CATHAY STRENGTHENS HONG KONG AS AIR CARGO HUB WITH AIRBUS A350F FREIGHTERS ORDER

News / Airlines, Manufacturer



Cathay Cargo has placed an initial firm order with Airbus for six A350F freighter aircraft and has secured the right to acquire 20 more aircraft, taking another important step towards achieving its vision of becoming the world' most customer-centric air cargo service brand. This order to be delivered commencing from 2027 will help further strengthen Hong Kong's status as the world's number one air cargo hub, providing even greater cargo connectivity between Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland and the rest of the world.

Cathay Group Chief Executive Officer Ronald Lam commented: "As we move into 2024, our rebuild journey is gaining momentum. This order marks another major component in our investment for the future. It reflects Cathay's confidence in the Hong Kong hub as we look ahead to the opportunities provided by the Three-Runway System. These highly fuel-efficient, next-generation freighters will provide important additional cargo capacity, expand our global network and contribute to our sustainability leadership goals."

Airbus Chief Commercial Officer and Head of International Christian Scherer said: "There's a new standard in the cargo space and we are gratified that such a savvy global air-cargo operator as

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Cathay has joined the growing number of reference players in the air-freight industry selecting the A350F. The aircraft will fit seamlessly with Cathay's existing A350 passenger fleet, while lowering operating costs to a level never before seen in increasingly competitive cargo markets. At the same time, it will bring a very significant reduction in carbon emissions, contributing immediately to sustainability goals."

Powered by latest technology Rolls-Royce Trent-XWB97 engines, the aircraft will bring a reduction in fuel consumption and carbon emissions of up to 40% when compared with the older 747F and is at least 20% more efficient than its competitor.

The A350F features the largest main deck cargo door in the industry, with fuselage length and capacity optimised around the industry's standard pallets and containers. Over 70% of the airframe is made of advanced materials, resulting in a 46 tonne lighter take-off weight than the competing derivative. The A350F is also the only freighter aircraft that will fully meet ICAO's enhanced CO? emissions standards, coming into effect in 2027.

These freighters will link Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland with long-haul destinations in North and South America as well as Europe. The purchase agreement brings the Cathay Group's new aircraft deliveries to 77. The Cathay Group's order book includes 21 Boeing 777-9 wide-body passenger aircraft scheduled to be delivered from 2025 and a total of 49 Airbus A320neo and A321neo aircraft expected to be delivered by 2029.

Cathay Cargo has a freighter fleet of 20 Boeing 747 freighters, including 14 B747-8Fs and six B747-400ERFs. In addition to freighter capacity, Cathay Cargo provides belly capacity through the Cathay Group's extensive passenger network, providing cargo services to around 80 destinations worldwide.



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08 DECEMBER 2023

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https://ut.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/cathay-strengthens-hong-kong-as-air-cargo-hub-with-airbus-a350f-freighters-order

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