Boeing 747-8 Freighter to Fly to Paris Air Show on Sustainable Biofuel

-- Washington-to-Paris journey is first transatlantic flight of a biofuel-powered commercial airplane

-- 747-8 Freighter makes its international air show debut after historic flight

SEATTLE, June 16, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) will fly the new 747-8 Freighter to its international air show debut in a doubly historic fashion, flying the airplane across the Atlantic Ocean to the Paris Air Show using a renewable aviation jet fuel – the world's first transatlantic crossing of a commercial jetliner using biologically derived fuel.

Boeing pilots Capt. Keith Otsuka and Capt. Rick Braun and Cargolux Capt. Sten Rossby will fly the airplane with each of the 747-8 Freighter's four GE GEnx-2B engines powered by a blend of 15 percent camelina-based biofuel mixed with 85 percent traditional kerosene fuel (Jet-A). The airplane is scheduled to arrive at Le Bourget Airport Monday at about 5 p.m. Paris local time (15:00 GMT) after a 4,989-mile (8,029 km, 4,335 nautical mile) trip.

"This historic flight is a boost to aviation's efforts to reduce carbon emissions and improve efficiency in all phases of our industry," said 747-8 Vice President and General Manager Elizabeth Lund. "And the 747-8 Freighter fits in well with these efforts by bringing huge improvements in fuel efficiency, lower carbon emissions and less noise."

Camelina, the plant source used to create the biofuel, was grown in Montana and processed by Honeywell's UOP. Boeing does not need to make any changes to the airplane, its engines or operating procedures prior to departure to accommodate biofuel use. Normal flight parameters are being followed and were approved in advance by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration.

The airplane will be on static display at the Paris Air Show June 21 and 22. It is scheduled to leave the air show the evening of June 22 and fly to Cargolux headquarters at Luxembourg for a two-day visit. Cargolux is scheduled to take delivery of the first 747-8 Freighter to enter service this summer.

The 747-8 Freighter is the new high-capacity 747 that will give cargo operators the lowest operating costs and best economics of any freighter airplane while providing enhanced environmental performance.

Aviation biofuel use

ASTM International, the global standards body that oversees the jet fuel specification in North America, recently approved an amendment to the current specification to include fuels from bio-based sources. The revised jet-fuel specification will be published later this year, allowing use of the new fuels without special approval. Industry efforts will shift to ramping up production and work to ensure the sustainability of fuel sources being considered.

Plant-based biofuels provide a net reduction in carbon due to absorption ofCO_2 during the growth phase, and are a key element of aviation's strategy for achieving carbon-neutral growth beyond 2020. Boeing, Honeywell's UOP, GE and other industry leaders have worked for the past five years on sustainable aviation biofuel development including commercial and military flight test programs, laboratory and ground-based jet engine performance testing to ensure compliance with stringent aviation fuel performance and safety requirements.

Camelina, an energy crop grown in rotation with dry wheat, is one of the biofuel sources identified during a comprehensive regional analysis conducted by Boeing and others in the Northwestern U.S. as part of the Sustainable Aviation Fuels Northwest project (www.safnw.com). Boeing is guiding regional biofuel assessments in Australia/New Zealand, Mexico, United Arab Emirates and China to identify potential fuel sources that don't compete with food or fresh water resources or contribute to deforestation. The end goal is to establish regional supply chains that produce aviation biofuel for blending with Jet-A, reducing the industry's dependency on fossil fuels.

Contact:
Jim Proulx
+1-206-850-2102
Jim.proulx@boeing.com

Terrance Scott
+1-206-766-2949
Terrance.scott@boeing.com

More information: www.boeing.com

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