

First C-17 delivery builds ties with Qatar

Aircraft to fly humanitarian airlift missions

By Lorenzo Cortes

Qatar Airways has been a solid customer for Boeing Commercial Airplanes and is acquiring 777 and 787-series aircraft. Now, Qatar, a small country located on a peninsula in the southwest Arabian Gulf, is becoming an important market for Integrated Defense Systems as well. Key opportunities there include fixed-wing aircraft, training solutions and industrial partnerships, according to IDS Middle East Business Development director Jeff Johnson.

To better participate in humanitarian lift operations around the world, the Qatari government signed a contract last summer to acquire C-17 transport aircraft, the first of which Boeing delivered last month at its C-17 production facility in Long Beach, Calif.

A longtime customer of European defense providers, Qatar only recently has emerged as a potential market for U.S. companies like Boeing.

“Qatar’s acquisition of C-17 military transport aircraft marked the first time the country opted for U.S. defense equipment of

any kind,” Johnson said. “The trust and good will we have established as a result of the C-17 acquisition will be crucial as we pursue other business and partnerships in Qatar.”

“In the Middle East, our customers view Boeing as one company, not just as IDS or Commercial Airplanes,” Johnson said. “It is important to understand that when the Qataris approach us, they make no distinctions. That the Qataris rely on Boeing to provide airborne humanitarian lift capability and commercial airliners is a testament to the effort Boeing has made in gaining the trust of this customer.”

Along with other Arabian Gulf states—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait—Qatar is experiencing a period of strong economic growth. Qatar has the world’s second-highest per-capita gross domestic product. A major oil and natural gas exporter, Qatar in recent years has developed its economic status to become a global player in the financial sector. ■

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PHOTO: Qatar’s first C-17 takes off for its new home after delivery last month from Boeing’s Long Beach, Calif., factory. MICHAEL GAIL/BOEING

Poseidon

Navy's new warrior

Boeing officially “rolled out” the U.S. Navy’s new P-8A Poseidon aircraft during a July ceremony in Renton, Wash. Close to 500 people gathered for the event at the Lake Washington manufacturing facility.

Navy sailors in attendance were all smiles upon seeing the Poseidon up close and painted in Navy gray for the first time. Many came from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash., where P-8As will eventually be based.

During his speech, Adm. Gary Roughead, chief of Naval Operations, thanked the men and women at Boeing and the industry team.

“You are building this airplane magnificently ... you are building it for the sons and daughters of America who will fly it, man it and operate it for decades to come,” Roughead said.

Washington State Gov. Christine Gregoire proclaimed July 30 as P-8A Poseidon Day and asked the people of Washington and the nation to join her in the celebration.

“The P-8A Poseidon will equip the U.S. Navy with the most advanced multi-mission maritime patrol and reconnaissance



aircraft in the world,” said Jim Albaugh, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems president and CEO.

Attendees also included representatives from Boeing’s industry partners and suppliers, elected officials, and Boeing employees.

Boeing’s industry team is currently preparing for the start of formal flight testing, which will begin in Puget Sound in the coming months. The Navy plans to purchase 117 P-8As to replace its fleet of P-3C aircraft.

– Charles Ramey

PHOTO: Surrounded by a sea of admirers, the U.S. Navy’s P-8A Poseidon formally rolled out in July at Boeing’s Renton, Wash., plant. **JIM ANDERSON/BOEING**

Bio-thunder

on the water

With Seattle’s 60th anniversary Seafair celebration as a backdrop, Boeing—a main sponsor of the event—used the U-787 hydroplane Aug. 1–2 to showcase the company’s involvement in the community while helping pioneer a new generation of sustainable biofuels for commercial aviation.

Driven by hydroplane hall-of-fame driver Chip Hanauer, and powered by the same biofuel blend demonstrated earlier this year aboard a Japan Airlines 747-300, the U-787 made history on Lake Washington with an exhibition that culminated in a final run using a 100 percent biofuel blend of camelina, algae and jatropha. It was a first for an unlimited hydroplane.

“A sport like hydro racing provides a great way to bring attention to the good work and promise offered by sustainable biofuel technology,” Hanauer said. “I think it’s great that Boeing is using a racing venue to demonstrate to our culture that biofuel development is all about performance. Performance, innovation and sustainability—a great combination!”

Boeing is working with science, fuel and technology leaders to accelerate the market availability of bio-based fuels



that can help aviation lessen its environmental impacts. This comprehensive research and test program, conducted over the past several years, will help support approval of these fuels for use in commercial jetliners.

– Terrance Scott

PHOTO: The Boeing U-787 unlimited hydroplane thunders down the straightaway of the Lake Washington racecourse in Seattle in early August. The series of demonstration laps highlighted the viability of sustainable aviation biofuels in a high-performance engine. **ED CLARK**