Douglas Aircraft Company already had 200 orders in hand for the competing DC-9. As it turned out, the Boeing 737 became the best-selling commercial jetliner of all time, accounting for nearly one-fourth of the world's commercial jets. Orders for the advanced Next-Generation 737 models, which first entered service in 1998, account for 35 percent of all orders ever placed for Boeing 737s.
- The initial Boeing 767 was intended for intra-continental service. But the airplane's capabilities, taking advantage of technological advances and progress in deregulation, has made it the world's No. 1 airplane for trans-Atlantic travel.

The company's airplane products range from the short-haul, 106-passenger Boeing 717 to the long-range, 416-passenger Boeing 747 jumbo jet - and every market in between. A new generation of advanced, more capable and larger Boeing 747s is being developed, as are ultra-long-range versions of the popular Boeing 777 models.

To access a variety of current and historical reports on Boeing commercial airplane orders and deliveries, check out the company's Orders and Deliveries website.

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