KLM DELAYS 787-9 INAUGURAL FLIGHTS TO LATE NOVEMBER

News / Airlines



KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)'s first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, Registration PH-BHA, took off into the sky successfully after completing a total of more than two hours' maiden test flights at Paine Field, Washington on Wednesday afternoon, according to a tweet posted by Paine Airport.

The brand new Dreamliner conducted its test flights on Wednesday afternoon. The 787 took off from Boeing's Paine Field at 2:41 p.m. on Wednesday and landed at Grant Co International Airport at 4:31 p.m. After a short break, the plane returned the airport at 5:33 p.m., according to live flight tracker FlightAware.

The first test flight, known as B1 flight conducted by Boeing test pilots, was part of a series of work that Boeing performs before handing over the airplane to the airline.

KLM announced previously that Abu Dhabi and Bahrain will be the first destinations to be served with the 787-9 from October 25, followed by Cairo in November. From December, KLM will operate the 787-9 to Quito, Guayaquil and Xiamen. The stretched Dreamliner will be finally deployed on Amsterdam-Chengdu on March 27, 2016.

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Meanwhile, the Dutch carrier will probably delay the delivery of "PH-BHA", since its C1 flight is scheduled in November, according a source familiar with the matter disclosed via Twitter.

As KLM's booking system shows, the airline once again delays its planned 787-9 inaugural services. According to the airline's official website, KLM will start operating the 787-9 Dreamliner on Amsterdam-Abu Dhabi-Bahrain and Amsterdam-Cairo routes on November 22, 2015, a week later than planned.

The 787-9 will be configured with 294 seats in a three-class layout - 30 lie-flat seats in World Business class in rows of 1-8, 48 seats in Economy Comfort zone, arranged 3-3-3 from rows 10 through 16, and 216 Economy seats also stacked 3-3-3 from rows 17 through 44.

KLM currently has 21 787s on order. In this August, the flag carrier converted six of its 21 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner orders into the larger 787-10s because of the network.

The first two 787-9s will be delivered to KLM in 2015, with approximately eight or nine joining the fleet in 2016. The remaining aircraft of the current order are scheduled to be delivered in the years after that, with the first 787-10 joining the fleet in 2020.

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