GOOD WEEK FOR VERY LARGE AIRCRAFT AS BOTH A380 AND 747-8 WIN NEW ORDERS

News / Manufacturer

Airbus's A380 program has received a boost with its largest customer Emirates adding an extra two aircraft to its already hefty order book, while Boeing has also confirmed a fresh order for four 747-8s.

The Dubai-based carrier says the extra two A380s, which will be configured in a two-class format featuring business and economy and powered by Rolls-Royce engines, will be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2017. It takes Emirates' total A380 orders to 142, with 75 currently in service and 67 on firm order.

Emirates president Sir Tim Clark said the additional A380 orders come as his airline planned to retire 30 older aircraft from the fleet between now and the end of 2017.

"At the same time, to meet our growth expectations, we will receive delivery of 24 new Boeing 777 and 33 new A380 aircraft including these two additional A380 aircraft just ordered," Clark said in a statement on Wednesday.

"This is in line with our strategy to operate a modern and efficient fleet and offer the best possible experience for our customers."

The CAA also increased its air show charges from 1 April - by up to £2,695 for larger displays - to

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fund the measures. Emirates said the addition of Prague, Taipei and Vienna to the airline's A380 network in the period ahead would bring to 42 destinations served by the world's largest commercial passenger aircraft.

Bloomberg reported Emirates was taking the two A380s that were originally built for Japanese airline Skymark and currently sit in storage at Airbus's facility in Toulouse.

Skymark had ordered six of the type but had the order cancelled by Airbus. The airline later filed for bankruptcy in May 2015.

This is the third fresh order for A380s so far in 2016, after Japan's ANA and Iran Air ended a three-year drought for new orders in February. ANA put pen to paper for three of the type for flights to Hawaii and Iran Air agreed to acquire 12 A380s as part of the airline's fleet modernisation program and following the lifting of economic sanctions against the country.

The Airbus website said as of March 31 the company had 319 total orders for the A380, with 184 in service and 185 due for delivery.

Meanwhile, the order for two A380s comes a week after Boeing logged four new orders for its 747-8 program. The orders were from an unidentified customer, according to the Boeing website. There have been 125 total orders for the 747-8 passenger and freighter models, with 23 aircraft yet to be delivered.

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