

Boeing Resumes 787 Deliveries After 4-Month Halt

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Boeing restarted deliveries of 787s on Tuesday after a four-month halt while it dealt with the smoldering batteries that had kept the planes grounded.

Boeing handed the plane over to Japan's All Nippon Airways at its factory in Everett, Wash.

Airline flights and deliveries were halted in mid-January after two battery incidents. One was a fire on a plane that had just landed minutes earlier, and the second was in-flight smoldering that prompted an emergency landing by an ANA plane.

The emergencies less than two weeks apart prompted aviation authorities to ground the world's 50 787s while investigators looked for a root cause. They never found one, but Boeing designed extensive changes to the battery and its charger, including more heat insulation, holes to vent any flame or smoke outside of the plane, and lower charging levels. U.S. and Japanese authorities approved the fix last month.

Airlines have been slowly resuming flights. Ethiopian Airlines was the first to get the plane back in the air, on April 27. United Continental Holdings Inc. owns six of the jets and is set to begin flying one of them again on Monday.

Airline customers have been eager to get the plane, which is supposed to be 20 percent more fuel efficient per seat than other, similar planes. The battery problem came just as Boeing was ramping up production after delivering the first one in 2011, three years late.

Boeing had set a goal of delivering at least 60 of the planes this year, and it said on Tuesday that it is still on track to meet that target. Boeing kept building 787s even though it couldn't deliver them, and pushed ahead with a planned production increase. It hopes to build 10 planes per month by the end of this year.

The planes are assembled at Boeing's facilities in Everett and North Charleston, S.C.

"The health of our 787 factories in Everett and North Charleston has never been better or more efficient," Boeing's vice president for marketing, Randy Tinseth, wrote on a company blog.

Shares of Chicago-based Boeing Co. rose \$1.35 to close at \$96.11. They've risen 30 percent since dipping slightly in the days after the grounding began in January.

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