

Toulouse, February 5, 2012

## Villa Air introduces the ATR 72-600 in the Maldives

### The carrier leases its first ATR -600 series aircraft from GECAS

Maldivian carrier Villa Air, commercially known as FlyMe, is about to become the very first operator of an ATR -600 series aircraft in the archipelago. The airline will start operating an ATR 72-600 which has been delivered to the US-based lessor GECAS (GE Capital Aviation Services Limited), the commercial aircraft leasing and financing company of GE, who is leasing the aircraft to Villa Air. The aircraft, after arriving in the Maldives, will perform its inaugural flight between Malé and Maamigili, the main hub of Villa Air in early February.

This new generation ATR 72-600 will allow Villa Air to expand the airline's fleet and boost service to cities destinations it already flies to: from Maldives' capital Malé to airports in Maamigili, Gan and Dharavandhoo. Villa Air already operates a fleet of 2 ATR 42-500s aircraft deployed on domestic routes in the islands.

The ATR 72-600 is equipped with a new full-glass cockpit and is configured in a highly comfortable 66-seat layout. The modern Armonia cabin features extra legroom, new seat trim and shapes and wider overhead luggage compartments. In addition to the performance advantages and enhanced comfort, this aircraft will bring additional capacity to meet the needs of Maldives' rapidly strengthening travel demand and address the sustained growth of the Maldivian travel market.

Qasim Ibrahim, Chairman of the Villa Group, underlined "the importance of offering new standard of comfort to passengers as well as the outstanding inter-island capabilities of the new ATR 72-600. We are delighted to upgrade our fleet with the most modern 70-seat regional aircraft renowned for its environment friendliness. We want to associate our growth to the preservation of the environment in the Maldives."

Todd Freeman, SVP and Manager, Regional Aircraft, of GECAS, stated: "We are now introducing the ATR 72-600 aircraft in our lease portfolio and we are pleased by the strong attractiveness of this aircraft among regional airlines all over the world. With its low operating costs and its modern passenger comfort standards, the ATR 72-600 is becoming increasingly popular. Our ATR 72-600 commitments will allow us to offer even more comprehensive product offerings to our customers and help them to succeed in the years to come."

Filippo Bagnato, Chief Executive Officer of ATR, declared: "We are pleased that the advantages of the -600 aircraft, starting from the outstanding comfort standards, are now available for passengers in the Maldives". He added: "The Villa Group of companies has a strong commitment to the environment and this is exemplified by their choice of the most "Green" aircraft available today. It's an exciting new chapter for ATR today, which underscores the strong confidence that Villa Air has in ATR, and underlines the Maldivian market's growth potential. Finally, GECAS has an outstanding track record

of placing airplanes with airline customers around the world. We are pleased they continue to expand their portfolio of ATR aircraft."

**About the ATR 72-600:**

Passenger capacity: 68-74 seats  
Engines: Pratt & Whitney 127M  
Maximum power at take-off: 2,750 horse power per engine  
Maximum weight at take-off: 23,000 Kg  
Maximum load: 7,500 Kg  
Maximum range with full passenger load: 900 nautical miles (1,665 Km)

**About Villa Air/FlyMe:**

Malé-based Villa Air was incorporated in 1997 by the Chairman of Villa Group Hon. Qasim Ibrahim with a vision to build an airport and to create an airline, baptized later FlyMe, owned by Villa Group. Villa Air/FlyMe had its maiden flight on October 1st 2011 between Villa Airport Mamigili (VAM) and Ibrahim Nasir International Airport. The beginning of commercial operations of FlyMe to VAM creates a 24/7 safe and convenient air corridor between Male International Airport and south Air Atoll. Today Villa Group is the proud owner of the only ICAO Certified (Domestic/Private) airport in Maldives.

**About GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS)**

GECAS, the U.S. and Irish commercial aircraft financing and leasing business of GE, has a fleet of over 1,700 owned and serviced aircraft with over 230 airlines in over 75 countries. GECAS offers a wide range of aircraft types and financing options, including operating leases and secured debt financing, and also provides productivity solutions including spare engine leasing, airport and airline consulting services, spare parts financing and management. GECAS, a unit of GE Capital, has offices in 24 cities around the world. ([www.GECAS.com](http://www.GECAS.com))

**About ATR:**

Founded in 1981, ATR has become the world leader on the market for regional aircraft with 90 seats or less. Since its creation, ATR has sold over 1,200 aircraft, and has today 182 operators based in 90 countries. ATR planes have totaled over 21 million flight hours. ATR is an equal partnership between two major European aeronautics players, Alenia Aermacchi (a Finmeccanica Group company) and EADS. Its head office is in Toulouse (France). ATR is ISO 14001-certified, the international reference standard in the field for environmental friendliness.

For additional information, log on to [www.atraircraft.com](http://www.atraircraft.com).

Follow ATR also on its official YouTube channel: [ATRbroadcast](https://www.youtube.com/ATRbroadcast).

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