

Monday, February 2. 2009

## **No 747-8?**

Hmm ... is it just me or is Boeing testing the water with the statement, that they would stop the 747-8 program in the case they find out that this isn't commercially feasible.

Or was it like shaking the tree: If you don't order it NOW, we will not build it (vice versa to the original 747 discussion between the Boeing - Allen - and the Pan Am - Trippe- boss at the time of the 747. Trippe: „If you build it, I buy it.“, Allen: „If you buy it, I build it.“)

Up to now the pax version of the 747-8 (the 8i) was just ordered by Lufthansa in substantial numbers. And as far as i overlook this topic, there wasn't a freighter (8F) order in the last year, albeit there are already a significant amount of orders for the 8F.

I'm even not sure that there is a market for the 8F now: Oil got much cheaper the last time and there are a lot of upcoming 747-400 (the actually flying generation) just short before their end-of-life as passenger aircrafts and thus possible frames for a conversion to freighters. The freight rates decreased substantially ... a sign that there is more than enough capacity in the market.

By the way: Boeing has a large problem with the 787 and engineers are a precious resource. They need them there. There are even the first cancellations in the 787 program. There might be the moment, when Boeing thinks, that they have to get this program up and running at any costs before creating a new aircraft. And then there is the the problem, that the 737NG program (a high-volume market) is in it's 12 year of delivery. And basically this is a 41 years old aircraft design. Perhaps Boeing comes to the conclusion, that they need their engineers for the next version of a Boeing single aisle aircraft and not for a competitive product to the already flying A380 owning it's market segment at the moment.

I'm just an outsider to this topic, but i don't think that it's impossible, Boeing will announce that they won't build the 747-8.

But such a decision would have interesting consequences: Airbus would own the high-margin very-large aircraft sector (Boeing doesn't build the 747-400 for some time now, as nobody wanted to buy it). I'm still sure that there is a large market for such aircrafts, people don't want to have more aircrafts starting and landing in their neighbourhood and no new runways, but more people want to fly, thus you need bigger aircrafts) Owning this sector would give them more money to outdevelop Boeing at the Single Aisle sector (the A320/B737 follow on).

Posted by Joerg Moellenkamp in Aviation, English at 20:14