

## Etihad to invest \$1b in fleet growth

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Abu Dhabi: Etihad Airways is set to invest \$1 billion in retrofitting around 50 aircraft, focusing initially on its Boeing 787 and 777 fleets, CEO Antonoaldo Neves told Bloomberg.

The upgrades aim to address consistency and passenger experience amid delivery delays from aircraft manufacturers.

The retrofit program will cover Etihad's 10 Boeing 787-10s, 33 Boeing 787-9s, and 9 Boeing 777-300ERs, as per ch-aviation data. Other widebody aircraft, excluding the Airbus A380s, are also slated for upgrades.

Etihad's fleet expansion plan aims to grow from 102 to 150 aircraft in five years, with an order book including A350-1000s, A350Fs, and Boeing 777-8s and 777-9s.

Neves emphasized the importance of fleet consistency, stating, "We're

retrofitting even planes that don't necessarily need it to ensure uniformity." The initiative is part of Etihad's \$7 billion five-year investment, which also includes new aircraft, route expansions, and network changes.

The cabin retrofits, scheduled to begin in late 2025, will include full interior overhauls with upgraded business class seats, high-speed internet, and a new inflight entertainment system. Supply chain challenges, particularly in sourcing key components, have contributed to the project's timeline.

Etihad's announcement coincides with its reported AED 1.4 billion (\$380 million) after-tax earnings for the first nine months of 2024, a 66pc year-on-year increase.

Neves attributes the strong financial performance to the airline's strategic growth initiatives, which continue to position Etihad as a leading global carrier.

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