Boeing Selects Leading Edge for South Carolina 787 Dreamliner Painting

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C., March 10, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) has selected Leading Edge Aviation Services to paint 787 Dreamliners assembled at Boeing's new North Charleston, S.C., final assembly and delivery facility.

Leading Edge will perform the work at its Amarillo, Texas facility where other wide-body airplanes are painted. The company, which specializes in commercial and military aircraft painting, will apply final paint and customer livery to all 787 Dreamliners delivered from the Boeing South Carolina facility.

"Leading Edge is a well-respected company when it comes to painting airplanes," said David Palmer, director of Boeing's South Carolina Delivery Center. "The company shares our values of quality, safety and excellence and we look forward to our relationship with them."

"We began our search for a paint subcontractor soon after we broke ground on our facility, knowing the experience and capacity to paint large commercial airplanes didn't currently exist geographically close by," said Marco Cavazzoni, vice president and general manager, Boeing South Carolina Final Assembly and Delivery. "Leading Edge brought immediate capability and capacity and is located within a manageable flying distance from our new facility."

As 787 Dreamliners complete final assembly and prepare for delivery, the airplanes will make the 1,250-mile (2,000-kilometer) flight from North Charleston to Amarillo to be painted. The airplanes will then return to South Carolina for final delivery to customers from around the world.

"This paint process is the only difference customers will experience in 787 Dreamliner deliveries from South Carolina. Airplanes built and delivered from both Everett, Wash., and North Charleston, S.C., will be identical, as both sites use common quality management and production systems and meet the same U.S. Federal Aviation Administration requirements," said Cavazzoni.

Production in the new South Carolina 787 Dreamliner facility is on schedule to begin mid-2011, with first delivery scheduled for 2012.

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