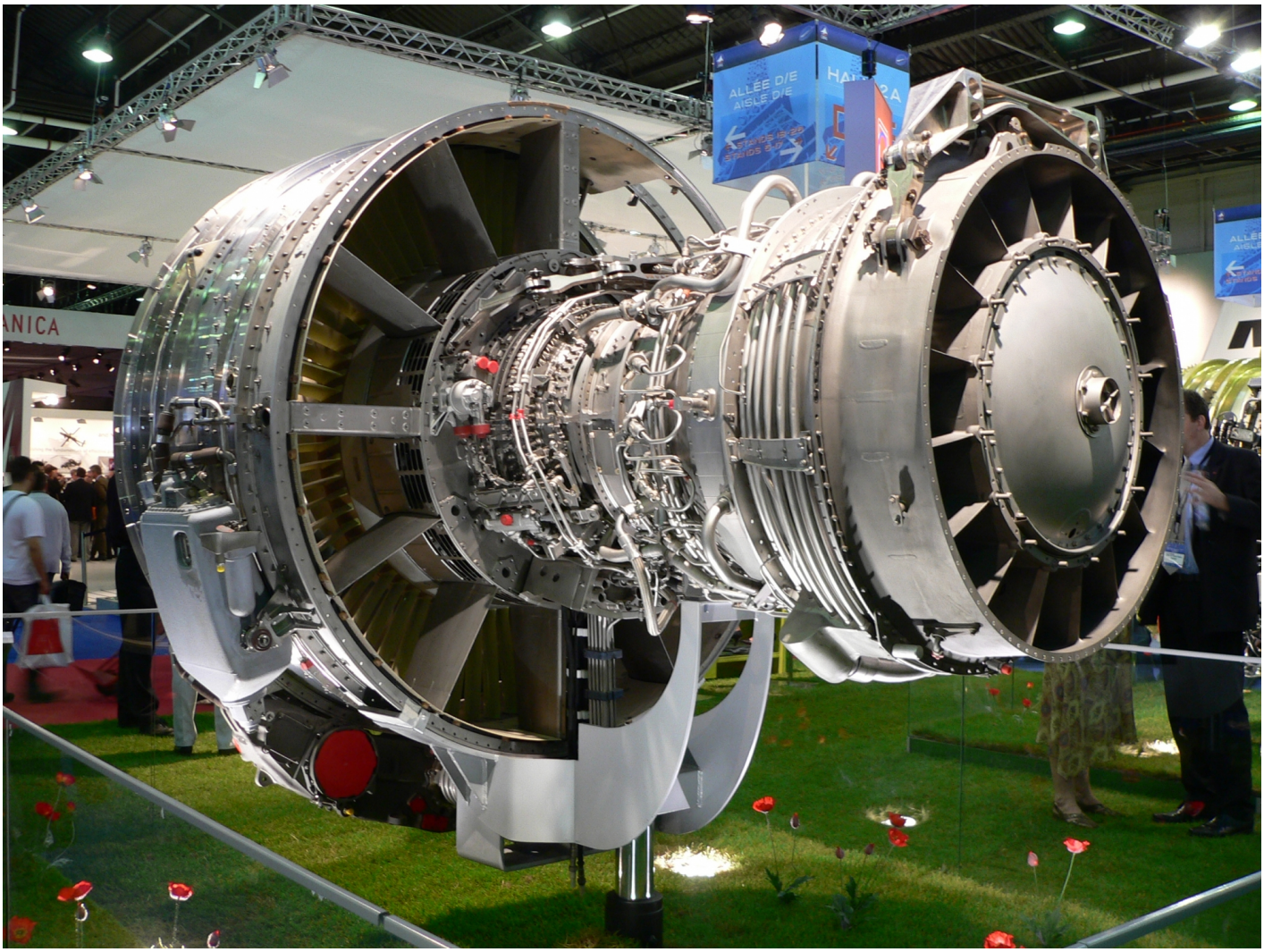
CFM56 REACHES RECORD PRODUCTION RATEAS CFM DELIVERS 30,000TH ENGINE

News / Manufacturer



CFM International has now delivered the 30,000th CFM56 engine. The milestone engines, one each for Airbus and Boeing, were recently delivered to customers, including a CFM56-5B going to Delta Air Lines powering an Airbus A320ceo and a CFM56-7B engine to China Eastern Airlines for a Next-Generation Boeing 737-800.

Delta Air Lines actually launched the CFM56 engine into commercial service in 1982 and currently has more than 400 CFM56-powered aircraft in service or on order. China Eastern Airlines became a customer in 1994 and, today, is the largest CFM customer in China, operating more than 800 CFM56 engines.

“It is an historic year for the CFM56 program,” said Jean-Paul Ebanga, president and CEO of CFMInternational. “As confident as our founding fathers were in this program, I don’t think even they could have foreseen the success this engine has enjoyed. At the heart of it all, though, is the

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continued confidence of Airbus and Boeing and all of our 550 customers around the world. We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.”

Meanwhile, the company is making a smooth transition to LEAP engine production. CFM will produce around 100 LEAP engines in 2016, ramping up to more than 2,000 engines per year by 2020.

“We knew from day one that this would be an extraordinary ramp-up, and we have been preparing for it for a long time,” said Francois Bastin, CFM executive vice president. “The investment that GE and Safran have made, our dual-sources strategy, and the fact that we have kept critical technologies in house has put us on track to meet our production commitments to Airbus and Boeing.”

Prime examples of the investment include Safran’s 3-D woven carbon fiber composite fan blades factories, as well as GE’s new LEAP final assembly and overhaul facility in West Lafayette, Indiana.

The two composite fan production facilities, one each in France and the U.S., have opened in the past two years and have already produced more than 4,600 fan blades for production engines. A third factory in Mexico will be in line in 2017. Each LEAP engine requires 18 fan blades and plans are in place to ramp up to more than 40,000 blades per year to support planned LEAP production levels.

The final assembly plant in Indiana came on line earlier this year and is currently assembling the first production LEAP-1B engines for the Boeing 737 MAX. The West Lafayette facility also does modular assembly of LEAP engine cores.

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