BOEING TALKS UP 787 PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

News / Manufacturer

Boeing says independent research shows its 787 Dreamliners are the "preferred" choice for economy passengers in terms of cabin space and comfort.

The results of a survey of passengers were presented during a media conference at the Singapore Airshow on Tuesday with Boeing Commercial Airplanes vice president of marketing Randy Tinseth and Scoot chief executive Campbell Wilson.

A slide in Tinseth's presentation, titled "Research confirms: 787 preferred by passengers", showed 48.2 per cent of respondents found the 787 cabin to be "very spacious", compared with 34.5 per cent for the Airbus A380 and 17.3 per cent for the A330.

Similarly, the survey said 45.3 per cent said the 787 cabin was "very comfortable", with 34.2 per cent saying the same for the A380 and 20.5 per cent for the A330.

The results will perhaps be curious for some regular travellers on 787s in economy class around the world, given the vast majority of airlines have fitted their economy cabins with nine seats per row in a 3-3-3 configuration, resulting in seats that are less than 18 inches wide.

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By contrast, the bulk of A330 (2-4-2) and A380 (3-4-3) operators have 18-inch wide seats in their economy cabins.

Tinseth said the 787 had opened more than 90 new nonstop markets, with the route network of the Dreamliner comprising short-, medium- and long-haul routes.

Figures OAG contained in Tinseth's presentation showed there were 1,843 flights a week for flights less than 2,000nm, 1,534 flights a week between 2,000-4,000nm and 1,288 longer than 4,000nm.

Boeing has delivered 371 Dreamliners – comprising 291 of the original 787-8 and 80 of the stretched 787-9s – as at February 5.

Of those, 10 have been delivered to the Singapore Airlines (SIA) owned long-haul low-cost carrier Scoot – five 787-8 and five 787-9 – with a further 10 to come over the next few years.

Scoot flies to the Gold Coast, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney from its Singapore hub, while it also serves China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Thailand with its all-787 fleet.

India and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia were expected to join the airline's route network later in 2016, with Scoot chief executive Campbell Wilson telling reporters on Tuesday he is hopeful of announcing which Indian cities the airline to fly to in the next month, once the regulatory process has been concluded.

In terms of current market conditions, Tinseth said the market today was "as good as we have ever seen", with the aviation sector continuing to do well even though there are concerns about an economic slowdown in China and sluggish conditions in other parts of the world.

Meanwhile, Airbus said on Tuesday it expected Asia Pacific passenger traffic to grout by 5.6 per cent a year for the next two decades, with the airlines in the region to increase their fleet size from 5,600 today to 14,000 aircraft by 2035.

Asia Pacific airlines were expected to offer 12,810 new aircraft over the next 20 years, representing 40 per cent of total demand for 32,600 new aircraft in that period.

Of the 12,810, some 4,480 were forecast to be for twin aisle and widebody aircraft, with 8,330 to be single aisle.

"Asia Pacific will continue to experience stronger growth than any other world region as more people fly more often," Airbus chief operating officer for customers John Leahy said.

"Airbus will be especially well placed to respond to this demand in every size category."

17 FEBRUARY 2016

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION
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