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A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Business Jet today completed the first North Atlantic flight by a business jet equipped with the Future Air Navigation System (FANS), a system that streamlines communication between airplane crews and air-traffic controllers.

Until now used only on commercial aircraft such as the Boeing 747 and 777, FANS automatically provides controllers with real-time airplane position reports and clearance requests for in-flight changes. The crew receives the response via nearly instantaneous text messages displayed on flight-deck computer screens. Using Oceanic Air Traffic Control satellites and VHF radio data link networks, FANS reduces conversations between a flight crew and controllers, and therefore the use of congested radio frequencies.

"The aging high-frequency voice radio method is heavily burdened with atmospheric interferences that cause poor reception, and delays caused by the number of aircraft attempting to use the same frequencies," said Mike Hewett, chief pilot for Boeing Business Jets. "FANS clears the lines of communication and ultimately gives air traffic controllers better control of aircraft in oceanic air space."

Boeing Business Jets President Lee Monson added that "using FANS for private and business aviation can add another layer of safety and efficiency to the global air transportation system. It will also allow BBJ operators to take the most direct routes, shortening flight times and saving fuel."

FANS' high degree of positioning accuracy would allow air traffic controllers to safely reduce the buffer space between airplanes and increase the amount of traffic in the same airspace.

Today's non-stop eight-hour, 4,000-nautical-mile flight from Gary, Indiana, to Geneva, Switzerland, was part of a North Atlantic Traffic trial being conducted by the FANS Central Monitoring Agency (FCMA). More than 75 BBJs are in service around the world, many of which will participate in the Atlantic FANS trials.

For more about the BBJ, visit the Boeing Business Jet website.

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