AIRBUS CONFIDENT FOR A320NEO ON-TIME FIRST DELIVERY

News / Manufacturer

Airbus is on schedule to deliver the first **A320neo** by end of 2015 as planned, an Airbus executive confirmed Friday.

Qatar Airways is due to receive its first A320neo, a more efficient re-engined version, in December. Akbar Al Baker said last week on the sidelines of the Dubai Air Show that he was "optimistic" the aircraft would arrive before the end of the year, but he had a concern relating to the Pratt & Whitney PW1100G engine.

The Pratt engine, a geared turbofan is one of two powerplants available to A320neo customers, with the CFM International LEAP engine being the other option.

In early October the first PW1100G-powered A320neo suffered “minor damage” during an incident during hot-weather testing in the Middle East. Airbus CEO Fabrice Bregier later said the engine incident was not technical and was more about the life of the engine.

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He said he was confident the European manufacturer would meet a year-end deadline to bring the A320neo into commercial service.

Qatar's Al Baker noted that while he was optimistic, his only concern was the P&W engine's readiness. "I hope they will catch up. But they still have six weeks," he said in early November.

Briefing media at the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines annual assembly in Bali Friday, Airbus head of marketing, Asia, Joost Van Der Heijden seemed certain they would.

Asked whether there was any chance first delivery could slip into 2016, Van Der Heijden said, "I can confirm that we are on schedule to deliver the airplane by the end of the year."

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