First 747-400 Boeing Converted Freighter Redelivered to Cathay Pacific

Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Cathay Pacific Airways celebrated completion and certification of the first 747-400 Boeing Converted Freighter at a redelivery ceremony held in Xiamen, People's Republic of China, Dec. 19. Cathay Pacific launched the Boeing passenger-to-freighter conversion program in January 2004 with its order for six firm conversions and options for a further six.

"Cathay Pacific has an impressive record of being the first airline to operate new aircraft types," said Derek Cridland, Cathay Pacific Engineering director. "We were the world's first airline to fly the Boeing 777-300 and the Rolls Royce-powered Boeing 747-400, the type from which this new freighter has been converted. Our involvement in its certification underscores Hong Kong's position as a center of global aviation excellence. The addition of further 747-400BCF aircraft to our fleet will allow us to expand our services and further strengthen Hong Kong as the world's busiest international air cargo hub."

"Our Boeing team is thrilled to deliver the first 747-400BCF to Cathay Pacific," said Lou Mancini, vice president and general manager for Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. "I am proud of our Boeing employees who worked in partnership with TAECO to complete this well-designed and expertly managed conversion."

The Cathay Pacific jet began its transformation from a passenger airplane to a freighter in April 2005, when it arrived at Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering Co., Ltd. (TAECO) in Xiamen, China. TAECO completed the hands-on modification work for this prototype in September, and Boeing began its ground testing and certification program immediately following. In October, Boeing test pilots flew the airplane from Xiamen to Hong Kong and conducted two months of flight testing. This is the first time Boeing has completed a major flight-test program outside the United States, and first time the Company has certified a modified airplane to the new U.S. Federal Aviation Authority Changed Product rule. These accomplishments were made possible with assistance from Cathay Pacific, TAECO, Hong Kong-based aircraft maintenance and engineering company HAECO, and the Hong Kong Civil Aviation Department.

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