

Silk Way West Airlines Taps Airbus A350F to Bridge Fleet Transition

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Azerbaijan's Silk Way West Airlines, based at Baku Heydar Aliev International, is strategically leveraging the Airbus A350F to seamlessly bridge the gap between the delivery of its final Boeing 777-200Fs in 2027 and the commencement of 777-8F deliveries, according to the airline's President and CEO, Wolfgang Meier. In an interview with STAT Media, Meier highlighted the A350F's fuel efficiency and environmental friendliness as key factors influencing the airline's decision.

"With the last delivery of our five 777-200Fs scheduled for 2027 and a subsequent waiting period before the arrival of the 777-8Fs, we've chosen the A350F to fill this gap. Both aircraft models offer compelling advantages in terms of fuel efficiency and environmental impact," Meier emphasized.

While the precise timeline for the B777-8F deliveries remains undisclosed, Meier emphasized the airline's strategic preference not to be among the early operators of a newly certified type. Boeing estimates that the freighter variant of the B777-9, the 777-8F, could be delivered to the launch customer in 2027. The A350F, therefore, serves as an ideal solution for Silk Way West Airlines to renew its fleet promptly without waiting for the 777-8F deliveries.

Silk Way West Airlines placed an order for two A350Fs with two additional options in mid-2022, followed by an order for two 777-8Fs with two options less than six months later. These A350s mark the airline's first foray into Airbus aircraft.

The current fleet of Silk Way West Airlines, as indicated by the ch-aviation fleets, includes seven 747-400FSCDs, five 747-8Fs, and two out of the five recently ordered 777-200Fs. Meier disclosed plans to retire the aging 747-400FSCDs, emphasizing the carrier's commitment to modernizing its fleet. While the macroeconomic environment for cargo freighters presents challenges, Meier affirmed that Silk Way West Airlines continues to thrive in the competitive market.

