Final Boeing 717 Begins Production on Moving Assembly Line

The final Boeing [NYSE: BA] 717 began production this week on the moving assembly line in Long Beach, Calif. This milestone marks the final phase of assembly before the airplane delivers to airline customer AirTran Airways in May.

The airplane is the 156th 717 produced by Boeing. The 717 program helped shape Boeing business practices through its supplier partnerships and applying principles of lean manufacturing.

"We challenged the traditional way of thinking and operating to create a great airplane at a reasonable cost," said Pat McKenna, vice president and general manager of the 717 program. "From its concept to production, this airplane has been a team effort that benefits the world's airlines and passengers."

Developed by McDonnell Douglas as the MD-95 and renamed the 717 after the merger with Boeing in 1997, the 100-seat airplane will provide excellent economics, performance and reliability to the world's airlines for years to come.

The 717 model is the last commercial airplane produced in the Southern California factory. More than 15,000 airplanes have been produced in Long Beach since the plant opened in 1941.

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