New Boeing Airplane to Include Range of Possibilities

Product improvements aimed at increasing airplane speed and range always have been at the top of airlines' "wish lists." Boeing again is responding to its customers' needs - this time with the new, faster airplane it unveiled last month.

While the company will work with airlines to determine the new airplane's final configuration and operational performance targets - much like it continues to do with the highly successful 777 program - it is clear this new airplane will change the way the world flies.

The Boeing new, faster airplane will be able to provide faster service on any route. The airplane will cruise 15- to 20-percent faster than today's airplanes. But one question now under consideration is this: What range should the airplane be designed to fly?

Today's long-range airplane can fly from 6,600 to 8,500 nautical miles (12,223 to 15,742 kilometers) at speeds between Mach 0.80 and Mach 0.85. The Longer-Range Boeing 777-200, due to enter service in 2004, will be the first airplane to open routes as far as 8,810 nautical miles (16,316 kilometers). With speeds of Mach 0.95 or higher, the new airplane proposed by Boeing will make trips even quicker on any existing routes and may introduce entirely new routes that are 9,000 nautical miles (16,668 kilometers) or farther.

Should airlines and Boeing agree that 6,000 nautical miles (11,112 kilometers) is the appropriate solution, the airplane will make faster flights between cities like Tokyo and Chicago, Los Angeles and Paris, London and Cape Town, South Africa, and London and Tokyo. Trip times over these routes will be reduced by one hour and 35 minutes with the new airplane.

If 7,000 nautical miles (12,964 kilometers) is chosen as the target, additional city pairs will become possible: London-Singapore, Chicago-Beijing and New York-Tokyo. With the new airplane, flying time on these routes will be reduced by one hour and 50 minutes.

If an additional 1,000 nautical miles (1,852 kilometers) is added for a total of 8,000 nautical miles (14,816 kilometers), the airplane will serve the following city pairs: Los Angeles-Sydney, Los Angeles-Hong Kong and Hong Kong-New York. Using the new airplane, two hours could be saved on these routes.

Should the decision be made to design for a capability of 9,000 nautical miles (16,668 kilometers), the new airplane will make possible non-stop routes such as Singapore-Los Angeles, Los Angeles-Bangkok and New York-Singapore. These trips will take approximately 16 hours, 25 minutes.

If even longer range is required, the airplane will be configured to fly more than 10,000 nautical miles (18,520 kilometers). This will open service between London and Sydney for the first time, as well as between Sydney and New York. Such 10,000 nautical mile (18,520 kilometer) non-stop trips will take a little over 18 hours. Today, it takes much longer and requires a layover to fly from London to Sydney.

These city pairs are just examples of the routes that may be served by the new airplane, depending on requirements of the airlines. See the range charts attached for additional possible routes. Please note that the circle charts do not fully illustrate the effect of takeoff conditions, actual winds or airline routing, which can increase the distance required to fly a particular city pair route. Thus, some of the distances mentioned above may be greater than they appear on the accompanying charts.

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For further information:
Lori Gunter
office: 425-294-6100
Craig Martin
office: 206-766-2917