Boeing to Lead Southwest Airlines 737 Flight Deck Modernization

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SEATTLE, Dec. 22 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Boeing has been selected by Southwest Airlines as the lead integrator for the airline's 737-300/-700 flight deck upgrade to incorporate advanced performance-based navigation capabilities. Boeing's role will include design, installation and integration of new hardware and software from multiple suppliers, as well as flight testing and certification.

Under this large-scale integration program, the 737-300 airplanes will be modified with new and enhanced avionics supplied by GE Aviation, Honeywell and Rockwell Collins. The Classic 737s will be equipped with GE's large area displays which use the latest in LCD technology and more closely align the 737-300 and 737-700 flight decks, creating commonality, and allowing the 737-300 to operate in the same preferred airspace as the newer 737-700s.

The 737-300 enhancements will also position Southwest for additional features -- currently under development -- that will support future airspace requirements.

Southwest Airlines, an industry leader in airline efficiency, also is making a fleet-wide commitment to Required Navigation Performance (RNP) operations, a navigation technology that enables an aircraft to operate within a tight corridor of airspace with Global Positioning System guidance. These RNP enhancements will help the airline reduce fuel consumption, enhance safety and situational awareness, and minimize aircraft emissions and noise resulting in improved efficiency and reduced costs.

"Southwest is a great airline and partner and we're proud to support in their initiatives toward more efficient operations," said Kevin Schemm, vice president, North America Sales, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "Boeing is committed to working with our customers to introduce environmentally progressive lifecycle solutions."

"This upgrade program will enhance safety, situational awareness, and fuel efficiency, and it will allow greater training flexibility due to flight deck commonality," said Chuck Magill, vice president of Flight Operations at Southwest Airlines. "But the bottom line is that our customers will benefit from better performance and continued low fares."

As the original equipment manufacturer, Boeing is uniquely qualified to provide the lowest risk solution through its intellectual property, engineering and technical resources, world-class testing and certification capabilities and long term supplier relationships.

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