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

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The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Shares of Boeing Co. climbed to a multiyear high Tuesday after the company reported a smooth test flight of its new 787 passenger jet and the U.S. government reported that a surge in commercial aircraft sales lifted durable goods orders.

Boeing shares rose \$1.67, or 2 percent, to \$86.52 in midday trading after hitting a high of \$86.84 earlier in the session. FactSet says that was its highest since May 2008. The shares have been rising since hitting a low of \$66.82 last June.

The Commerce Department reported Tuesday that orders for durable goods jumped 5.7 percent in February compared with January, as commercial aircraft orders nearly doubled, reversing a decline in January.

Airlines have been ordering new Boeing and Airbus jets to improve the fuel efficiency and passenger comfort of their fleets.

Meanwhile, Boeing reported on Monday that the first test flight of its grounded 787 "Dreamliner" passenger jet since Feb. 11 "went according to plan."

The test gave Boeing officials and shareholders hope that aviation regulators might soon lift orders that grounded the worldwide fleet of about 50 of the new jetliners after two incidents in which lithium-ion batteries overheated.

Boeing's fix includes more space between the eight cells in each battery, putting batteries inside stainless steel boxes, and adding a means to vent any smoke or fumes.

Monday's 2-hour test flight over Washington and Oregon carried a crew of six Boeing pilots, engineers and technicians. Company spokesman Marc Birtel said the flight was designed to test various systems on the plane. After further ground tests, Boeing will conduct another flight to demonstrate the safety of a redesigned battery system to Federal Aviation Administration officials, Birtel said.

The timing of that next flight is uncertain, but Boeing hopes that the 787 fleet will be back in the air within weeks, not months.

Source URL (retrieved on 03/31/2015 - 10:06pm):

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