

## **Boeing has firm plans to help develop BD's knowledge, capability in cargo ops**

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Dhaka : Cargo is a crucial area that the national flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines can look to exploit, since the Bangladeshi air freight market is overwhelmingly served by foreign capacity, mostly from Middle East, East Asia, and European-domiciled cargo operators.

Hence, local airlines would need the right product to compete such as the 737BCF and 777F; reliable freighter aircraft, with the lowest per-tonne costs and a common cross-section with operators' other aircraft (as about 40 per cent of freighter traffic is interlined).

For this purpose, Boeing has firm plans to help develop Bangladesh's knowledge and capability in cargo operations.

Randy Heisey, Managing Director, Commercial Marketing, Middle East, Africa, Russia and Central Asia of The Boeing Company said this to The Bangladesh Monitor in an exclusive virtual interview recently.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, cargo transportation around the globe have grown substantially. Air cargo remains a crucial piece of the global trade infrastructure, from manufacturing supply chains to e-commerce.

According to IATA estimates, 2021 was the best year ever for air cargo revenue, up 95 per cent through for full year 2021 vs 2019. The freighter market continues to be

strong with 2021 cargo traffic 8 per cent higher than 2019. Air cargo capacity on dedicated freighters is up more than 30 per cent vs 2019.

This demand is evidenced by record orders in 2022 for Boeing freighters, including new production models and converted freighters. In 2021, Boeing had 84 gross orders for new production freighters (747-8F, 767F and 777F), outpacing the previous record of 83 in 2019. Also in 2021, Boeing had more than 100 orders and commitments for Boeing Converted Freighters (737- 800BCF and 767-300BCF, more than double the previous high mark, shared Randy Heisey.

He further said, longer term cargo demand will continue to be driven by global trade and GDP growth, including continued growth in ecommerce.

Boeing's 2021 Commercial Market Outlook forecast (September 2021) projects:

- Demand is expected to grow 4 per cent annually and generate further demand for 930 new wide-body production freighters and 1,500 converted freighters through 2040.

- A 70 per cent increase in the freighter fleet by 2040, including approximately 450 new large wide-body freighters such as the new 777-8 Freighter and 777 Freighter. The 777-8 Freighter is ideally positioned to replace the four-engine 747-400 Freighter, in addition to providing additional lift for the growing air cargo sector.

Randy explained, projected demand has increased for dedicated freighters, including new and converted models. With sustained demand for air cargo tied to expanding e-commerce and air freight's speed and reliability, the CMO projects the global freighter fleet in 2040 will be 70 per cent larger than the pre-pandemic fleet. To meet customer demand amid the pandemic, Boeing is expanding capacity at existing maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) supplier facilities in the Asia-Pacific region and is adding new conversion sites in the Americas and its own London Gatwick facility.

On January 28, Boeing launched the new Boeing 777-8 Freighter with an order of up to 50 from Qatar Airways.

This will be the world's largest, most capable and most fuel-efficient twin-engine freighter. With advanced technology from the new 777X and proven performance from the 777 Freighter, the new 777-8 Freighter offers the highest payload and the lowest fuel use, emissions and operating cost per tonne of any large freighter, ideal for operators creating a more sustainable and profitable future, mentioned Randy.

On March 4, Boeing announced that it has signed a memorandum of understanding with Ethiopian Airlines for five 777-8 Freighters.

"We continue to expect that we will deliver the first 777X in late 2023," said Randy Heisey.

Other than B-777X, Boeing is progressing on 737-7, 737-10 and 777X development and certification, and now are adding the 777-8 Freighter to those efforts. The US-based plane manufacturing giant is also beginning to lay the foundation for its next commercial airplane development programme.