Boeing: Global Commercial Fleet Will Top 50,000 Airplanes in 20 Years as Passenger Traffic Doubles

- Near-term disruptions will not impact long-term aviation growth
- The global commercial airplane fleet is projected to grow nearly 80% by 2045
- Nearly 44,000 new deliveries are expected in the next 20 years – half of which will replace older airplanes with more fuel-efficient models
- Emerging market travel, point-to-point network expansion and air cargo will contribute to fleet growth

FARNBOROUGH, United Kingdom, July 18, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] projects near-term disruptions will not meaningfully affect long-term aviation industry growth with demand for air travel set to double over the next 20 years. The global commercial airplane fleet is expected to grow nearly 80% to more than 50,000 airplanes by 2045 as airlines and cargo operators add capacity.

Ahead of the Farnborough International Airshow, Boeing released its 2026 Commercial Market Outlook (CMO), forecasting that operators will need nearly 44,000 new airplanes to support sustained air travel demand and air cargo expansion over the next 20 years. Half of these deliveries are projected to replace previous-generation airplanes with more fuel-efficient models and support sustainability goals.

"Airlines are adapting quickly to manage near-term industry constraints while demand for air travel remains resilient," said Brad McMullen, Boeing senior vice president of Commercial Sales and Marketing. "That demand is driving the need to grow and modernize the global fleet, underscoring the importance of new, fuel-efficient airplanes that will play an increasingly vital role in connecting people and economies around the world."

How is the Middle East crisis affecting global passenger air travel?

- Passengers are adjusting destinations and routings rather than forgoing travel in the near term.
- Point-to-point and short-haul leisure segments are leading traffic growth, while long-haul travel in some regions, including the Middle East, has seen the most short-term impact.
- In the long term, air travel continues to connect the world through enduring demand drivers, including extended and dispersed families and friend networks, growing tourism and expanding destinations, trade and commerce.
- Passenger traffic is expected to grow 4% annually, resulting in a doubling of global air traffic between 2026 and 2045.

What strategies are airlines pursuing to innovate and expand?

- Airlines have added nearly 5,500 new airport pairs since 2015, driving nearly 30% network growth and giving passengers more choices and more direct itineraries.
- Airlines are broadening service levels, from ultra-low-cost to premium, depending on trip need, passenger value and market conditions:
  - Premium offerings are growing, especially in North America and Northeast Asia, supported by higher incomes and wealth effects.
  - Low-cost options are expanding in emerging markets such as Latin America, Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, improving affordability.
- Without the efficiency and productivity gains of new, efficient jets, airlines would need 9,000 additional airplanes to serve the same number of passengers.

How will airplane demand evolve over the next 20 years?

- Demand remains balanced across the nearly 44,000 new airplane deliveries projected over the next two decades:
  - Mature regions, including North America, Eurasia, Oceania and Northeast Asia, will account for about 45% of new deliveries.
  - Transitioning and emerging markets, like China, the Middle East, Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, and Africa, will make up about 55% of new deliveries.
- Low-cost carrier fleets are expected to grow nearly 4% annually, versus nearly 3% growth for network carriers.
- Globally, replacement demand is rising as mature and transitioning markets renew fleets. By 2045, less than 10% of previous-generation airplanes are expected to remain in the global fleet.

How is air cargo performing in the current environment and how will it change in the next 20 years?

- Air cargo demand remains resilient as operators adapt routes and flows in response to geopolitics.
- International freighter capacity has increased 5% year-to-date in 2026 despite market disruptions, underscoring the flexibility and agility of air cargo networks to meet demand.
- Through 2045, air cargo traffic is forecast to grow about 3.7% annually, outpacing trade and economic growth.

- Demand is supported by the need to move high-value, perishable and time-sensitive goods, as well as supply chain reliability and cross-border e-commerce.

New deliveries, 2026-2045

Single-aisle:	33,545
Widebody:	7,715
Regional:	1,435
Freighters:	930
Total:	43,625

Industry and 2026 CMO by the numbers:

- Passenger traffic has grown despite double-digit swings in oil prices in 17 of the last 25 years.
- Half of the 5,500 new routes added to the global network over the last decade are served daily or more.
- Airlines generate nearly half of their revenue from premium passenger traffic, cargo and ancillary revenue streams.
- The global single-aisle fleet will nearly double to more than 36,000 jets, serving core short-haul networks and operating more than half of all global capacity.
- More than 8,000 widebody airplanes will be in service in 2045, enabling long-haul passenger routes, enhanced passenger experience and critical air cargo capacity.
- Air cargo traffic growth and the need for new-technology freighters to renew the fleet will drive demand for more than 2,900 production and converted freighters.

Since 1961, Boeing has published the CMO, the most comprehensive analysis of the commercial aviation industry. The full 2026 outlook is available at boeing.com/cmo.

Boeing also published today the annual Commercial Services Market Outlook and the Pilot and Technician Outlook for 2026-2045.

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Contact

Boeing Media Relations
media@boeing.com

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