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EVERETT, Wash., Dec. 18, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing (NYSE: BA) today delivered the first 747-8 with performance-improved GEnx-2B engines as part of the airplane's Performance Improvement Package (PIP.) A Cathay Pacific Airways 747-8 Freighter was the first 747 to deliver with the PIP engines.

The engine is the first of the package's three improvements to enter service. The two other components, Flight Management Computer (FMC) software upgrades and reactivation of the horizontal tank fuel system on the 747-8 Intercontinental, are expected to enter service later this month and in early 2014, respectively.

"This is a significant milestone for the 747 program. These upgrades are part of our commitment to continually improve the 747-8 for our customers," said Eric Lindblad, vice president and general manager of the 747 program.

The PIP engine improves the airplane's efficiency by 1.8 percent. "With this improvement, 747-8 customers will use roughly 30 fewer semi-sized trucks of fuel per airplane per year," said Bruce Dickinson, 747-8 chief project engineer and vice president.

All three PIP components can be retrofitted on the 747-8. The tail fuel reactivation is applicable only for the 747-8 Intercontinental and the FMC upgrades can also be made to 747-400s.

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