

Virgin Atlantic to test jet biofuel

by UPI

LONDON - Virgin Atlantic is planning an aviation milestone, a flight from London to Amsterdam in the Netherlands using biofuel. The Boeing 747-400 will not carry any passengers on the flight. Henry Harteveldt, an airline industry analyst with Forrester Research in San Francisco, told the San Francisco Chronicle that more research and testing is needed before biofuel for planes becomes commercially possible. Virgin Atlantic, Boeing and GE Aviation worked together to develop the fuel. The mixture will be 80 percent conventional fuel mixed in with biofuel. "This breakthrough will help Virgin Atlantic fly its planes using clean fuel sooner than expected," Sir Richard Branson, the airline's founder, said in a statement. "The demonstration flight will give us crucial knowledge that we can use to dramatically reduce our carbon footprint." Branson said the test is being done 10 months ahead of schedule. Boeing, Air New Zealand and Rolls Royce plan a similar test in the second half of the year.

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