CHINA EASTERN TAKES DELIVERY OF ITS 50TH A330

News / Airlines, Manufacturer

Airbus and China Eastern Airlines (MU) celebrated Friday the delivery of the airline's 50th A330 aircraft in Toulouse, France, marking a new milestone in the airline's fleet modernization.

The 50th A330 aircraft, an A330-200 powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 700 engines, features a two class configuration with 233 seats, including 202 economy class seats and 30 lie flat business class seats in a 1-2-1 reverse herringbone layout.

The 50th A330, Registration B-8231, touched down at Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG) on Saturday. With the arrival of its 50th A330, the airline has become one of the largest A330 operators in the world. In August, China Eastern placed an additional 15 A330s to meet booming demand for air travel, with deliveries scheduled between 2017 and 2018.

The Shanghai-based carrier received its first A330 in 2006. The A330 has formed the backbone of the airline's long-haul fleet. The 50 A330 aircraft include 32 A330-200s and 18 -300s. Besides, the airline operates nearly 230 A320 Family aircraft, making it the largest Airbus operator in China with a total of 282 Airbus aircraft.

Meanwhile, the most advanced in-flight entertainment system has been installed in the cabin of the newest A330, with 15.4-inch screen in business class and 10.6-inch screen in economy class. In-

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flight Wi-Fi is available on the new aircraft, creating an extraordinary travel experience for customers.

The airline said it will soon put its 50th A330 into revenue service. The airline will launch two new international services -- Shanghai-Colombo and Shanghai-Auckland -- using A330 next week.

The Airbus A330 Family aircraft is the best-selling widebody aircraft. To date the A330 Family, which spans 250 to 300 seats, has attracted more than 1,500 orders and around 1,200 A330s are flying worldwide with over 100 operators. Ever since the original A330-300 entered service, its hallmarks are its very efficient operating economics, innovative cabin features, while offering passengers much wider economy-class seats than any competing aircraft. Moreover, with numerous product improvements and with an operational reliability of 99.4 percent, the A330 is the most cost-efficient and capable aircraft in its class.

China Eastern carried 84 million passengers in 2014, making it the seventh largest carrier worldwide. It expects to transport more than 93 million passengers in 2015. The airline will operate a fleet of 800 aircraft and carry more than 140 million passengers by 2020. The airline has been strengthening its competitiveness in the international market and has expanded its route network to 1,057 destinations in 179 countries and regions. Currently, the proportions of its international passengers carried and revenue are both the largest among the Chinese airlines.

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