Boeing and South Africa's Comair Limited Announce Order for Eight 737 MAXs

First African airline operator to announce order for the 737 MAX

737 MAX 8s to support airline's future fleet renewal and expansion

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa, March 19, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Comair Limited announced an order today for eight 737 MAX 8s, valued at $830 million at list prices. It is the first 737 MAX order announcement for an African operator. The order was booked in December 2013 and was previously unidentified on the Boeing Orders & Deliveries website.

"We're proud to be the first African operator to announce an order the 737 MAX," said Erik Venter, chief executive officer of Comair, "This investment in Comair's fleet upgrade is fundamental to its business strategy of consistently improving customer service and value, while ensuring a sustainable airline. Our decision to make this investment was not taken lightly and is a critical component in managing our exposure to the volatile fuel price and thus minimizing the impact of the fuel price on airfares."

Johannesburg-based Comair operates Africa's first low cost carrier, kulula.com, offering flights to South Africa's major cities. Comair is also the franchise partner of British Airways, operating its local and regional Southern African routes. The company currently flies an all-Boeing fleet of 25 Classic and Next-Generation 737s on its kulula.com and British Airways (operated by Comair) brands. The order for eight 737 MAX 8s will support future fleet renewal and expansion.

"Comair has grown over the past six decades by providing a product and service of consistent value, reliability and comfort," said Van Rex Gallard, vice president of Africa, Latin America and Caribbean Sales, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "The unmatched operating economics of the 737 MAX make it the best airplane for Comair's growth strategy. In addition, the 737 Sky Interior, combined with Comair's excellent customer service, will provide an unmatched passenger experience."

The 737 MAX builds on the success of the Next-Generation 737 – retaining efficiency, economics, reliability and passenger appeal that make this family of airplanes the market leader. The 737 MAX incorporates the latest technology CFM International LEAP-1B engines, as well as aerodynamic improvements such as new Advanced Technology winglets, to deliver a 14 percent fuel-efficiency improvement over today's most fuel efficient single-aisle airplanes. Airlines operating the 737 MAX will see an 8 percent operating cost per seat advantage over tomorrow's competition.

Along with superior operating economics, the passenger-preferred 737 Boeing Sky Interior will also come standard on the 737 MAX. Drawing from years of research inspired by the travel experience, the 737 Boeing Sky Interior features modern-sculpted sidewalls and appealing features reveals that draw passenger eyes to the airplane's windows, giving passengers a greater connection to the flying experience.

With today's announcement Comair will have a total of 12 airplanes on order from Boeing, including the eight 737 MAX 8s and four Next-Generation 737-800s for delivery in 2015 and 2016. Since its announcement in 2011, the 737 MAX has amassed more than 1,800 orders worldwide.

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