VARIG To Be First Operator Of Boeing Next-Generation 737 With Performance-Enhancing Winglets In Latin America

VARIG Airlines will be the first carrier in Latin America to operate the Boeing 737-800 with winglets when it takes delivery of two of the advanced airplanes in September and October. VARIG will operate the airplanes through a lease agreement with GATX Capital Corporation.

VARIG already has 14 737-800s on order.

"The winglets on the Boeing 737-800 represent the latest technology to improve flight performance and economics," said Ozires Silva, CEO of VARIG Airlines. "This is an important step in continuing to offer our passengers the best services."

The blended winglets on the 737-800 curve out and up from the wingtip, reducing aerodynamic drag and boosting performance. Some of the potential improvements include:

- Up to 4 percent better fuel burn.
- Reduced engine maintenance costs.
- Improvement on takeoff performance and obstacle clearance.
- Improved payload capability of one-half to three metric tons.
- Increased optimum cruise altitude.
- Reduced noise by 0.5 to 0.7 decibels on takeoff.

"VARIG will experience first-hand the performance benefits of the blended winglets on these advanced airplanes," said Daniel da Silva, vice president of Sales for Latin America, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "The 737 family offers the lowest operating costs in this market. This airplane helps continue our long-standing relationship with VARIG by providing the newest technology, the best economics and the highest comfort this market has to offer."

VARIG is Latin America's largest carrier, transporting more than 11 million passengers per year and serving 18 countries plus 34 cities within Brazil.

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