

# CREW SHORTAGES IN THE INDUSTRY - an Operators Perspective

Workgroup presentation



## A BRIEF BACKGROUND OF ALS



- ▶ ALS is an aviation Company based in Nairobi, Kenya.
- ▶ It started its operations in 1986 with a C150 and has grown to a fleet of 21 aircrafts comprising ERJ's, Dash 8's, Beech 1900's and Caravans.
- ▶ Works extensively with Humanitarian Aid organizations such as WFP, ICRC and Oil Companies.
- ▶ Provides ACMI services
- ▶ Invested a lot of resources in Training, Safety, Equipment and Maintenance.

## OPERATOR PERSPECTIVE ON CREWING CHALLENGES IN THE INDUSTRY

The challenges can be categorized into two:

- ▶ Ensuing crew shortage
- ▶ Evaluation criteria prescribing minimum hour requirement for crew on a particular fleet without considering crew competence and quality of training.



## CREW SHORTAGE - general facts



- ▶ Shortage of **experienced** pilots as supply not keeping up to increased demand in Air Travel.
- ▶ Some Statistics: The Boeing Pilot Outlook predicts a need for 117,000 new pilots between 2017 and 2036 in North America alone. Worldwide, the demand for new pilots will be an astounding 637,000 during the same period.
- ▶ The shortage for Humanitarian operators is more acute as a lot of experienced humanitarian pilots are nearing the retirement age of 65 years,
- ▶ **Pilot Turnover** - Airlines are actively poaching experienced pilots from small operators and Humanitarian operators cannot match the salaries paid by airlines resulting in a high turnover of pilots.
- ▶ **Hardship/Remote operations** - Attracting new and experienced pilots in the humanitarian sector is difficult due to the stressful environment that crew operate as well as the hardship conditions endured in terms of operations, safety and security in the outstations.
- ▶ **Pilot Retention and Progression** - Difficult for humanitarian operators to retain and upgrade pilots from within due to the stringent hour requirements required by UNAVSTADs.

## UNAVSTADs - experience vs competence



- ▶ Prescriptive stipulation of minimum hour requirements for flight crew as dictated by UNAVSTADs vs competency based training and experience.
- ▶ Hours (Total Time, Time on Type) is not necessarily a measure of Safety. For instance, there are no available statistics to demonstrate that quantitative experience requirements improve safety. Studies reveal that pilot exposure and experience in the last 24 months is more relevant.
- ▶ Introduction of new aircraft types - difficult for experienced humanitarian pilots to acquire hours on type on a new type e.g. EMB 145, Airbus 295 etc.
- ▶ Entry point for experience building required. E.g Airlines using MPL (Multi-Crew Pilot License) for entry level co-pilots.
- ▶ Emphasis on Pilot Training Programmes - Use of ICAO recommended Competency Based Training & Assessment in training and qualifying crew.



## UNAVSTADs compliance - industry example



Focus is placed on the Embraer 145s and the unique challenges in crewing this fleet with personnel that meet the UNAVSTAD's requirement. Some of the challenges ALS face include:

- ▶ Pure charter operators (ACMI) have no avenues to build hours on scheduled flights.
- ▶ Sole operator of E145 in Kenya thus difficult to build hours on type.
- ▶ The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) and the Kenya Immigration Department are becoming increasingly difficult in approving work permits for foreign pilots.
- ▶ Poaching by mainstream Carriers - Airlines prefer our pilots as they are well trained on modern jets with two-crew concept. To retain these crew who meet UNAVSTADs, higher salaries/incentives need to be paid which affects our competitiveness leading to unsustainable pilot costs.



## UNAVSTADs - way forward



- ▶ Based on the foregoing, we strongly recommend a review of the current UNAVSTADs which needs to evolve with changing times.
- ▶ **Dispensations** - In the interim, we propose to have dispensations granted on hour requirements to allow operators conduct Line Flying Under Supervision (LIFUS) for pilots who have undergone a rigorous training programme. E.g. ALS has successfully been granted a reduction in hour requirement on CRJ-200 & ERJ 145 pilots using similar type concept.
- ▶ A risk-based assessment for pilot experience is required as opposed to a prescriptive hour-based approach as for instance, the Oil & Gas Industry have successfully implemented this for aircraft age and pilot hour requirements.

# THANK YOU

