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EVERETT, Wash., July 21, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) this week delivered the first 777-300ER (extended range) to Air China, the flag carrier of the People's Republic of China. The new airplane is the first of 19 777-300ERs Air China has on order with Boeing. With this new addition to its fleet, Air China becomes the first airline on the Chinese mainland to operate the new generation 777 family member.

"The introduction of this brand new aircraft is not only a milestone in the cooperation history between Boeing and Air China, but also an important symbol to deepen our relationship," said He Li, Vice President of Air China. "The 777-300ER will be the backbone of our long-haul international fleet in the coming years and enable us to fulfill our ambition to be a large network carrier with international competitiveness."

With this delivery, Boeing is scheduled to deliver an additional three 777-300ERs to Air China by the end of 2011. Air China will use the airplanes for route expansion including direct routes to Frankfurt, London and Paris, as well as for gradual replacement of the Boeing 747-400s currently serving North American routes.

"We have witnessed the rapid development of Air China and we're honored to be part of their success by providing our best products and services," said Ihssane Mounir, senior vice president of Sales for Greater China and Korea, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "The new generation 777-300ER is a great choice for Air China. Its structural efficiency, industry-leading reliability and brand-new cabin design combine to help the airline remain profitable and provide superior passenger experience."

The Boeing 777-300ER is 19 percent lighter than its closest competitor, greatly reducing its fuel requirement. It produces 22 percent less carbon dioxide per seat and costs 20 percent less to operate per seat. To date 34 customers around the world have ordered more than 500 777-300ERs.

Air China, a member of the Star Alliance, is the most profitable airline in world as well as the world's largest carrier by market value. Air China owns 158 Boeing aircraft, making up 60 percent of its fleet.

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