ETIHAD AIRWAYS NOT INTERESTED IN UPGRADED AIRBUS A380 SUPERJUMBO

News / Airlines

Etihad Airways is **not interested** in a stretched **upgrade to the A380**, which Dubai-based Emirates airline has asked Airbus to build, according to chief executive James Hogan.

The Abu Dhabi-based airline has 10 A380s together in its fleet and on order.

“We think the new technology (with) two engines is operationally and economically more advantageous to us in the long term,” Mr Hogan said, referring to Airbus’s twin-engine A350-1000 and the next generation 777 from the Boeing.

Emirates has already presented Airbus with a 20-year operating programme for a re-engined model of the A380, known as the A380neo, and is set to take delivery of 21 superjumbos next year.

The Dubai carrier last week started flying a two-class version of the A380 which carries 615 passengers.

Last year, there were zero orders placed by commercial airlines for new jumbo 747 aircraft from Boeing or Airbus A380s, reflecting a fundamental shift in the airline industry toward smaller, twin-

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engine planes. Smaller planes cost less to fly than the stately, four-engine jumbos.

Separately, Mr Hogan said Etihad had not considered whether it should increase its stakes in partners such as Air Berlin, of which it owns 29 per cent, if the European Union relaxes restrictions on foreign ownership.

“We’re happy with the investment structure as we see it,” he said while in New York to open a new airport lounge for Etihad at John F Kennedy International Airport.

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