

The Future of Freighters Is Now for Boeing

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Following record freighter orders, major development milestones on 2008 horizon

SINGAPORE, Feb. 21, 2008 -- As Boeing [NYSE: BA] looks forward in the freighter business, the company doesn't have to look very far to see that "The Future of Freighters Is Now."

"We've been on a great run with three consecutive years of record freighter orders," said Jim Edgar, regional director, Cargo Marketing - Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "But that's just the beginning - this year we're anticipating a series of milestones that bring about major improvements in fuel efficiency, environmental responsibility and operational flexibility. Our two new large freighters will provide a 16 to 34 percent improvement in CO2 and fuel efficiency relative to today's large freighters, and will be significantly quieter than Stage 4 community noise requirements.

"We've been laying the groundwork for a transformation that really takes off in 2008. We began major assembly of the 777 Freighter in January and will move forward with the completion of assembly, flight test, certification and a fourth-quarter delivery of the first 777 Freighter to Air France, and we'll achieve critical design milestones for the 747-8 Freighter and the start of 747-8F production. These airplanes will be the key revenue generators for the air cargo industry for years to come," Edgar added.

Orders for new Boeing production freighters have numbered 74, 81 and 83 for 2005, 2006 and 2007, respectively, for an unprecedented total of 258 airplanes, accounting for about 14 percent of total Boeing commercial airplane order value during that time.

Development of the 747-8F will proceed apace as General Electric conducts testing on its GEnx and Boeing reaches 50 percent design release during the early part of the year. Flying test-bed runs and 90 percent design release will be accomplished midyear and production on the 747-8F will start in late 2008, leading to a busy 2009 that features the airplane's rollout, first flight, certification and first delivery to Cargolux of Luxembourg.

Along with the 777 and 747-8 activities, Boeing freighter plans for 2008 include the first delivery of the company's 767-300 Boeing Converted Freighter to ANA and the release of Boeing's biennial World Air Cargo Forecast 2008/2009 at The International Air Cargo Forum & Exposition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November.

These new products, in addition to the existing 767-300 production freighter and the current 747 Freighter fleet of more than 300 airplanes, coupled with the successful 747-400 Boeing Converted Freighter program, position Boeing for continued success in the air cargo marketplace.

Boeing freighters currently account for more than 90 percent of the world's dedicated freighter capacity, with the 747 Freighter Family alone accounting for more than half of that capacity.

The series of freighter milestones in 2008 and continuing into 2009 is proof that "the future of freighters is now" at Boeing.

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