AIR HONG KONG ENTERS A NEW ERA AS AN ALL-AIRBUS A330F FREIGHTER AIRLINE

News / Airlines



Air Hong Kong, the first all-cargo freighter airline based in Hong Kong and a part of the Cathay Group, together with its key customer DHL Express have celebrated a new milestone with the successful completion of a seven-year re-fleeting programme. With the arrival of the final, newer A330F freighter, and the retirement of the last A300-600F freighter, Air Hong Kong has now transitioned into an all-Airbus A330F freighter airline, marking a new phase in its nearly 40-year history.

Air Hong Kong first began operating the A300-600F on behalf of DHL Express in 2004, and since then the aircraft has provided 21 years of safe and reliable operations for Air Hong Kong and its key customer, DHL Express. The A300-600F fleet has been a valued contributor to the success of the Hong Kong international aviation hub, carrying close to three million tonnes of express cargo over the years.

With the completion of the re-fleeting programme, Air Hong Kong now operates an all-A330F fleet comprising 14 aircraft in total. This includes 10 A330-300P2F (passenger-to-freighter converted aircraft), of which Air Hong Kong was one of the launch customers and is currently one of the

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world’s largest operators, and four A330-200F freighters.

Air Hong Kong Chief Operating Officer Clarence Tai commented: “The A300-600F has been a stalwart of Air Hong Kong’s fleet and an important part of our story for over two decades. Its contribution to not only our business, but to the Hong Kong international aviation hub as a whole, has been considerable and we fondly bid farewell to this valued member of our fleet as we enter this exciting new chapter. The new-generation A330F brings with it considerable benefits that will enable us to further enhance our operations and services for our customers, and continue to play an important role in the ongoing growth of Hong Kong’s air cargo sector. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hong Kong Civil Aviation Department, the Cathay Group, our people, our suppliers and our key customer, DHL Express, for their firm support which has made this re-fleeting plan possible.”

DHL Express Senior Vice President for Network Operations & Aviation – Asia Pacific Peter Bardens stated: “Balancing our customers and operational needs has always been top of mind for us. Our decision to re-fleet aircraft years ago reflects our foresight to invest in ourselves so that we are ever-ready to support our customers. The A300-600F was instrumental to our robust aviation network for many years. As we bid farewell to this valued member of our fleet, we are excited to welcome a new chapter with this new generation of freighters. We are confident that we will continue to deliver excellence in both our service capabilities and sustainability targets.”

Air Hong Kong’s re-fleeting programme began seven years ago starting with the introduction of its first wet-leased A330F in February 2018.

Compared with the A300-600F, the newer A330F provides 25% more payload and volume enabling more cargo to be carried, in particular e-commerce shipments. It also has a longer range capability of 7,400 kilometres, which will help Air Hong Kong continue to grow and has already enabled the airline to expand to new destinations including Bahrain and Sydney. Meanwhile, its increased fuel efficiency and reduced noise levels will help contribute to Air Hong Kong’s and the Cathay Group’s wider sustainability goals.

Coinciding with the launch of the Three-Runway System at Hong Kong International Airport, the Cathay Group has committed over HK$100 billion in investments to strengthen the Hong Kong international aviation hub and enhance the customer experience. The Group has already begun adding more than 100 new-generation aircraft to the fleets of Cathay Pacific, Cathay Cargo and HK Express over the coming years, including narrowbody, regional widebody, long-haul widebody and large freighter aircraft.

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