



PRESS RELEASE



QATAR AIRWAYS GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE HAILS 'YEAR OF THE FLEET' WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW A350

Press conference and delivery ceremony in Toulouse attracts more than 150 international media as airline welcomes the first of its 80 A350 XWB aircraft

Year of significant fleet growth as Qatar Airways

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, chaired a press conference today at the Airbus Delivery Centre in Toulouse, France, to a crowd of more than 150 international media who had travelled from all corners of the globe to witness the delivery of the first A350 XWB to Qatar Airways, of which the airline is the global launch customer.

In attendance at the press conference and delivery ceremony in Toulouse were Fabrice Bregier, President and Chief Executive Officer at Airbus and Tony Wood, President - Aerospace from Rolls Royce, and Qatar's Ambassador to France, His Excellency Sheikh Mishaal bin Hamad Al-Thani, witnessing the arrival of the airline's first A350 XWB aircraft. Speaking at the press conference, Mr. Al Baker explained about Qatar Airways' rapid expansion plans, boosted by the arrival of this latest aircraft type.

The entire day was filled with cultural high notes. The audience was swept away by a specially created artistic performance by musicians from the Orchestra National du Capitole de Toulouse under the musical direction of Pierre Bleuse.

Renowned calligraphy artist, Faouzia Hilmy captivated the guests with sand artistry and poetry about friendship by Al Buhtari, a famous Arabic poet from the 9th century.

Finally, Hiba Al Kawas, the Grand Dame of Arabic opera singing and composing, performed a popular Arabic folklore song that mirrors the high regard for culture and classical music which the State of Qatar has supported for many years.

Following the press conference and delivery ceremony, media

Inaugurates its second new aircraft type in almost as many months

Media flew on the A350 and were taken for a tour of the Pyrenees Mountains in South-Western France following press conference and delivery ceremony



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were taken on a short flight onboard the A350, overlooking the Pyrenees mountains in south-western France.

Mr. Akbar Al Baker remarked: "Today marks a momentous occasion in the history of our airline. Not only are we welcoming a new aircraft type into the Qatar Airways fleet, but as global launch customer for the A350 XWB, we are receiving the newest and most modern aircraft that the world will see for at least another decade.

"With our significant order as launch customer for 80 of this aircraft type, it has enabled Airbus to create an aircraft that not only considers every aspect of passenger comfort, but also features the cutting-edge light-weight carbon composite design, which in turn allows fuel consumption and noise to be reduced, along with many other leading features.

"I am confident that with our passenger insight, the aircraft that has today been welcomed into our fleet will be the footprint for all future aircraft design, both with regard to technological advancements and the passenger journey itself."

Fabrice Brégier, Airbus President and CEO said: "Handing over the first A350 XWB represents a significant step in Airbus and aviation history. The A350 XWB becomes the most modern aircraft in service, developed with our excellence established over 45 years in meeting our customers' needs. The A350 XWB is the latest Airbus aircraft to join the skies, revolutionising our industry and redefining the way people fly." He added: "It is with tremendous pride that we are delivering our first A350 XWB today to our launch customer, Qatar Airways. It's a perfect match, to be handing over the first of an all-new, world-class aircraft to a leading, world-class airline."

As global launch customer for the A350 XWB, Qatar Airways will be the only airline to fly this aircraft type for the foreseeable future, and was a significant contributor to its cutting-edge design in partnership with aircraft manufacturer, Airbus.

The first commercial service will be deployed on the Doha-Frankfurt route in January 2015.

The delivery of the A350 XWB is the second significant fleet milestone for the airline in almost as many months, having recently taken delivery of its first A380 aircraft in September.

The A350 XWB will comprise a two-class configuration with 36 Business Class seats in a 1-2-1 configuration, featuring 80" fully flat beds and 17" HD in-flight entertainment screens. Economy Class will comprise of 247 seats, each 18-inches wide in a 3-3-3 configuration, with up to a 32-inch pitch. Each individual seat will feature a 10.6" in-flight entertainment screen, and more space at shoulder level for passengers in window seats, thanks to a vertical side wall panel design.

Over 70 per cent of the A350 XWB's weight-efficient airframe is made from advanced materials combining composites (53 percent), titanium and advanced aluminium alloys. The aircraft's innovative all-new carbon fibre reinforced plastic fuselage results in lower fuel burn as well as easier maintenance.

Qatar Airways has a robust range of Airbus aircraft in its fleet. In addition to the 80 A350s it has on order, the airline has a current Airbus fleet comprising of the A320, A330 Freighter, A319LR, A321, A330, A340 and A380 families.

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Notes to Editors:

About Qatar Airways

Qatar Airways, the national carrier of the State of Qatar, is one of the fastest growing airlines operating one of the youngest fleets in the world. Now in its 17th year of operations, Qatar Airways has a modern fleet of 142 aircraft flying to 145 key business and leisure destinations across six continents.

Qatar Airways celebrated its one year anniversary, in October 2014, of joining the **oneworld** global alliance. The award-winning alliance was named the World's Best Airline Alliance 2014 by Skytrax for the second year running this year.

Qatar Airways was the first Gulf carrier to join this global airline alliance, enabling its passengers to benefit from almost 1,000 airports in more than 150 countries, with 14,250 daily departures.

At the Farnborough Air Show, the airline placed an order for 100 Boeing 777X aircraft, taking Qatar Airways' orders to more than 340 aircraft with a value of US \$70 billion.

For images:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/qatarairways/sets/72157649884689055/>