



Singapore Airshow Takes Flight

SINGAPORE AIRSHOW, AEROSPACE INDUSTRY **CNBC.com**

By CNBC.com with Wires

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Aerobatics are set to blaze the Singapore skies this week as exhibitors, tradesmen and the public gear themselves up for what promises to be an exciting Singapore Airshow 2008.

The Singapore Airshow, billed as the world's third largest in size after Paris and Farnborough, but smaller than others such as Dubai in terms of orders, is seen as an opportunity for planemakers to access the fast-growing Asia-Pacific aviation industry.

Key players in the aerospace industry gather at airshows like this, to network and announce major deals, which have been negotiated many months beforehand. Eyes are on whether airlines such as Malaysia's **AirAsia X** and **Thai Airways** will pick the Airbus A350 or Boeing's 787 Dreamliner.

In January, **Boeing** announced a second delay in its top-selling 787, pushing first deliveries out until early 2009. Airlines have so far ordered 857 of the planes, worth \$140 billion at list prices, and some are seeking compensation for the postponement.

Boeing's problems mirror that of rival **Airbus**, whose A380, the world's largest passenger jet, was delayed two years before the first delivery last October to **Singapore Airlines**.

Other industry heavyweights participating in the Singapore Airshow include **Rolls-Royce**, **BAE Systems** and **EADS**. Both military and commercial aviation players took up almost all the exhibition hall space even before the brand new Changi Exhibition Centre (CEC) was built.

The CEC is a multi-dimensional facility with over 50,000 square meters of exhibition space. *Singapore Airshow & Events*, the organizer of this mega event, expects a turnout of roughly 80,000 people from both the industry and the public during the six-day event. Visitors will also be able to catch a full glimpse of the much-touted Airbus A380.

Comparisons are being drawn between the Singapore Airshow and **Asian Aerospace** held in Hong Kong last September.

Asian Aerospace, organized by *Reed Exhibitions*, was previously held in Singapore two years ago, but moved to set up a rival show in Hong Kong after falling out with the Singapore government. The Hong Kong show, which highlighted its access to the China market, dropped the military element that features in Singapore as U.S. companies are barred from selling weapons to China.

But barring bad weather, the only rivalry on peoples' minds will be the one between the RSAF's Black Knights and the RAAF's Roulettes. The showcase of high-speed maneuvers and screeching vertigo stunts by the latest and most powerful aircraft is expected to draw thousands of spectators.

CNBC Asia will be broadcasting live from the Singapore Airshow from Tuesday, 19th February to Thursday, 21st February. The broadcast will be streamed live on CNBC.com from 8 a.m. to noon Singapore/Hong Kong Time.

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