Boeing Signs Sky Airlines as First European 737-900ER Customer

Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Sky Airlines of Turkey announced today an order for three Boeing Next-Generation 737-900ERs with advanced-technology Blended Winglets. Sky Airlines becomes the first European carrier to order the 737-900ER model, which Boeing launched in 2005 as a higher-capacity, longer-range complement to its single-aisle 737 family of airplanes. In addition, Sky Airlines secured purchase rights for two additional 737-900ERs, which it can exercise at a later date if it chooses.

The order is valued at $226 million at list prices. Deliveries are scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2009. These airplanes had been carried on the Boeing Orders and Deliveries Web site attributed to an unidentified customer.

Sky Airlines, based in Antalya, Turkey, will use the new airplanes for fleet replacement as well as fleet growth. Sky Airlines already operates a fleet of six 737-400s and one 737-800. Sky Airlines is a leader in the Turkish tourism industry, its business focused largely on bringing European travelers to beach-vacation destinations and resorts in Turkey.

"This model of the Boeing 737 has more seats than our fleet today. It's exactly what we need to meet the growing demand in Turkey for safe and inexpensive air travel," said Talha Gorgulu, chairman of Sky Airlines and the KayiGroup, which owns Sky Airlines. "We fly the 737-800 today, so we're very familiar with the 737 family. The 737-900ER offers commonality advantages that also allow us to operate more efficiently and economically. We can leverage that in terms of profit and lower fares for our passengers."

The 737 continues to be the airplane of choice in Turkey. More 737s are operated in Turkey than any other model - 33 737 Classics and 57 Next-Generation 737s.

"I am delighted that Sky Airlines will be the first European and first Turkish carrier to purchase and operate the 737-900ER," said Marlin Dailey, senior vice president for Sales for Europe, Russia and Central Asia, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "Today's order represents Sky Airline's leadership as well as its faith and confidence in the quality of Boeing products.

"This order also demonstrates the continued growth of the Turkish market. It is becoming very clear that as Turkey's economy develops, the demand for commercial air travel, low-cost options and integrated-tour packages will continue to rise to unprecedented levels. Boeing will of course be there, as we always have, to meet the needs of our airline customers," Dailey said.

The Boeing 737-900ER is the largest member of the 737 airplane family and can carry more passengers and fly farther than the 737-900. The derivative seats up to 215 passengers and flies up to 3,200 nautical miles (5,900 kilometers), making the range comparable to the 737-800. Blended Winglets enable an additional 3 to 5 percent in fuel efficiency.

The 737 is the most popular airliner in history with more than 6,100 sold. Unfilled orders for the 737 exceed 1,200 airplanes, worth about $85 billion at current list prices.

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