Boeing Says It's Settled Basic Design Of New Jet

AP

RENTON, Wash. (AP) — Boeing Co. has made decisions on the design and hired additional suppliers for its new 737 Max jet that is scheduled to start showing up in airline fleets in 2017.

The company said Thursday that it finished the broad outlook or "firm concept" for the new single-aisle airplane, which Boeing says will boost fuel efficiency 13 percent by using new engines, a redesigned tail, winglets and aerodynamic lines.

The new outline means that the plane won't need the small bump found on the nose-gear door of earlier designs.

Honeywell International Inc. will provide an electronic bleed-air system, which uses airflow from the engines to pressurize the cabin and deice the wings.

Rockwell Collins Inc. will make large-format LCD displays for the cockpit, similar to displays already used in Boeing KC-46 tankers and retrofitted into some Boeing 757 and 767 airliners.

Boeing said it was turning to "finer details" of the design and is confident of beginning detailed design work in mid-2013. Production is expected to begin in 2015.

Chicago-based Boeing is developing the new, more efficient plane just as rival Airbus works on its single-aisle jet of the future, called the A320neo. Rising oil prices have made jet fuel the largest expense for many airlines and many are eager to upgrade their fleets.

Boeing reached several deals to sell the new jets in the past few months, including a $14.7 billion order with United Airlines for 150 planes.

Boeing shares fell 25 cents to close at $71.04.

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