

Submission to the Senate Inquiry on Pilot Training etc

Please accept my apology for the brevity of this submission. This is due to my travelling overseas and the closing date for submissions. However as I have been both President of the Australian & International Pilots' Association (1999-2002) and Chief Pilot of Qantas (2003-2008) and have been intimately involved with most, if not all of the Terms of Reference of this Inquiry I feel that I may be able to add something to it. In my position with Qantas I was responsible for employing the largest number of pilots of any one organization.

Terms of Reference Responses

- (a) All pilot experiences are not the same e.g. 1000 hours flying a complex military jet does not equate to 1000 hours VFR (visual) flying in a single engine light aircraft. Whilst experience should be taken into account competency based requirements carried out by a reputable organization are a vastly better indicator of a pilot's ability. Falling back on to hours based criteria would give a false sense of pilot competence.
- (b) See (a) above
- (c) There is no doubt that a well structured 'cadet pilot' program can and does deliver a polished professional product. However the standards of the trainees are the responsibility of the program organizer. Self interest of the delivery organization should mitigate any issues but maybe there needs to be more regulatory input into required standards. In summary a well structured course will deliver the safest outcome.
- (d) Currently I see no issue with the retention of experienced pilots.
- (e) For major airlines this is not an issue and I cannot comment on smaller organizations due to my lack of experience in this sector.

- (f) This certainly was an issue in the past and I would assume that CASA is doing something about addressing this issue nowadays. The problem has been standardizing the standards arbiters in the Regulator.
- (g) I haven't seen any problems with the current legislation. Federal 'whistle-blower' legislation must protect those individuals who raise valid safety issues.
- (h) There is a tendency sometimes to 'play-down' and sometimes a tendency to 'over-blow' an incident. All that is required is the reporting of an incident. The organization involved must have a 'Just culture' in place so that those who make the report feel that they will be fairly treated. The airline or organization involved should then have processes that alert the ATSB where necessary, and to carry out any investigation that may be required. As long as the pilot or crew report the incident the responsibility for investigation falls on the next link in the chain.
- (i) There needs to be, in all aviation organizations, an adherence to 'Just culture' principles. These should be available in the organization's manuals as part of the Safety Management System. Training should be provided to employees on these principles.
- (j) I must stress that aviation safety has much more to do with competency and the standards and guiding philosophy of the organization than hours based criteria.
- (k) A full review of pilot training syllabi should be undertaken under the auspices of CASA with inputs from interested parties. The outcome should be to have commercial pilot graduates of the highest standards no matter where they happen to be trained.
- (l) An investigation into whether current funding arrangements for pilot licenses are appropriate. Currently only certain tertiary institutions can offer Fee Help whilst none can offer HECS. Current costs of a commercial license are around \$80,000 - \$90,000 with an earning potential of about half this amount in the first year or two, at least, after course completion. There are no academic qualifications presently required to embark on a commercial license course – all that is needed are a medical clearance and

access to a lot of money. The piloting profession must be the only profession without any entrance academic requirement.

Thanking you for your consideration and commending the Senate for instituting this Inquiry.

Yours Sincerely

Chris Manning