NORWEGIAN ORDERS 19 ADDITIONAL 344-SEAT BOEING 787-9 DREAMLINERS

News / Airlines

Norwegian Air Shuttle (Oslo) today made this announcement:

Norwegian, Europe's third largest low-cost airline, is continuing to expand its international operations by signing an agreement to purchase **19** new **Boeing** 787-9 **Dreamliners** – the order will help more than quadruple its current long-haul fleet to 38 aircraft within the next five years.

The agreement is the largest single order of 787-9s in Europe and includes purchase options for an additional ten aircraft of the same type. The new order will enable the company to launch even more long-haul routes and expand its existing network in the coming years.

Norwegian already operates Dreamliner aircraft from its London Gatwick base, serving the UK's only low-cost long-haul flights to US – Dreamliners are used on services to New York, Los Angeles and Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood. A further low-cost route from Gatwick to Boston will be launched in May 2016, while next month will see the launch of low-cost Caribbean flights with the UK's only direct route to Puerto Rico – both new routes will also be served by Dreamliner aircraft.

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Norwegian currently operates eight 787-8 Dreamliners and has 11 of the bigger 787-9 on order. With today's order, Norwegian's long-haul fleet will consist of 38 Dreamliners by 2020. The first deliveries from the new order will commence in 2017.

The 787-9 complements and extends the 787 family. With a longer fuselage, the 787-9 will fly 53 more passengers than the 787-8. Norwegian's asset company, Arctic Aviation Assets Limited (AAA), will own the aircraft.

Norwegian's version of the 787-9 has 344 seats with 35 in premium and 309 in economy. With today's order for 19 787-9s, Norwegian has more than 150 unfilled orders from Boeing, including 100 737 MAXs. In addition, the company has 100 Airbus A320neos on order.

In other news, on the financial side, Norwegian today reported its third quarter results for 2015 with a pre-tax result (EBT) of 1.1 billion NOK (£87million), a strong improvement from the same quarter previous year. The company's long-haul operations and international routes have a positive impact on the results. The load factor is at a record high of 91 percent.
The pre-tax result was 1.1 billion NOK, a strong improvement from 505 MNOK (£43.5million) in the same quarter last year. The load factor for the third quarter was 91 per cent, up six per cent.

The airline carried 7.7 million passengers this quarter, an increase of 9 per cent. The long-haul passenger growth was 15 per cent, compared with last year's third quarter result.

Norwegian's strongest growth in terms of passenger numbers was at London Gatwick, where the airline operates both long- and short-haul routes. The growth at Spanish airports is also considerable. In the Nordic countries passenger numbers are stable, with a slight increase in market share.

Norwegian CEO Bjørn Kjos said: "The third quarter results show that Norwegian's long-haul operations and international routes are becoming significantly more important. This is where we see most of the future growth potential, enabling the company to compete in a global market with strong competition.

"UK activity has played a crucial role in a strong third quarter for Norwegian, with Gatwick seeing our biggest overall growth in passenger numbers. With new aircraft and new routes planned, expansion in the UK will continue to be at the forefront of our long-term plans.

"We also see growth in Europe in general, while the Scandinavian market is stable. The Scandinavian and European route networks play an increasingly important role in our long-haul strategy, as many of our passengers use connecting flights with Norwegian."

The UK will be a key market in Norwegian's future expansion plans – growth and activity in the UK during the third quarter has included:

UK FLEET UPGRADED WITH NEW AIRCRAFT – Norwegian already has one of the youngest aircraft fleets in the world and Q3 has seen further new 737-800 aircraft begin operating from UK airports

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Also in the third quarter, Norwegian received more international awards, including two Passenger Choice Awards. The company took delivery of five new aircraft, ordered two new Dreamliners and entered into an agreement to lease out 12 of its new Airbus A320neos, which will be delivered from 2016. Norwegian-subsidiary Arctic Aviation Assets Limited owns the aircraft and will be leasing them out for a period of 12 years.

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