Lufthansa to make majority of short-haul aircraft quieter

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Modification of a total of 157 planes from the A320 family from January 2014

Lufthansa is an active proponent of noise abatement and is investing in the nationwide modification of 157 aircraft from its Airbus A320 family. These planes connect Lufthansa's hubs in Frankfurt and Munich with the destinations in its closely meshed European route network.

The manufacturer, Airbus, has even developed vortex generators especially for the A320 family. These are based on the findings of research carried out by Lufthansa and the German Aerospace Center. Flyover measurements showed that the vortex generators eliminate two unpleasant tones and therefore reduce the total noise generated by the approaching plane by up to two decibels. They can be fitted both to aircraft already in service as well as to the new Airbus A319, A320 and A321 models, which are still to be delivered.

"By fitting these vortex generators to our Airbus short and medium-haul fleet, we are continuing to invest in active noise protection", says Kay Kratky, Member of the Lufthansa German Airlines Board, Operation & Hub Frankfurt. "In addition to the extensive modernisation of our fleet over the next few years, this is one of several steps that we are taking to reduce noise. It shows our commitment to working towards a balance between the interests of aviation and local residents, especially at our hubs."

The tones that the vortex generators will eliminate are created on the underside of the wing by the pressure equalisation vents for the fuel tanks. Airflows passing over them in flight have an effect like blowing across the mouth of a bottle. The new components create a vortex in front of these vents and so prevent the noise. The modification of the existing fleet is to start in early 2014. All new deliveries of the A320 and A321 for Lufthansa will be fitted as standard with the vortex generators in future.

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