Boeing 787 Dreamliner Program Completes Static Test Analysis, Gauntlet Tests

EVERETT, Wash., Dec. 10 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) today completed the review and analysis of the static test that was conducted Nov. 30 to validate the side-of-body modification made to the 787 Dreamliner.

"I am happy to report that the program has validated the airplane structure for the 787 Dreamliner," said Scott Fancher, vice president and general manager of the 787 program.

Fancher also reported that the 787 team has completed final gauntlet testing on the first airplane. Testing lasted for just two days because only improvements made earlier this year during previous testing had to be examined. "We are very pleased with the results of this final functional testing. With the successful completion of static testing and this functional testing, our focus now moves to first flight."

During the test on the 787 Dreamliner static test airframe, the wing and trailing edges of the airframe were subjected to their limit load -- the highest loads expected to be seen in service. The limit-load test was required to clear the airplane for first flight. Boeing's test strategy is to conduct all limit-load tests and analyze data before conducting the ultimate load series, which is required for certification and will be conducted next year.

Boeing announced June 23 that it was necessary to reinforce an area of structure at the side-of-body section of the 787. The modification entails installing new fittings at 34 stringer locations within the joint where the wing attaches to the fuselage. The 787 team has completed modifications on the first three flight-test airplanes and the full-scale static test airplane.

First flight of the 787 Dreamliner is expected to occur after final flight readiness reviews, receipt of documentation from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and taxi testing. Both taxi testing and first flight are subject to weather conditions.

"We are pleased with the pace of progress in preparing to enter our flight test program," said Fancher.

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