

# Asia Cargo Network to add 737-800Fs and Airbus freighters

Southeast Asian group expands and diversifies its fleet



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Malaysia-based World Cargo Airlines (WCA) has added its second 737-800BCF as the carrier's parent Asia Cargo Network (ACN) is set to execute ambitious growth plans that include more 737NGs, A321s and even A330s.

The 737-800BCF is the 2010-vintage unit 36804 (ex-Garuda Indonesia), which belongs to BBAM. The aircraft arrived in Jinan (TNA) in October 2021 for conversion with Boeing and now joins WCA's first 737-800BCF (29052, ex AeroMexico), also on lease from BBAM.

WCA, the first airline in Southeast Asia to operate 737NG freighters, is part of the Singapore-based ACN group that also owns two airlines in Indonesia: Asia Cargo Airlines and Raffles Global Angkasa (RGA)-Black Stone Airlines.



WCA began flying its first 737-800BCF in 2021. (Photo/World Cargo Airlines)

ACN CEO Marco Isaak confirmed to *Cargo Facts* that the three airlines now have a total fleet of eleven 737 freighters: two -800Fs, one -400F and one -300F with WCA; five -300Fs with Asia Cargo Airlines; and two -300Fs with RGA-Black Stone Airlines.

ACN plans to add around five more 737-800 freighters over the next two years to the group's carriers, Isaak told *Cargo Facts*. However, the acquisition of the 737-800BCFs has not diminished ACN's interest in the 737 Classics; its new Indonesian carrier **Black Stone Airlines** recently launched with its first 737-300F (28200, ex-*Texel Air*) while WCA added another -300F (28869, ex-*Star Air Cargo*) in late 2021. With Indonesia's 17,000 islands, the Classics still offer the best economics for freighter operations across the archipelago, Isaak said.

The Malaysian and Indonesian markets have been particularly active in adding 737 Classic freighters in the past couple of years, with **My Indo Airlines** recently adding a sixth unit and **My Jet Xpress** adding a fifth.

Apart from 737s, ACN has verbally committed to taking two A321Fs but is closely monitoring fuel prices and the conflict in the Ukraine before finalizing the deal, in which case the group could take delivery of the first aircraft around July and the second in September.

Fellow Malaysian carrier **Raya Airways** is also moving into the A321-200F platform.

Beyond narrowbodies, ACN is also looking at A330P2Fs and is engaged in serious negotiations to partner with a major Asian operator of the medium widebody, Isaak told *Cargo Facts*.

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