

June 8, 2007

787 News

I'm sure many of you are aware that we made the press regarding performance concerns on the 787 program. Fact is, Boeing's 787 has been so successful that everything about it is newsworthy - especially anything having to do with risk. Due to a series of recent events, we have managed to pique the media's attention as a source of risk and so we made the news this week.

Bottom line up front: We have some challenges - just like everybody else. Our job is to identify, attack, and fix challenges as they arise. We are today responding the right way - fast, decisive, and with our best resources. These issues will get fixed and we will move on to the next ones. After all, execution of any program is little more than overcoming a series of challenges. Don't let the sudden flurry of anxious media get you down. This is a great program and we will do a great job.

We are truly fortunate to be a part of the 787 - the most successful new airplane launch ever, and overall our team has done well under some stressful circumstances. Our thorniest problem is the ongoing schedule slippage of some key purchased components that we install in the fuselage. Supplier management is a big part of our job description on all our programs, and so as a company we have lots of experience with problems like this and know exactly what to do. Given urgency of the schedule, we had to hit this one fast and hard and we have. Other issues we are facing are pretty routine to fix, once the right resources are applied.

I don't want to gloss over the challenges, only to put things in perspective. We have some work to do, but there is nothing here we haven't done before, and we can get these issues corrected in short order.

Ultimately, such challenges are opportunities for growth. I have been amazed at just how fast a team of talented and motivated people from within the program and across the company have mobilized to fix this problem. There is simply no way to convey just how impressive this response has been. This is an example of what we want to become - a collection of special people that bring together their uniquely diverse experience to accomplish great things as a team.

Keep the faith - we will get there. Be safe.

Original signed by:  
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