

Boeing Delays 787 Parts Shipment

George Tibbits, Associated Press Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — Boeing Co. has asked the companies that make the large sections of its new 787 jetliner to hold back shipping the assemblies for two of the jets for about a month.

Boeing Commercial Airplanes spokeswoman Yvonne Leach said Tuesday that 787 final assembly is continuing at its Everett plant and that the temporary delay won't affect work under way. Boeing remains on track to deliver the first 787 to a customer late this year, she said.

Boeing relies on suppliers from around the world to build huge sections of the plane that are later assembled in Everett. Early on, that approach proved troublesome, with ill-fitting parts and other glitches hampering production of the initial jets. Boeing originally planned to deliver the first 787 in 2008.

Leach said some of the manufacturers are having difficulty getting components to finish their sections and some need to complete engineering and design changes Boeing wants. She declined to identify the companies.

Boeing asked the companies to hold back sending sections for the 23rd and 24th 787s to be assembled for 24 manufacturing days so they can complete the needed work at their sites. Boeing wants to avoid having to do any catch-up work itself that would hamper production at Everett.

"We don't want to be doing out-of-sequence work in final assembly," she said.

While there is some out-of-sequence work currently being done at Everett, it's manageable and "this impact would have been larger than we wanted to handle," she said.

Boeing built time into its 787 schedule in case of such delays, she said, and has plenty of work to do on 787s to fill any gap in the line.

Boeing has orders for 866 of the planes, from 57 customers. The plane first flew in December and extensive flight tests are under way.

Boeing shares fell \$1.86 or 2.5 percent Tuesday to \$72.48 amid a broad decline in U.S. stocks.

Source URL (retrieved on 08/23/2014 - 12:34pm):

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Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

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