

# UPDATE

## Most annoying button to be phased out

Located next to the reading light button and often indistinguishable from it, **the dreaded button causes flight attendants to make countless pointless trips down the aisles every day**

**LE BOURGET** (France): In the long history of bad industrial design, the flight attendant call button commercial airlines takes a prominent place.

Usually located next to the reading light button and often indistinguishable from it, the dreaded but-

ton causes flight attendants to make countless pointless trips down the aisles every day, only to hear embarrassed passengers say they were just trying to switch on the light. Not for much longer.

The new interior design for Boeing's 737 passenger jet, the



best-selling plane in aviation history, includes an innovation that is as radical as it is obvious: a flight attendant button that is situated well away from the reading light

“On every flight somebody pushes the wrong button

Tim Techt,  
Pilot, airberlin

button and actually looks different from it.

“I feel we came up with a really good improvement,” Beverly Wyse, Boeing's General Manager for the

737 programme, told reporters at the Paris Air Show.

**New design**

The new 737 “Sky Interior” brings design elements from future Boeing planes such as the 787 Dreamliner and the new 747-8 stretch jumbo to the slowly ageing 737.

Besides an identifiable call button and a slightly plusher finishing, the new interior features sophisticated LED lighting and new luggage bins that leave enough headspace for a tall person to stand up in the seats next to the aisle.

Wyse said that 83 per cent of the airlines in Boeing's long order book for the 737 opt for the new interior.

Cabin crew will feel the difference in their feet.

“On every flight somebody pushes the wrong button. It is an issue for

flight attendants,” said Tim Techt, Technical Pilot for airberlin, the first airline to take delivery of 737s with the new cabin design.

The new interior of the 737 is the result of extensive research, which has shown, among other things, that many passengers avoid turning on the reading light for fear of accidentally calling the flight attendant, Boeing Director of Differentiation Blake Emery said from Seattle.

Could earlier engineers not have imagined a more intuitive position for the call button, which has stumped generations of passengers and earned its own entry on bad-designs.com? (<http://www.bad-designs.com/call-button.html>)

“I can't help but agree that it is not like we needed extensive research to figure that one out,” Emery said. -AFP

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He, however, agreed there was no one size that fitted all solutions. “Every country has its own uniqueness, its unique history, unique circumstances.”

On Libya, he noted how there had been a healthy debate in the US on exercising the quantum of firepower.

“But the Gaddafi forces are getting weaker every day,” he pointed out, while revealing about talk of some countries replacing others for a period of time in the Nato operations.

“In Bosnia, it took two-and-a-half years.

“In Libya, it took 33 days,” he said of the time it took the international community to start operations to stop the massacre of people.

“I was in Benghazi a month ago. The contrast with atmosphere in Tripoli is remarkable. There is fear in Tripoli.”

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