Airbus to boost US production of A320 planes

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Airbus is boosting its American A320 production

European planemaker Airbus said Thursday that it would increase production of its best-selling A320 passenger jet in the United States, to seven per month from five starting next year.

The move to ramp up production at Airbus's factory in Mobile, Alabama, is part of the company's goal to lift output of the A320 family planes to 63 per month in 2021, the company said in a statement.

The announcement comes as some $7.5 billion worth of European Union exports are targeted by tariffs imposed by Washington in a clash over government subsidies to Airbus.

The A320 family, competitors for Boeing's troubled 737 range, includes the A319, A320 and A321 jets.

The increase will result in 275 new jobs at its Alabama-based facility, the company said, on top of 600 positions added last year.

"This increase in commercial aircraft production in Mobile is an exciting expansion of our significant industrial investment in the US, and it continues Airbus' positive contribution to American aerospace," said Airbus Americas chairman C. Jeffrey Knittel.

Airbus said it employed about 4,000 people in 38 locations in 16 US states.

The company has capitalised on Boeing's problems with its 737 MAX, grounded since last March after two crashes that killed a total of 346 people—one involving Indonesia's Lion Air and the other an Ethiopian Airlines jet.

Since then, Boeing has failed to allay safety concerns and secure approval from regulators to allow 737 MAX flights to resume, a headache for dozens of airlines who have already ordered the plane.

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