Boeing Welcomes Qantas Decision on 737-800 Purchase

The Boeing Company today welcomed news from Australian flag carrier Qantas Airways about its decision to acquire 15 Boeing 737-800s to meet its domestic fleet expansion plans.

The first of the airplanes will enter service in January 2002. The balance of the order will deliver by mid-year. Boeing and Qantas are working to finalize the contract. The order is valued at more than $900 million at list prices.

Qantas Chief Executive Officer Geoff Dixon announced in Sydney that Qantas would acquire the Boeing 737-800 jetliners to build domestic capacity.

"The 737 family answered all of our questions," Dixon said. "We were attracted by its economics, the ease of integration with our existing fleet of 38 Boeing 737s, and indeed by its advanced technology. The capability of the 737-800 will increase our flexibility to improve service and frequency over a wide range of destinations."

As Qantas ran a side-by-side comparison of the Boeing 737-800 and its Airbus competitor at Sydney Airport last week, Boeing rolled out the 1,000th Next-Generation 737 at its Boeing plant in Renton, Wash. The milestone was reached just four years after the first Next-Generation 737 went into service.

The 737 family is the newest design and most technologically advanced family in the single-aisle market. With the lowest operating costs in its class, the 737 offers superior reliability and maintainability, a new, more spacious interior, as well as the latest technology in the flight deck.

It flies higher, faster and farther than previous 737s. Qantas also has specified distinctive 2.5-meter high-blended winglets for its new 737s to improve payload and range.

"This competition has been a tough evaluation by a very experienced airline," said Seddik Belyamani, executive vice president, Sales, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "You will never find a more level playing field than the tarmac at the Sydney Airport last week."

Qantas lined up the two competing aircraft, ran through all the figures, and then chose the 737 airplane, Belyamani said.

"This is a very strong validation of the improvements we've made to the 737 family," he said. "The winglets, in particular, are a major feature of this jetliner and made in Melbourne by Hawker de Havilland, which manufactures other 737 parts in Bankstown as well."

Belyamani said the Qantas decision also was good news for the 140 jobs in Sydney and Melbourne, which hinge on component manufacturing for the 737 program.

Qantas has flown Boeing jetliners since the start of the jet age and currently operates a fleet of 100 airplanes that include 747s, 767s and 737s. The Qantas Link airline operates another 67 airplanes, including eight Boeing 717s. Qantas also is the launch customer for the new Longer-Range 747-400, which is due for delivery later next year.

The new 737 family includes the 737-600, -700, -800 and -900; and the Boeing Business Jet and BBJ 2, which are special high-performance derivatives of the 737-700 and 737-800, respectively. History's best-selling jetliner, the 737 family accounts for about 40 percent of 737 orders, or 1,854 airplanes out of 4,986 for the entire 737 line.

###

For further information:
Lewis Brinson
Seattle 206-766 2116
206-898-9521 mobile
Ken Morton
Sydney 02-9317 4767
0438-764 100 mobile