



GLOBAL DEMAND FOR AIRLINE PILOTS DRIVES MAJOR GROWTH FOR ETIHAD'S AVIATION TRAINING DIVISION

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Soaring global demand for airline pilots, and the growing popularity of Airbus A320 and Boeing 787 aircraft, have jointly sparked major growth in the pilot training division of Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways.

In the past year, Etihad has won contracts to train pilots for more than 40 clients, over half of them airlines in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Indian sub-continent and South East Asia. One year ago, it supported only three other operators.

"Air travel is booming, and so is demand for pilots and other aviation professionals," said Captain Paolo La Cava, Managing Director of Etihad Aviation Training. "The number of passenger journeys on the world's airlines is expected to double within 20 years, and the aircraft manufacturers Airbus and Boeing are both predicting that total aircraft numbers will also double to accommodate this growth," he said.

Captain La Cava said training for new pilots from 'ab initio' stage was a growing activity of Etihad Aviation Training, which currently has over 100 cadet pilots and 22 training aircraft,

including four Embraer Phenom 100 jets, all based at Al Ain, in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

But by far the fastest-growing segment of the business has become retraining pilots to fly new aircraft types, particularly the Airbus A320-family of narrowbody jets and the wide-bodied Boeing 787 Dreamliner, two of the most in-demand types.



“As airlines and private operators introduce more of these jets, demand is increasing significantly to transfer pilots from flying other aircraft types,” said Captain La Cava.

“Many operators simply don’t have the facilities or capacity to retrain the number of pilots required for these planes. But we do, and demand for our services is growing. In the first half of this year, our volumes have exceeded expectations by 30 per cent. A key reason for our success is that our instructors are also active pilots with Etihad Airways, operating the aircraft types on which we are training other pilots.”

Captain La Cava said Etihad Aviation Training was equipped with 10 Full Flight Simulators including three Airbus A320 devices, three Boeing 787 units, two Boeing 777s, a single unit for Airbus A330s/A340s, and one A380 simulator, as well as 12 fixed-based Airbus and Boeing training devices. An Airbus A350 simulator will be introduced later this year, as well as an A320 fixed base training unit.

In addition to training pilots to operate these aircraft types – all of which Etihad operates, has previously flown, or will introduce - Etihad Aviation Training provides courses for flight instructors, examiners and senior examiners, as well as cabin crew and aircraft maintenance personnel. Its credentials were strengthened late last year when it became the first aviation business in the UAE to receive accreditation as an Approved Training Organisation by the European Aviation Safety Agency. This approval, EASA 147, is connected to the Etihad Engineering Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul facility, providing exposure to operational aircraft and instructors.

“From small beginnings just over a year ago, we have built our training business in Abu Dhabi to

become the largest such facility in the Middle East, and one of the largest independent providers of training in the aviation industry," said Captain La Cava. "Etihad Aviation Training is providing real solutions to emerging issues in our industry, and we are confident that we will continue to grow our global client base as airlines and other operators continue to expand their own businesses."

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