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# Air Canada places repeat order for Mirabel-built Airbus A220 jets

Canada's biggest carrier converted options for 15 Airbus A220-300 aircraft into firm orders.

#### Frédéric Tomesco

Oct 26, 2022 • 25 minutes ago • 3 minute read • 💭 Join the conversation





An Air Canada Airbus A220-300 jet lands at Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport in Dorval 2022. PHOTO BY JOHN MAHONEY /Montreal Gazette

<u>Air Canada</u> is doubling down on the former Bombardier C Series by purchasing additional units of the narrow-body plane now known as the <u>Airbus A220</u>.

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Montreal-based Air Canada will have 60 A220s in its fleet.

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Wednesday's order extends a multi-year effort by Air Canada to lower operating costs by adding fuel-efficient aircraft such as the A220, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner and the 737 Max. Air Canada said the new Airbus jets would play an "important role" in helping the company reach a goal of net zero emissions from all global operations by 2050.

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a mainstay of our narrow-body neer, and its performance and passenger connort are enabling us to compete enectively in the north American market."

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Air Canada becomes the third existing A220 customer to place a repeat order for the plane this year, after U.S. carriers Delta and JetBlue. Delta is the biggest buyer of the jet, with 107 orders placed so far.

Some 227 A220s are currently flying worldwide, including 172 of the larger A220-300 variety. As of the end of September, Airbus had booked 773 orders for the aircraft.

Carriers like the A220 because of its lower operating costs — mostly the result of the Pratt & Whitney engines that power the jet — compared with older aircraft like the Airbus A320 or the Embraer E190. The Bombardier-designed plane is also quieter and less polluting.

Compared with older models, the A220 features larger windows, bigger overhead stowage bins and the widest economy seats in Air Canada's fleet.

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6 of 11

"The A220 is the only Airbus airplane that did not see a production cut during the pandemic," industry analyst Addison Schonland, founder of the U.S.-based consulting firm AirInsight, said in a telephone interview. "It was the absolute right-sized airplane for traffic that had shrunk. The A220 only could not only deliver good range and good load factors, but do it much more economically than larger airplanes. The market still wanted that airplane."

Air Canada initially placed a firm order with Bombardier for 45 of the jets in 2016, along with 30 options. It became the first North American carrier to fly the larger version of the jet, the A220-300, in 2020. It operates the A220 on transcontinental routes within Canada, as well as to the U.S. and to Latin America.

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Airbus employs more than 2,500 people at its A220 headquarters and manufacturing site in Mirabel. <u>Employment</u> there is expected to exceed 3,000 people in the near future, Airbus said Wednesday. The European planemaker also has a production facility in Alabama for U.S. buyers of the A220.

Output of the A220 is projected to rise to 14 per month by about 2025 from six currently.

Airbus inherited Bombardier's Mirabel facilities in 2018 when it <u>took control of the Montreal-based company's C Series program</u> in exchange for sales, logistics, procurement and support expertise. The plane was eventually renamed the A220, and Bombardier exited the venture in 2020.

"The deal Airbus did with Bombardier is without a doubt the greatest deal in the history of commercial aviation," Schonland said. "That was the bargain deluxe."

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