Innovative New Cargo Handling Systems Installed On First Boeing 757 Special Freighter

Boeing completed installation of an innovative new cargo handling system for the first 757SF (Special Freighter) at its Boeing Airplane Services Wichita facility today. Launch customer DHL Worldwide Express will receive the airplane from Boeing in early March.

The systems, designed and built by Boeing, are installed on the main deck, lower forward compartment and lower aft cargo compartment. Both systems use innovative and robust hardware to meet the high reliability requirements of time sensitive shipments.

The main deck system is unique because it can accommodate a variety of certified Unit Load Devices (ULDs), such as pallets and containers, at the same time. For example, DHL will be able to carry a combination of 88x125 inch ULDs, 96x125 inch ULDs, 88x108 inch commercial ULDs and a LD3 or AXY container. This flexibility will allow DHL to interline a wider variety of freight with other airplanes.

The lower deck system features the ability to carry DYH containers in a narrow-body airplane for the first time. By using containers in the lower deck, turn-around time is expected to decrease significantly. Benefits of the new system will be even more evident as 757 derivatives grow in length. In addition, the system can be quickly installed to the existing anchor plates.

As the launch customer, DHL worked closely with Boeing engineers in the development and design of the Cargo Handling System to produce a state of the art, fully flexible system.

"I believe this system sets new standards for the industry to follow," said Neale Millett, DHL Network Airside manager. "It gives DHL the ability to achieve the tight turn-rounds demanded by our network. The innovative powered lower lobe system will lead to optimal use of the bellies within the time frames available and further reduce the risks of back injuries to loading staff."

The airplane is the first of 44 that Boeing Airplane Services is purchasing, converting and providing to DHL under a multi-year arrangement, as part of a total fleet management solution.

"Installation of this new system is an important milestone for the program," said Bob Avery, president of Boeing Airplane Services. "As always, working together with our customer results in a world-class product."

The 757SF modification involved the removal of the passenger furnishings, installation of a side cargo door, replacement of selected floor panels to strengthen the main deck floor, and installation of a cargo handling system. The 757SF will be capable of carrying 60,000 pounds (27,210 kg) of cargo more than 2,000 nautical miles (3,704 km) with a volume payload capacity of more than 8,000 cubic feet (226.535 cubic meters).

Boeing Airplane Services provides customer-focused service solutions designed to meet an airline's individual requirements. Offerings include engineering retrofit packages, avionics upgrades, in-flight entertainment systems integration, cabin management solutions, passenger-to-freighter conversions, recovery and repair services, and airplane performance improvements for Boeing commercial airplanes.

Boeing Airplane Services is a unit of the Boeing Commercial Aviation Services organization, and as part of The Boeing Company, has access to all the experience and technical capabilities of the world's largest aerospace company. More than 11,000 Boeing airplanes are in operation today around the world.

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