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Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Nippon Cargo Airlines (NCA), one of the premier air cargo operators in Asia, today said the carrier will renew its fleet with Boeing 747-400 Special Freighters, making NCA the second announced customer for the program, launched earlier this year.

This agreement is in addition to NCA's three new 747-400 Freighters previously announced by Boeing in February. Under the agreement, Boeing will manage the conversion of four 747-400 passenger airplanes to special freighter configuration, with the airplanes scheduled for redelivery beginning in August 2007.

The newly converted freighters will replace older 747 freighters in the NCA fleet.

"The 747-400 Special Freighter provides an economical solution for Nippon Cargo to improve operational performance and increase profitability potential," said Lou Mancini, senior vice president of Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. "As the expert on the 747 product line, Boeing will provide the best 747-400 modification in the industry."

The modification work will take place at a Boeing-approved modification facility. Boeing announced earlier that Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering (TAECO) in Xiamen, China, will provide the 747-400 Special Freighter prototype modification.

The modifications to freighter configuration include the addition of a side cargo door, the strengthening of the main-deck floor, the installation of a full main-deck lining and provisions for a new cargo handling system and revised flight-deck systems. The 747-400 Special Freighter has positions for 30 pallets on the main deck -- comparable volume to the 747-400 production freighter -- and is capable of seating up to 19 people, an option found on no other converted freighter.

Boeing, as the original equipment manufacturer, offers customers the optimum in conversion-based engineering and certification expertise, on time and without risk. In addition, a variety of support packages may be incorporated during freighter conversions, including avionics and flight-deck upgrades, customized maintenance programs and integration of technical manuals.

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