

Airbus deliveries decline by 16pc in May

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Paris: Airbus delivered 53 aircraft in May, down 16pc from the same month last year and bringing the number of airplanes handed over to customers since Jan. 1 to 256, the aircraft maker said.

It is targeting 800 deliveries for the year.

Demand for aircraft is strong because air travel is staging a strong recovery at the same time as supplies of new airplanes are tight, notably at U.S. planemaker Boeing.

Airbus, which has headquarters in France, had delivered around 50 aircraft in May. Industry sources said it had been targeting closer to 60 deliveries for the month.

Jefferies analyst Chloe Lemarie described the published tally of 53 deliveries as a "setback".

While May was affected by a high number of weekday holidays in France, where Airbus has two out of eight narrow-body assembly lines, Airbus must achieve "significant catch-up" to reach stable deliveries for the quarter, Lemarie said in a note.

That comes as Airbus is also facing new pressure on the underlying production of single-aisle jets because of parts and labour shortages, Reuters reported last week.

There is no immediate connection between production and deliveries because Airbus includes a buffer in its plans against delays to protect its delivery goals, analysts say.

But industry sources said production of several dozen jets could be delayed in the second half of the year, putting renewed pressure on the planemaker's industrial ramp-up.

Airbus also said on Thursday it had sold 27 airplanes in May, including 20 A330neos to an unidentified customer.

The upgraded A330 wide-body jet is one of the few available types of aircraft in a market beset by widespread shortages in the midst of surging demand for newer models like the A350 and Boeing 787, delegates said at an airline summit this week.

So far this year, Airbus has sold 254 airplanes, or a net total of 237 after cancellations.

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