First 737-700 With Winglets Goes To Kenya Airways

The first Boeing 737-700 arrived in Kenya Monday, making Kenya Airways the first airline anywhere in the world to operate a 737-700 with blended winglets. Kenya Airways is expected to put the airplane into service later this month. The airplane will be leased through GE Capital Aviation Services.

"Our goal is to become the premier airline of choice in Africa and provide more frequency for passengers," said Isaac Omolo Okero, chairman for Kenya Airways. "The 737's economics and low maintenance cost will help us continue to provide the best service to destinations throughout Africa."

The retrofitted blended winglets on the 737-700 curve out and up from the wingtip, reducing aerodynamic drag and boosting performance. Some of the potential improvements include better fuel burn, increased range, improved takeoff performance and obstacle clearance. Working with Aviation Partners Inc., Boeing developed the blended winglet technology for the 737 airplane.

"The addition of the winglets on the 737-700 will provide Kenya Airways with a superior product," said Kevin Bartelson, chief operating officer for Aviation Partners Boeing. "The new 737-700 with winglets will add value to operators and provide a technologically advanced product with a reputation for superior reliability."

The family of 737s consisting of the 737-600, -700, -800 and -900 is the newest design and the most technologically advanced in the single-aisle market.

"Kenya Airways' selection of the 737 airplane will help reduce its fleet costs, which directly affects the airline's bottom line," said Doug Groseclose, senior vice president of International Sales, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "With the new 737s, Kenya Airways can continue to offer its customers a quality product and on-time in-service performance."

The airplanes are designed to fly higher, faster, farther, quieter and with greater fuel efficiency than previous 737 models -- and the competition.

Kenya Airways, one of the fastest growing and most profitable airlines in Africa, will use the new 737 to fly to key destinations in Africa and other domestic routes on the continent. There are more than 130 Boeing 737s operating in Africa and more than 4,000 737s in service today.

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