



SMARTLYNX AIRLINES PLANS TO HAVE 20 A321F UNITS IN 2023

News / Airlines



Latvia-based SmartLynx Airlines announced an addition of four A321Fs to its growing cargo fleet to ensure flights in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. The additional freighters will bring SmartLynx's fleet to a total of 15 active aircraft of this type by H1, 2023, with a plan to expand up to 20 by the end of the year. All four A321Fs – MSN 941, 961, 1185, and 1241 are part of a sales-leaseback agreement with Aero Capital Solutions, Inc. and will be registered in Malta after the conversion. The passenger-to-freighter conversions are being undertaken by Precision Aircraft Solutions and Elbe Flugzeugwerke.

CEO of SmartLynx Airlines Zygimantas Surintas, commented: "The current demand for this type of aircraft is very high – even higher than the conversion capacity, and we are happy to be one of the first airlines to believe in the program and secure multiple P2F conversion slots. I can admit that at the beginning there were doubts if it was the right move for SmartLynx, but from today's perspective, taking that risk and diversifying our business portfolio with cargo operations has proven to be the right choice. In addition to tapping into a market that has grown during the pandemic, the addition of freight business helps offset the seasonal issues that ACMI operators typically face."

The expansion is one of the key components of SmartLynx's strategic plans to become the largest operator of A321F freighters in the near future. The A321F offers many advantages, having the highest payload and the most versatile, customer-friendly features in the cargo market today. Moreover, A321F is the most fuel-efficient narrowbody cargo aircraft available, and choosing this type of aircraft underlines SmartLynx's commitment to more sustainable air transportation.

Žygimantas Surintas added: "The new Airbus A321F freighters have helped us reduce flight operational costs by up to 15 % and ensure up to 20 % lower fuel consumption as compared to other aircraft in the class, making the company very competitive in the complex air cargo market. Because of their efficiency, these aircraft are used by such international logistics companies as DHL which is also our first cargo customer. A321Fs are the first narrowbody freighters that offer containerized lower cargo deck to reduce the overall shipping costs, and that is why they are currently in high demand on the market."

SmartLynx's main focus still will be passenger operations, but the company's cargo operation volumes are expected to grow from 10 % to around 40 % in the next two to three years. In the coming years, the airline is planning to operate up to 20 aircraft of this type.



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