

Air India to recruit 500 pilots, 1,500 cabin crew in next 2-3 years

Air India may recruit about 500 pilots and over 1,500 cabin crew in next two to three years to meet the requirement as the fleet size is expected to increase considerably, a senior official has said.

"We are planning to have 700 more pilots in the next two to three years keeping in view the fleet expansion. From last August till now, we have already recruited 250 pilots. So about 500 more pilots we are going to recruit. Advertisement for 400 pilots has already been floated," AI's General Manager (Operations) N Sivaramakrishnan told PTI.

Last year, Air India had sought to recruit 200 trainee pilots (senior trainee pilot license holders who come with A320 endorsement). However, it could select only 78. Now all those pilots are flying on various routes, he said. Nearly 150 pilots are expected to complete their training by December this year.

According to him, the present strength of pilots is 858 and the beleaguered airlines lost about 100 pilots during the last two years. "We have plans to have cabin crew of 3,000 personnel. Besides the existing number, we are planning to take 1,500 more in the next two to three years," he said.

The official said Air India envisaged fleet expansion of another 100 aircraft in the next four years' time.

On training facilities for pilots, the official said currently they have three simulators in Hyderabad and four in Mumbai. The simulators in Hyderabad belong to A320 while the four in Mumbai belong to Boeing family.

"We are planning to order one more simulator for training on ATR aircraft in Hyderabad. RFI (Request for Information) has already been floated. By January next year we hope that it would be operational," he said, adding that the cost of the simulator would be about Rs 65 crore and an additional Rs 6 crore is needed for construction of building and other facilities for the ATR simulator.

Though Air India does not have any ATRs in its fleet, services will be provided to its wholly-owned subsidiary 'Alliance Air'.