Boeing and Cathay Pacific Airways Launch 747-400 Special Freighter

Airline to Purchase Additional 747-400 Production Freighter

The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA] and Cathay Pacific Airways today confirmed that Cathay Pacific will launch the Boeing 747-400 Special Freighter program, with an initial agreement to convert at least six, and as many as 12, 747-400 passenger airplanes into freighters.

Cathay Pacific will receive its first Special Freighter in December 2005, and the sixth during 2007.

Boeing is pleased to be working with Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering (TAECO) in Xiamen, China on the prototype modification.

The airline will also purchase one new 747-400 Freighter, to be delivered during February 2005. This order was previously identified by Boeing on its Commercial Airplanes Orders and Deliveries Web site.

"The decision to acquire both new and converted freighters makes sound economic sense, both as a way to make best use of our existing aircraft assets and to ramp up air cargo capacity in the most cost-effective way," said Philip Chen, Cathay Pacific director and chief operating officer. "This investment once again underlines our commitment to strengthen Hong Kong as a global aviation and logistics hub."

"Cathay Pacific Airways has been operating freighters very successfully since 1982," said Lou Mancini, senior vice president of Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. "We are proud to be a part of their continued success and excited that Cathay Pacific is launching the Boeing 747-400 Special Freighter."

Cathay Pacific Airways, the world's sixth-largest air cargo carrier in terms of tonnage carried, currently operates five Boeing 747-400Fs and six Boeing 747-200Fs.

The 747-400 Special Freighters will be used on cargo routes within Asia and connecting to North America and Europe.

For the conversion to a freighter configuration, a 747-400 passenger airplane receives a side cargo door and layout that is identical to the 747-400 production freighter. That includes 30 pallets on the main deck and comparable volume. The upper deck of the Special Freighter is capable of seating up to 19 people, an option found on no other converted freighter. Also included is a strengthened main-deck floor, full main-deck lining, provisions for a new cargo handling system and revised flight-deck systems.

The Special Freighter will have an estimated capacity of 250,200 pounds (113,490 kilograms), structural payload at a design range of 4,100 nautical miles (7,600 kilometers) and will be capable of 870,000 pounds (394,625 kilograms) maximum takeoff weight.

The new-build freighter Cathay Pacific is ordering will operate to Europe, North America as well as some regional routes in the Asia-Pacific region. It will be powered by Rolls-Royce RB211-524H-T engines.

As the world's largest production freighter, the 747-400 Freighter can carry up to 263,400 pounds (119,477 kilograms) of cargo up to 4,450 nautical miles (8,240 kilometers). The production model is distinguished by its nose door, providing greater ease and efficiency in loading, along with increased revenue potential by allowing for unusual and outsized items to be carried. Ninety 747-400 Freighters are in service worldwide today, operated by the leading air cargo companies.

The 747 Freighter family is the backbone of the world's dedicated freighter fleet, providing nearly half of the world's freighter capacity.

Boeing, as the original equipment manufacturer, offers customers a variety of support packages that may be incorporated during freighter conversions, including avionics and flight-deck upgrades, and integration of technical manuals. This is the 10th program for converting airplanes to a freighter configuration that Boeing or Boeing licensees offer. The company also offers four dedicated freighter models.

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