



International Civil Aviation Organization

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ICAO NEWS RELEASE

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CAREERS IN AIR TRANSPORT PROMISING AS DEMAND FOR SKILLED AVIATION PROFESSIONALS GROWS

Montreal, 3 December 2008 – *Tomorrow's Aviation – a world of opportunity for skilled aviation personnel* is the theme for International Civil Aviation Day 2008. Celebrated annually on 7 December, this day marks the creation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in 1944.

“This year’s theme is about the tremendous prospects available to those considering careers in aviation,” remarked Roberto Kobeh González, President of the ICAO Council.

“In the next few years there will be a massive wave of retirements from the current workforce. Thousands of new aircraft will be coming into the fleet and new technologies will transform the very nature of aviation jobs. The industry will be looking for pilots, air traffic controllers, maintenance personnel and managers capable of effectively meeting the demands of a challenging working environment,” said Mr. Kobeh.

The rapid and sustained growth in air traffic over the coming years is another major factor. Despite the current global economic context which will impact air traffic in the short term, civil aviation development is expected to regain momentum by 2010, according to the latest ICAO forecast.

“Human resource development is vital to a safe, efficient and sustainable air transport system,” said Mr. Kobeh. “ICAO recognizes that professional competence is a critical element in achieving optimum levels of safety and is developing training strategies to ensure that the future world air transport system is supported by enough competent and qualified professionals,” Mr. Kobeh emphasized.

Among these strategies is a four point plan of action to assist Member States in maintaining high standards of training. The plan includes: identifying the number of pilots, maintenance personnel and controllers needed and related training requirements; aligning ICAO Standards with modern training methodologies; identifying activities to be initiated with industry partners; and, bringing all parties around a common strategy.

A report on this initiative will be presented to the 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2010.

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A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 190 Contracting States.

**Message from ICAO on the occasion of
International Civil Aviation Day
7 December 2008**

The theme of this year's International Civil Aviation Day, *Tomorrow's Aviation – a world of opportunity for skilled aviation personnel*, captures the exciting opportunities open to those around the world contemplating their choice of careers.

In the next few years there will be a massive wave of retirements from the current workforce. Thousands of new aircraft will be coming into the fleet and new technologies will transform the very nature of aviation jobs. The industry will be looking for pilots, air traffic controllers, maintenance personnel and managers capable of effectively meeting the demands of a rapidly changing working environment.

Moreover, in spite of the current slowdown in the industry caused by the global economic crisis, prospects for the long-term growth of the industry are positive and strong. So the timing is excellent for anyone entering or moving ahead in the exciting world of aviation.

The challenge for the aviation community will be to attract and retain competent employees, to shape the next generation of aviation professionals, and training is the key. Human resource development is vital to a safe, efficient and sustainable air transport system.

ICAO understands the magnitude of the challenge and is working diligently with all industry stakeholders to develop, implement and promote the training programmes that will ensure aviation personnel of tomorrow develop the skills and abilities necessary for a long and prosperous aviation career.

The Assembly of ICAO in 2007 called for a four point plan to encourage and assist its 190 Member States in maintaining high standards of training of aviation personnel and particularly those employed in the provision and operation of services and facilities for international air navigation.

The process begins with identifying the number of pilots, maintenance personnel and controllers needed, as well as the training required. That is under way. The second step is to bring the ICAO Standards in line with modern training methodologies. That is also under way. The third step is to identify activities that can be initiated with industry partners, and the fourth is to bring everyone together around a common strategy. This includes a symposium on training the new generation of aviation professionals planned for the first quarter of 2010.

All of this will culminate in a Report to the next Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2010. Out of this process will come a global approach to meeting the Human Resources challenge of this early part of the 21st century.

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