

Team members install recognition plaque on plane that transported Pope in 2015

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In September 2015, American had the honor of transporting Pope Francis from Washington, D.C., to New York, Philadelphia and back to Rome on his first trip to the U.S. And now, the Boeing 777-200 that was used as Shepherd One has the plaque to prove it.

Tech Ops team members installed a commemorative plaque last week inside the aircraft near the 2L door. The plaque, which was manufactured at Tech Ops – Tulsa, was installed at the line maintenance hangar at DFW.

“The Tulsa manufacturing shop was honored to create the plaque for Shepherd One, commemorating Pope Francis’ first visit to the United States,” said Tech – Ops Tulsa supervisor David Chandler, whose team helped create the plaque.

Aircraft Maintenance Technicians (AMTs) James Cooper, Steven Helms and Walter Listig completed the installation, working with engineer Mark Lidres. Installing the plaque required an engineering authorization, which details the installation process, including the specific parts that were required.

“It was a special job, for a special person,” said Walter. “It was a labor of love, and I am proud to have played a role in installing this plaque.”

The plaque states: This aircraft served as “Shepherd One” during Pope Francis’ first visit to the United States from September 24-28, 2015 Washington, D.C., New York, Philadelphia, Rome

The first revenue flight with the plaque installed occurred Feb. 23 — the same day of installation — as flight 2307 from DFW to MIA. We anticipate using this aircraft on our May 5 inaugural flight from DFW to Rome (FCO). The

aircraft, known internally as 7AG, is tail number N776AN.

The 2015 papal charter was the seventh time that American, and previously TWA, had transported a pope. The crew of Shepherd One — pilots, flight attendants, aviation maintenance technicians, charter coordinators, corporate security representatives and an Integrated Operation Center (IOC) team member — were based out of a variety of locations including DFW, ORD, LAX, MIA, New York, Raleigh/Durham and Tulsa. They also represented different faiths and persuasions. 7AG was recently retrofitted, and as part of that process, the seat used by Pope Francis was removed from the aircraft. It was transported to the C.R. Smith Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, and has been accessioned into the museum's collection.