JAPAN'S RYUKYU AIR COMMUTER TO BE Q400 COMBI LAUNCH CUSTOMER

News / Airlines

Okinawa-based Ryukyu Air Commuter Co. has been identified as the launch customer for the Bombardier Q400 combi aircraft.

Ryukyu Air Commuter, a subsidiary of Japan Airlines Group, has been revealed by Bombardier as the previously unidentified customer that ordered five Q400s in July 2014, when the Canadian manufacturer also launched the Q400 combi turboprop at the Farnborough Airshow. The Q400 combi can carry 50 passengers in 32-in. pitch seats or 58 passengers in 29-in. pitch seats while also having 9,000 lb. of cargo capacity.

The five turboprops are valued at US$168 million at list prices. Ryukyu Air Commuter said it will use the Q400 combi aircraft to fly passengers "travelling around Japan's Okinawa islands." A delivery date for the first Q400 combi was not announced.

Bombardier Commercial Aircraft VP-Asia-Pacific sales Andy Solem said in a statement, "We are proud to unveil Ryukyu Air Commuter as the launch operator of the Q400 combi aircraft and pleased to credit the airline -- with its innovative market insights -- as the major impetus for the

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launch. The Q400 combi aircraft will provide the right capacity for [Ryukyu Air Commuter's] passenger demands as well as the additional cargo service to stimulate the local economies."

Bombardier Commercial Aircraft president Fred Cromer added, "The Q400 combi aircraft provides unique opportunities for airlines operating routes with medium to low passenger loads, but with high cargo potential."

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