AIRBUS EYES THE WIDE GAME IN CHINA

News / Manufacturer



Airbus expects strong demand for widebody aircraft in **China**, as Chinese carriers work on their fleet plans for the next five years.

Speaking to Flightglobal in Beijing, Airbus China president Eric Chen says the boom in outbound traffic, coupled with the relatively small widebody fleet in the country, will drive airlines to look at larger jets. The continued bottlenecks at the country's airports, together with air traffic congestion and a shortage of pilots, will also add to the push.

"I think that over the next five years, widebodies are going to be a key element for the development of fleet in Chinese airlines. The priority will be on the widebody," he says.

The manufacturer currently has about 172 twin-aisle aircraft operating in the country. It expects to end the year with about 190 widebodies and for that number to grow to 270 by end-2018, considering existing orders. Last week, China firmed options for 30 A330s, on top of an order for 45 A330s signed in July.

Chen says Airbus has been focusing on the current A330 and its re-engined variant in China, because of the lack of early slots for the A350.

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.

“For the A350 we have constraints here because airlines plan their fleet in a frame of five years. So when deliveries are beyond the five year plan period, even those which are interested, they are very cautious to order,” he explains. The next five year plan will cover the years 2016-2020.

Air China is the only Chinese customer with an order for 10 of the -900 variant currently, but Chen believes that the A350 will be “very popular” in the country.

He adds that the A330 and A330neo will continue to have a dominant position in China as the type's versatility allows airlines to utilise them on short, medium and long routes efficiently, as its cost per seat "remains unbeatable". He concedes however that there are “difficulties” in selling the product as airlines feel like “they should be looking for the future and the next generation”.

On the A380, of which China Southern Airlines has five in operation, Chen says he remains optimistic about its prospect in China as local airlines work on building up major hubs. He adds that Airbus will also move to “further promote the type” in the country.

05 NOVEMBER 2015

SOURCE: FLIGHTGLOBAL
ARTICLE LINK:
https://ut.50skyshades.com/news/manufacturer/airbus-eyes-the-wide-game-in-china

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.