New Boeing 747-8 Freighter Completes Certification Flight Testing

Major milestone on drive to certification, delivery of newest member of the 747 family

EVERETT, Wash., Aug. 3, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The new Boeing (NYSE: BA) 747-8 Freighter successfully completed its certification flight test program Tuesday, with two airplanes landing at Paine Field in Everett, Wash. Flight test airplane RC522 completed testing of the flight management computer (FMC) and RC523 completed function & reliability (F&R) testing.

"This is such a great day for the new 747-8 and for all the employees who played a part in designing, building and testing this incredible, game-changing airplane," said Elizabeth Lund, Boeing vice president and general manager, 747 program. "We are in the home stretch in delivering this airplane to our customers."

The first 747-8 Freighter is scheduled to be delivered to launch customer Cargolux in September after certification from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The 747-8 Freighter has flown more than 1,200 flights and 3,400 hours since its first flight Feb. 8, 2010. During that time, the five-airplane test fleet was used to gather data for more than 1,700 FAA certification requirements. Boeing tested the capabilities of these airplanes far beyond what they are expected to encounter in normal service. Tests concluded with F&R testing, a final phase in which an airplane must accrue 300 FAA-approved flight hours in its final delivery configuration.

"My team and I had the pleasure of spending hundreds of hours in these airplanes," said 747 Chief Pilot Mark Feuerstein. "We can truly say this airplane is a joy to fly, and our customers are going to love it. It flies like a 747, but one from the 21st century."

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. It is 18 feet and 4 inches (5.6 m) longer than the 747-400 Freighter. The stretch provides customers with 16 percent more revenue cargo volume compared to its predecessor. That translates to four additional main-deck pallets and three additional lower-hold pallets. The 747-8 Freighters will be powered with GE's GEnx-2B engines.

A video detailing the 747-8 Freighter's 17-hour test flight and its road to completing certification testing can be seen at http://goo.gl/pH6J0.

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