ANA, IRAN AIR END A380 ORDER DROUGHT

News / Airlines, Manufacturer

Airbus's flagship A380 has ended a three-year drought for new orders with confirmation Japan's ANA and Iran Air will be new operators of the world's largest airliner.

On Friday, ANA Holdings (ANA HD) confirmed it would take three A380s that were earmarked for Skymark Airlines, with first delivery is due in 2019.

ANA said the A380, which will be powered with Rolls-Royce Trent 900s, would be initially used between Tokyo and Honolulu.

"The A380 allows us to efficiently expand seating capacity at a lower cost per seat while offering a flexible range of cabin classes," ANA said in a statement on January 29.

Airbus said the ANA order lifted total orders for the A380 to 319, with 179 already delivered to 13 airlines. Emirates is the A380's largest customer, having ordered 140 of the type. Closer to home, Qantas has 12 A380s in its fleet.

Airbus chief executive Fabrice Bregier said ANA would benefit from the A380's "proven operating economics and unrivalled passenger appeal".

"We are confident that the A380 will play an important role in the success of ANA HD's new business strategy," Bregier said in a statement.

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“The A380 will help ANA Group overcome capacity constraints at Tokyo’s busy airports, transporting more passengers, more efficiently and in greater comfort – all at lower cost.”

Airbus terminated Skymark’s order for six A380s in 2014. Two A380s that were slated for delivery to Skymark have already been built and sit in storage at Airbus’s facility in Toulouse. The Japanese carrier filed for bankruptcy in May 2015.

In August, the airline’s creditors backed a restructure plan from ANA and Japanese private equity fund Integral.

A second A380 order was confirmed on January 28 as part of Iran Air’s fleet modernisation program that included all of Airbus’s passenger aircraft lineup.

In an agreement covering 118 aircraft, Airbus said Iran Air agreed to acquire 12 A380s alongside 27 A330ceo family aircraft, 18 A330-900neos and 16 A350-1000s. The airline also planned to take 21 A320ceo family and 24 A320neo family narrowbodies.

The deal was signed in Paris during during Iranian president Hassan Rouhani’s visit to France with French president François Hollande.

“I am very proud of all the Airbus teams who quickly mobilised to propose the agreements and make them happen,” Bregier said in a statement.

The Iran Air order was made possible after the United Stated and European Union lifted sanctions against Iran after the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed the country had cut its nuclear program.

In July 2015, Iran committed to reduce its nuclear materials and open itself up to independent inspections as part of talks with six global powers in return for the decades-long economic sanctions being lifted.

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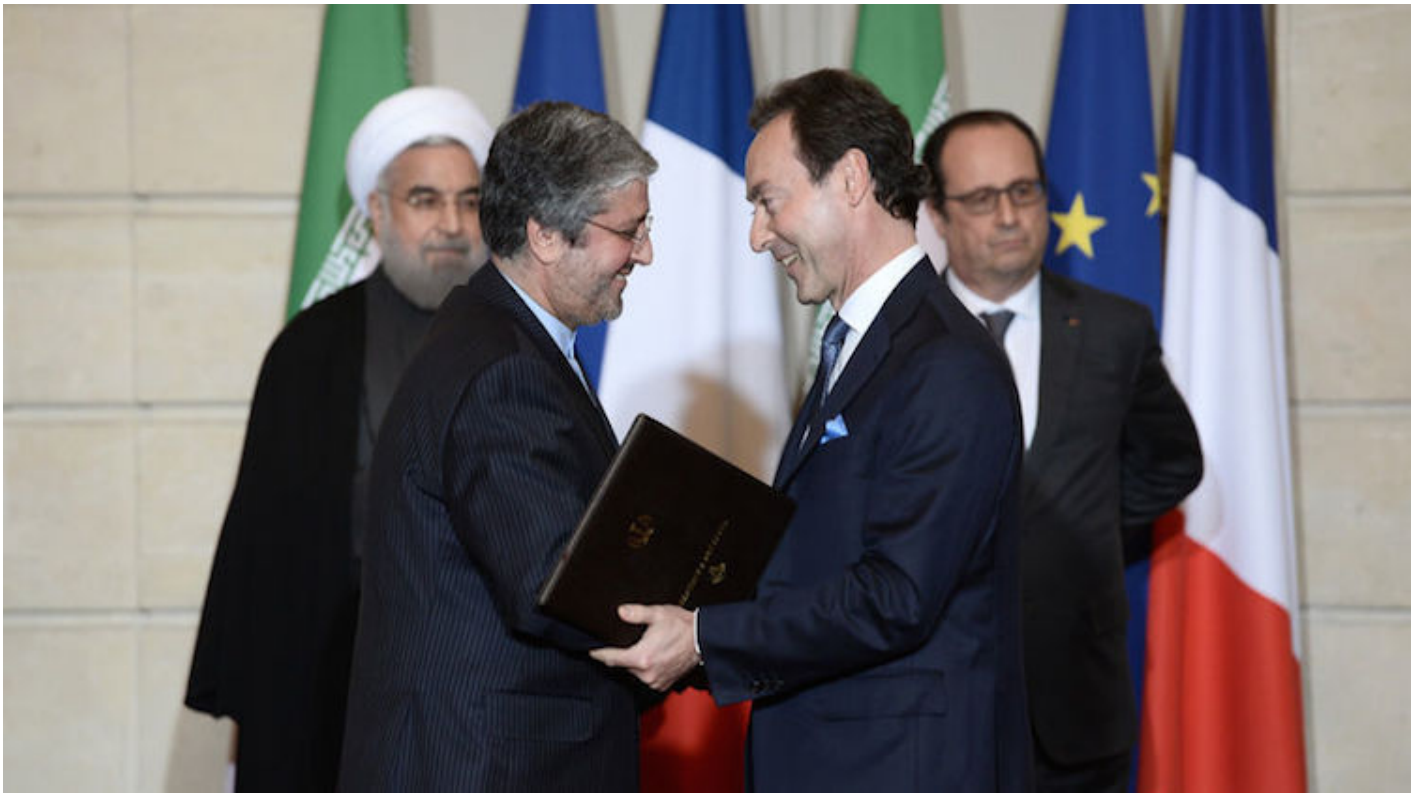

Airbus chief executive Fabrice Bregier and Iran Air chief executive Farhad Parvaresh with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and French President Francois Hollande at the Elysee Palace in Paris on January 28 2016. (Iran Air)

The ANA decision to pick up three A380s, alongside Iran Air's agreement for 12, is Airbus's first new order for the A380 in about three years.

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