



Air New Zealand Announces Bio Fuel Research Initiative

PRINT

CLOSE

28 September 2007

Air New Zealand will play a world-leading role in the development of more environmentally friendly fuel for commercial aircraft.

The airline will sign a memorandum of understanding today with aircraft manufacturer Boeing and engine maker Rolls-Royce to work together on projects aimed at ensuring that commercial aviation continues to become more environmentally sustainable.

The inaugural step in the relationship will be the first commercial trial of a bio fuelled, Rolls-Royce powered, Boeing aircraft toward the second half of next year/early 2009. The Boeing 747 flight, which is likely to depart Auckland and will not carry customers, will be conducted under strict safety standards.

Only one engine will run on a blended bio fuel/kerosene mix and the remaining three will be powered by regular aviation fuel. An announcement on the source and mix of the blended fuel will be made closer to the time of the flight.

Air New Zealand Chief Executive Officer Rob Fyfe says the test flight is another step in Air New Zealand's plan to lead the global aviation industry in developing the most environmentally responsible airline practices possible and the most environmentally responsible airline.

Mr Fyfe says that as little as a year ago bio fuel seemed like "pie in the sky" to many aviation industry observers, but it is now a possibility and technology is moving so fast that it may become viable in a much shorter timeframe than previously thought.

"Air New Zealand is keen to encourage research into alternative fuels and wants to work hand-in-hand with industry partners and the New Zealand Government on promoting this type of activity. Today is a day that both the airline and country should be proud of. We are taking the first steps on what promises to be an inspiring and defining journey."

Mr Fyfe says Air New Zealand would like to progress to an all New Zealand bio fuel for future tests flights, but sourcing the quantity necessary may be a challenge in the short term.

Air New Zealand has already made significant steps towards becoming one of the world's most environmentally responsible airlines through a large fleet investment programme.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner, due to come into Air New Zealand service in 2010, will save 20 per cent more fuel than similar aircraft through a combination of new technology and weight reduction.

"Along with the efficient Boeing 777s currently being flown by the airline, this will ensure Air New Zealand has one of the youngest, most technologically advanced, fuel efficient and environmentally friendly long haul fleets in the world," Mr Fyfe says.

"Our long haul fleet purchases together with initiatives underway in the area of fuel saving, weight reduction and flying techniques put Air New Zealand at the forefront of environmental responsibilities."

ENDS

Issued by Air New Zealand Public Affairs tel 09 336 2761

For more information:

Tracey Palmer
Corporate Communications Manager
Tel 09 336 3179
021 628 129
tracey.palmer@airnz.co.nz

NOTE

The content of all Air New Zealand media releases are accurate at the time of issue, as stated at the top of each release. For updates on any changes, please contact Air New Zealand.

About Us > Media Center > Media Releases

Copyright © 2002 - 2007 Air New Zealand Limited.