

Boeing wins orders for 60 planes on first day of Singapore Airshow

- Story Highlights
- Boeing has won orders for 60 planes at the Singapore Airshow
- Budget carrier Lion Air ordered 56 Boeing 737-900ER planes
- Indonesia's national airline Garuda ordered four Boeing 777-300ER airplanes
- Boeing rival Airbus announced no major orders in Singapore

SINGAPORE (AP) -- Boeing Co. outpaced European rival Airbus in competition for Asian customers this week so far, snagging orders for 60 planes Tuesday from two Indonesian airlines.

The orders, worth more than \$5.4 billion at list prices and announced on the opening day of the Singapore Airshow, gave Boeing a welcome distraction from a series of embarrassing delays in its hot-selling 787 program.

Lion Air, a Jakarta-based budget carrier, said it ordered 56 Boeing 737-900ER planes valued at a total of more than \$4.4 billion (&euro3.0 billion) at current list prices. Airlines typically negotiate big discounts on large orders.

The new purchase brings Lion Air's combined orders for the plane, which can seat up to 220 passengers, to 178. The airline also acquired purchase rights for an additional 50 units of the plane.

"We have good support from Boeing, but most of all, we make money from this aircraft," said Lion Air President Rusdi Kirana. "I think that it is the perfect aircraft in the emerging market."

Indonesia's national airline Garuda ordered four Boeing 777-300ER airplanes listed at more than \$1 billion (&euro680 million).

"We hope that this will be part of the expansion of Garuda," said Garuda Chief Executive Emirsyah Satar. The planes will be used to open new routes, he said, adding that he also hopes to use the jets to replace some of the company's existing Boeing 747s.

The airline also said it would convert its previous order for six 777-200ERs to six 777-300ERs.

Chicago-based [Boeing](#) faces enormous pressure to speed up progress on its 787 jet, the planemaker's first all-new aircraft since the 777 in 1995.

Boeing's vice president of marketing for commercial planes, Randy Tinseth, said Tuesday the company is confident of meeting the deadlines of its new delivery schedule for the plane, but would not rule out further delays.

"We are waiting until the end of the first quarter to finish the production plan and then we can make better projections on deliveries for 2009 and beyond," Tinseth told Dow Jones Newswires. "It is a reasonable plan but you never know."

Boeing last month announced that the inaugural flight for the 787 would be delayed up to three months, pushing delivery of the first plane into early 2009 -- it was the third time the airplane has been delayed.

The plane will be the world's first large commercial airplane made mostly of carbon-fiber composites, which are lighter and more durable than aluminum and don't corrode. Boeing has said those features will make the 787 more fuel-efficient and cheaper to maintain, as well as allow improvements such as bigger windows and a more comfortably pressurized cabin.

Despite the delays, most analysts say Boeing seems to have a better handle on its 787 production problems than rival [Airbus](#) did early on with its A380 superjumbo. The first A380 was delivered nearly two years late last fall -- a delay that slashed profits at parent company EADS.

Airbus announced no major orders in Singapore, although Korean Air Lines Co. said Monday it will buy three more double-decker A380s on top of its existing order for five of the world's biggest commercial jet.

"With the eight A380s, we will provide premium services on international routes to New York, Los Angeles and Paris starting 2010," Korean Air said in a statement Monday. The carrier, South Korea's largest, did not say how much it would pay for the three jets.

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