Just 100 Days From There to Here: Qantas Welcomes New Boeing 737 Fleet

As the first of a new fleet of Qantas Airways Boeing 737-800s were welcomed in Sydney today, The Boeing Company noted that the deliveries were achieved only 100 days after contract signature.

The Australian flag carrier last October ordered 15 new 737-800s, worth $910 million at list prices, to meet domestic expansion. The early airplanes were already in production as part of an order by Qantas Oneworld alliance partner American Airlines. Various Boeing divisions, including Boeing Airplane Services, Boeing Capital Corporation and Boeing Commercial Airplanes, worked together closely with Qantas to meet a demanding 100-day new airplane introduction.

The 737-800 starring in today's ceremony at the Qantas Jet Base was delivery No. 2, the third of Qantas' highly distinctive jetliners in Aboriginal livery, called "Yananyi Dreaming," which means going/travelling.

"This arrival is significant on many counts," said Rick Westmoreland, Sydney-based vice president of Sales, Australia & Pacific Islands, for Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "Qantas set Boeing an aggressive target, and I'm delighted to see the proof today that we've met their 100-day challenge, combining all of our resources in airplane modification, financing, spares logistics and training.

"Today also marks the start of the transition of the Qantas 737 fleet to the 737 Next-Generation family, now the undisputed benchmark for low-cost carriers in every major airline market," Westmoreland said.

So far, Boeing has delivered four new 737-800s to Qantas, with the other 11 due by August this year.

Qantas chose the Boeing 737-800 following a historic side-by-side comparison with its Airbus competitor, the A320, at Sydney Airport.

"The 737-800 and the Next-Generation 737 family answered all of our questions," Qantas Chief Executive Officer Geoff Dixon said when he announced the order. "We were attracted by its economics, the ease of integration with our existing fleet of 38 Boeing 737s, and by its advanced technology."

The digitally redesigned Next-Generation 737 is the newest and most technologically advanced airliner in the single aisle market. With a new wing and more powerful engines, the new 737s can fly higher, faster and further than previous models, and the competition. Qantas has also specified distinctive 8-foot-high (2.5-meter-high) blended winglets to improve payload and range.

In addition, the Next-Generation 737 flight deck features the latest liquid crystal flat panel displays and is designed to accommodate new communications and flight management capabilities.

The 737 is powered by new CFM56-7 engines produced by a joint venture of General Electric of the United States and SNECMA of France. The engines meet community noise restrictions well below current Stage 3 limits and below expected Stage 4 limits.

Qantas has flown Boeing jetliners since the start of the jet age, and currently operates a Boeing fleet of 113 747s, 767s and 737s. QantasLink airlines operate another 67 airplanes, including eight Boeing 717s. Qantas also is launch customer for the new Longer Range 747-400 due for delivery in October.

The 737 has proven itself in service with every type of airline. During 2000 and 2001, airlines ordered 551 Next-Generation 737 jetliners. Of those, new airline customers ordered 100.

In the past two years, seven out of 10 airplanes in this market segment ordered by new airline customers have been 737s. The remainder has been for the Airbus A320 family.

Airlines have purchased more 737s than any other commercial airplanes in history. To date, more than 5,000 737s have been ordered by 215 operators worldwide. Other facts about the Boeing 737:

- On the average, about 1,100 737s are in the air at all times.
- A 737 takes off somewhere in the world every 5.6 seconds.
- The 737 fleet has carried more than 7 billion passengers.
- The 737 fleet has flown more than 49 billion miles (78.6 billion kilometers), equal to about 260 round trips from Earth to the Sun.

The Next-Generation family includes the 737-600, -700, -800 and -900; the Boeing Business Jet and BBJ 2 are special high-performance derivatives of the 737-700 and 737-800, respectively. History's best-selling jetliner, the Next-Generation family, accounts for about 40 percent of 737 orders, or 1,926 airplanes out of 5,045 for the entire 737 line.

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