

China shows off homegrown C919 jet in Hong Kong

December 13 2023



China hopes its homegrown C919 passenger jet will be able to compete with models like the Boeing 737 Max and Airbus A320.

China's new domestically produced passenger jet made its debut outside the mainland on Wednesday, with international media in Hong Kong

getting their first up-close look.

The C919 made its maiden commercial flight in May and is key to Beijing's decades-long ambitions to compete with European and US rivals in the air and cut down China's reliance on foreign technology.

Chinese authorities hope the sleek, narrow-body aircraft—built by the state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corp of China (COMAC)—will challenge foreign models like the Boeing 737 MAX and the Airbus A320.

Now on display at Hong Kong International Airport, the C919 will fly over the city's Victoria Harbor on Saturday.

Hong Kong leader John Lee on Wednesday hailed the development of the C919 and the ARJ21—a smaller, earlier model made by COMAC—as "important milestones" in China's aviation sector.

"China's successful development of a large passenger jet symbolizes its leading position in the transportation manufacturing industry," Lee said at a ceremony at the airport.

The C919 has received 1,061 orders from more than 30 clients as of this week, officials said in a statement.

China has invested heavily in the homegrown jetliner as it seeks to become self-sufficient in key technologies, but many of the C919's parts are sourced from overseas.



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The jet received official certification to fly last year after more than a decade in development but has yet to secure any international buyers.

More than 60,000 passengers have been transported by two C919 jets that operate the route linking Chinese cities Shanghai and Chengdu, officials said.

Reporters and guests were invited to tour the plane on Wednesday, with the following two days reserved for visits from local community representatives.

The C919, which landed in the city on Tuesday, will fly around Hong Kong Island twice Saturday morning if weather permits, the government added.

Officials on Wednesday touted the jet's "advanced aerodynamic design, state-of-the-art propulsion system and [advanced materials](#)" that they said lead to lower emissions and better fuel efficiency.

The C919 can be configured to have between 158 and 192 seats and has a maximum range of 5,555 kilometers, they added.

Asia and China in particular are key targets for European manufacturer Airbus and its American rival Boeing, which are looking to capitalize on growing demand for air travel from the country's vast middle class.

Airbus earlier this year announced plans to double its [production capacity](#) in China, signing a deal to build a second final assembly line for the A320 in Tianjin.

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Citation: China shows off homegrown C919 jet in Hong Kong (2023, December 13) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-12-china-homegrown-c919-jet-hong.html>

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