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Airbus says bigger A220 jetliner makes sense at right time

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Europe's Airbus on Friday gave the strongest hint yet that it plans to launch a bigger version of its 110 to 130-seat A220 passenger jet while pledging to act only at the right time.

A stretched version of the lightweight Canadian-designed airplane makes a lot of sense, "but we don't want to be right too early", Chief Executive Guillaume Faury told investors.

The A220 was developed by Canada's Bombardier in a bid to break into the main part of the jet market but struggled to keep up with the investments needed to challenge Airbus and U.S. rival Boeing. Boeing and Bombardier sold the project to Airbus in 2018.

Airbus has in turn faced higher-than-expected costs on the loss-making programme but Chief Financial Officer Dominik Asam told investors it was on course to break even by mid-decade.

He reaffirmed Airbus production forecasts for larger A320neo jets. Airbus reported on Wednesday that Airbus was easing pressure on suppliers to reach the end-target of 75 a month by 2025 but was sticking for now to the headline goals.

Both executives were speaking at the company's first formal Capital Markets Day for investors in four years.

(Reuters)