



AIRBUS NARROWS ORDER GAP WITH BOEING AFTER AIR SHOW

News / Manufacturer



Airbus virtually closed the gap with Boeing in the intense battle for airliner orders in July after booking about half of the 197 firm sales unveiled at last month's Farnborough Airshow, according to the latest data from both companies.

Amid a broad slowdown in airline purchases, the European planemaker said it had sold 373 jets between January and July, or 323 after adjusting for cancellations.

That compares with 383 airplane sales, or 333 after cancellations, notched up by U.S. rival Boeing.

Despite the fanfare over an order for 100 Airbus jets from AirAsia, announced as a firm order at last month's UK air show, that transaction did not make it into the latest monthly order tally released by Airbus on Thursday.

A spokeswoman said paperwork for the deal, which if completed would put Airbus ahead, was still being finalised.

The tallies come as both planemakers are struggling to book new sales in a market that is somewhat oversupplied with jets, especially larger wide-body models, industry experts said.

A slowdown in sales has raised some questions about whether they will stick with plans to boost output later in the decade.

While Boeing remains ahead by a whisker in the race for new orders, it maintains a solid lead on deliveries, handing over 432 jets in the first seven months of the year.

Airbus delivered 339 jets as it suffered delays in delivering its latest model, the revamped A320neo narrow-body jet, which has been held up by problems with Pratt & Whitney engines.

Airbus delivered three of the jets in July, including two powered by Pratt & Whitney and the first to be delivered with alternative engines from CFM International.

So far this year it has delivered 11 A320neos and 15 of its widebody A350s, another model suffering delays due in part to problems with suppliers. It aims to deliver 50 A350s this year.

Industry sources say that besides widely reported problems with cabin equipment such as toilets, the A350 has faced some other glitches including quality problems with wing spoilers from Austrian parts maker FACC . An Airbus spokesman said these problems had been resolved. FACC declined to comment.

Airbus data also confirmed that Qatar Airways had canceled an order for the first of 50 A320neo-family jets it has ordered.

The Gulf airline has criticized Airbus and Pratt & Whitney over the delivery delays. It is also in negotiations with Boeing to place an order for rival 737 MAX aircraft to diversify its fast-expanding fleet.

Meanwhile, monthly Airbus data suggested that Mexican carrier Interjet had canceled five of 40 A320neo jets it has on order. No immediate comment was available from the airline.

04 AUGUST 2016

SOURCE: REUTERS

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