



Backgrounder

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Boeing Converted Freighters

Boeing is committed to helping airlines maximize the asset value of their airplanes over their entire lifecycle. At the same time, Boeing wants to offer carriers a full range of aircraft to meet their cargo needs. To meet these two goals, Boeing has developed a line of three freighter aircraft models converted from a passenger mission: Boeing Converted Freighters (BCFs).

Boeing Converted Freighters offer airlines the opportunity to transition aircraft to new missions after their useful life carrying passengers is over. And BCFs offer an important option for carriers keen to match the capability and cost of an airplane with its mission. That's why Boeing offers not just a full line of production freighters, but also Boeing Converted Freighters.

Boeing currently offers three models of Boeing Converted Freighters: the 747-400BCF, the 767-300BCF and the MD-11BCF. The BCF identifier on these airplanes ensures buyers that the same engineering, workmanship and attention to detail going into all Boeing airplanes are duplicated.

Crucially, Boeing offers customer support for the BCFs as if they were new airplanes. This includes automatic access to maintenance information and up-to-date technical manuals available on MyBoeingFleet, Boeing's web-portal support home. The customer support also includes access to Boeing field service representatives around the world and service engineers. Boeing's unique understanding of its airplanes helps to assure that BCF airplanes will be economical to maintain and will command the highest value in the freighter market.

Looking more closely at the BCF family:

747-400BCF

Boeing launched the 747-400 Boeing Converted Freighter in January 2004 as a way to help operators take advantage of the industry-leading cargo-carrying capability of the 747-400 while at the same time gaining even more value from airplanes already in service. Since then, customers in Asia, Europe and North America have opted to take advantage of this program by contracting to convert their own passenger or combi (combination freighter/passenger aircraft) airplanes or by purchasing airplanes on the open market, some for later lease to others.

Boeing created a program that takes advantage of experience gained on hundreds of conversions and that conforms to Boeing standards for design product integrity and safety, production, program management, certification and after-conversion support. It uses the capabilities of supplier-partners located around the world.

Boeing fabricated, assembled and shipped the first modification kit of components for the 747-400BCF to Taikoo Aircraft Engineering (TAECO) in Xiamen, China, in 2004. TAECO performed the hands-on labor of the first 747-400BCF, and this first 747-400BCF was “redelivered” to Hong Kong’s Cathay Pacific Airways in 2005.

767-300BCF

In October 2005, Boeing and Tokyo-based All Nippon Airways announced that ANA would launch the 767-300BCF program with a firm agreement for three passenger-to-freighter conversions and options for four more. A year later, ANA announced it was exercising two of those options, leaving it with five firm orders and two options.

For the conversion, a 767-300 passenger airplane receives major modifications on its main deck such as a side cargo door and surrounding structure, floor beams and struts, floor panels and freighter tracks as provisions for a buyer-furnished cargo-handling system, and wall and ceiling liners.

It is expected that the 767-300BCF will have virtually the same cargo capability as the same-model production freighter with approximately 50 tonnes structural payload at a range of approximately 3,000 nautical miles (5,930 kilometers) and 412,000 pounds (187,270 kilograms) maximum takeoff weight. There are 24 pallet positions on the main deck.

Performing the 767-300 conversions will be Aeronavali in Italy and SASCO in Singapore, a division of ST Aerospace. SASCO will induct the first 767-300BCF for conversion in 2007.

As with the other BCF conversions, Boeing offers a variety of support packages that may be incorporated during 767-300 BCF conversions, including avionics and flight-deck upgrades. Airlines may also consider options such as carbon brakes, live animal and perishable food carriage, weight increases and integration of technical manuals.

MD-11BCF and Boeing Special Freighters

Boeing performed its first MD-11 conversion in 1995. Today there are only a handful of MD-11s left in passenger service that are not yet scheduled for conversion. Boeing is carefully studying different rates at which the conversion program can be continued while keeping the price reasonable for MD-11 owners and still economically viable for Boeing and its conversion partners.

The MD-11BCF has been such a popular airplane for conversions because it meets the demanding requirements of its air cargo niche market. Well suited to both express and high-density operations, the MD-11 converted freighter carries up to 36 standard 96-by-125-inch pallets or containers. With a payload of about 90 tonnes and a range of nearly 3,500 nautical miles (almost 6,500 kilometers), low fuel burn, and unrestricted over-water operational capability, the MD-11BCF has proven to be a top performer among the world's premier package freight operators.

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April 2007

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