Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner to Visit New Zealand in International Debut

Dec. 31, 2013, SYDNEY, Australia, – Boeing [NYSE: BA] plans to bring the 787-9 Dreamliner to Auckland in early January to visit launch customer Air New Zealand. The trip, which is contingent on weather and other test factors, would mark the international debut of the 787-9, the second and newest member of the super-efficient 787 family.

“Boeing is proud to bring the 787-9 to Auckland to show Air New Zealand what the team has achieved,” said Mark Jenks, vice president, 787 Development, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. “With more than 150 flights since testing began in September, the test fleet continues to perform very well, and we look forward to delivering the first 787-9 in mid-2014 as promised.”

“Having one of Air New Zealand’s 787-9s touch down on Kiwi soil for the first time is hugely exciting,” said Christopher Luxon, chief executive officer, Air New Zealand. “It’s a real reminder that we will soon welcome the first of these more modern, fuel-efficient airplanes into our fleet.”

The aircraft, ZB002, is the second of three 787-9s dedicated to the test program. As the only 787-9 test aircraft to be fitted with elements of the passenger interior, in addition to test racks and instrumentation, Boeing uses ZB002 to test the environmental control system and other aspects of aircraft performance. After the test program is complete, the aircraft will be reconfigured for delivery to Air New Zealand.

During the Auckland visit, media will have the opportunity to tour the aircraft and speak with Boeing pilots and test personnel. (Media advisory to follow.) No general public tour opportunities will be available.

From Auckland, ZB002 is scheduled to continue on to Alice Springs, Australia, where Boeing plans to conduct flight testing in hot weather. Boeing chose Alice Springs Airport for this testing because the location meets specific test requirements for both facilities and atmospheric conditions. Testing is contingent on favorable weather and is scheduled to last approximately one week.

The 787-9 will complement and extend the 787 family. With the fuselage stretched by 6 metres (20 feet) over the 787-8, the 787-9 will fly up to 40 more passengers an additional 555 kilometres (300 nautical miles) with the same exceptional environmental performance — 20 percent less fuel use and 20 percent fewer emissions than similarly sized aircraft. The 787-9 leverages the visionary design of the 787-8, offering passengers features such as large windows, large stow bins, modern LED lighting, higher humidity, a lower cabin altitude, cleaner air and a smoother ride.

Boeing is on track to deliver the 787-9 to launch customer Air New Zealand in mid-2014. Twenty-six customers from around the world have ordered 402 787-9s, approximately 39 percent of all 787 orders.

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