Boeing, Xiamen Airlines Celebrate Airline's 100th airplane

Milestone delivery testifies rapid development of China's airline business

SEATTLE, Nov. 12, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) and Xiamen Airlines today celebrated the 100th airplane to join China's only all-Boeing carrier.

Formed in 1984 as China's first joint venture between CAAC and a municipal government, Xiamen Airlines started services in 1985 with two Boeing 737-200s serving three cities. The carrier has grown into China's sixth largest carrier serving 218 domestic routes and 26 international and regional routes. With today's delivery of a Boeing 737-800, Xiamen Airlines' fleet now consists of 100 airplanes – 17 737-700s, 77 737-800s and six 757-200s.

"Having an all-Boeing fleet is a key component in our growth strategy and our ability to achieve 26 consecutive years of profitability," said Che Shanglun, President and Chairman of Xiamen Airlines. "With excellent reliability, operational efficiency and range, the Boeing airplanes enable us to expand our network internationally."

As part of Xiamen Airlines' 12th five-year plan ending 2015, the carrier plans to grow its operational fleet to 136 airplanes, including six 787s.

"Xiamen Airlines is a valued customer of The Boeing Company and we are delighted to see the remarkable growth of Xiamen Airlines over the past 29 years," said Ihssane Mounir, senior vice president of Sales for Northeast Asia, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "We look forward to continuing such a longstanding partnership by providing more value with our industry-leading products and services."

Xiamen Airlines' rapid growth is a testimony of the tremendous development of China's airline business. According to data released by Civil Aviation Administration of China, in 1972, China established the government-run CAAC as the only player in aviation, and at that time, the number of registered aircraft was only nine. At the end of 2012, China had more than 40 airlines and the civil aviation industry as a whole had more than 2,000 airplanes across the fleet. Earlier this spring, Boeing celebrated its 1,000th delivery to China.

Boeing projects investments of nearly $800 billion in China for 5,580 new commercial airplanes to be delivered during the next 20 years. That would account for 16 percent of global demand, and reflects a requirement of nearly 200 single-aisle and over 60 twin-aisle airplanes each year on average.

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