Boeing Longer-Range 777 Airplanes Take Shape

The Boeing Longer-Range 777 airplanes just moved one big step closer from concept to reality. Boeing engineers have finalized the definition of the basic configuration for the Longer-Range 777-200 and 777-300, the newest members of the popular Boeing 777 airplane family.

This means the airplanes have been defined to the level of detail required to ensure that they will meet mission requirements in service. Boeing engineers now can begin defining detailed designs and releasing design information to Boeing factories and suppliers for the building of parts, assemblies and tools for the new airplanes.

"This is a major transition point in the program," said Lars Andersen, program manager for the Longer-Range 777 airplanes. "With the basic configuration set, we know what we have to do to get to the next major steps. Firm configuration gives us a solid platform from which to define our detailed designs and release this information to manufacturing to begin its build process."

The Longer-Range 777 Program, which was launched in February 2000, is on track to complete 25 percent of its design releases during the third quarter of this year. Deliveries of the Longer-Range 777s are scheduled to begin third quarter 2003.

The Longer-Range 777s extend the range of the 777 airplane family. The Longer-Range 777-200 will fly 301 passengers as far as 8,820 nautical miles (16,330 kilometers) - from Singapore to New York, for example - making it the longest-range airplane ever built. The Longer-Range 777-300 will fly 365 passengers as far as 7,250 nautical miles (13,430 kilometers) - from Paris to Los Angeles, for example.

"These airplanes are right on the mark," Andersen said. "They're the ideal solution for where the market is heading. Airlines are moving toward getting passengers to their final destinations in the fastest, most direct way possible. This means providing the airlines with airplanes that can fly directly from one point to another without stopping at hub airports for connecting flights."

The Longer-Range 777s build on the features and capabilities that have made the 777 the market leader in the "intermediate twin-aisle" category. They will have the same award-winning interior as the existing 777 models, giving passengers a more comfortable and spacious environment - wider seats, more head and shoulder room and more overhead stowage volume.

Like the current production models, the new longer-range airplanes are expected to out-perform the competition economically. Going head-to-head with the Airbus A340-500/-600s, the Boeing Longer-Range 777s will have seat-mile costs that are 14 to 18 percent lower and fuel burn that is 21 to 22 percent lower.

The fuel-efficient, twin-engine 777 longer-range airplanes will be powered by a higher-thrust derivative of the General Electric GE90 engine that is offered on the existing 777s. The derivative engine will provide 115,000 pounds of thrust, which is the most ever on a commercial jetliner.

The 777 is the fastest selling twin-aisle airplane ever, with the year 2000 being a record year for the most 777s sold -117 airplanes - in a single year. The 777 family of airplanes has captured 69 percent of its market, with more than 30 customers worldwide having ordered 563 airplanes. This includes 49 Longer-Range 777s ordered by six customers. The 777 worldwide fleet consists of 317 airplanes.

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