Boeing Delivers Air Austral's Third ILFC 777-200ER

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA], in conjunction with International Lease Financing Corp. (ILFC), held delivery ceremonies today with Air Austral for the airline's third leased 777-200ER (Extended Range). Air Austral currently operates two Boeing 777-200ER airplanes and has leased its third from ILFC to meet increased passenger traffic on its St. Denis to Paris and Marseille routes.

Air Austral is a French airline based on Reunion Island, a vacation locale in the South Indian Ocean renowned by outdoor adventurers for its mountainous volcanic interior. Boeing's 777 has been touted by travelers to the island for its spaciousness and comfort on long-haul routes and has become the overwhelming airplane of choice for visitors to the island.

"Our increased traffic demonstrates Reunion Island's growing popularity, and our passengers have expressed pleasure at the comfort level they've found in flying our 777s to and from Europe," explained Air Austral's President Mr. Etheve. "From an operational point of view, we see firsthand the exceptional reliability and economic benefits of having the 777-200ER as the cornerstone of our long-haul fleet."

Boeing's 777 family is one of the world's most advanced, and the 777 is the only airplane to receive ETOPS (extended-range, twin-engine operations) certification upon first entering service. More than thirty-five airlines have ordered approximately 680 Boeing 777s. The 777 has continually been selected by passengers as the most preferred airplane in its class. Since its launch, it has been the fastest-selling twin-aisle airplane in history, outselling the closest competitor in its class despite entering service two years later.

Hamid Zeghmi, Boeing's sales director, explained, "We are proud of Air Austral's success and our 15 years of close association working together to implement a well-conceived Boeing fleet solution for the airline and the people of Reunion Island."

Air Austral operates an all-Boeing jet fleet servicing its long-haul routes with the 777-200ER, and regional routes to South Africa, Mauritius, and the Comoros Islands with a mixed fleet of 737 airplanes.

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