New Pilot Training Up To 40 Percent More Efficient For Boeing Airplanes

Substantial flight deck commonality across the current in-production Boeing fleet has allowed Boeing and FlightSafetyBoeing to jointly develop a new shortened pilot training program.

The training program, known as the Star Program, provides a 30- to 40- percent time savings across the board by eliminating redundant material that pilots already have learned from qualification on other Boeing "glass" flight decks. Glass refers to current in-production and recent-production electronic flight decks.

"Flexibility is a key benefit this new training program offers an airline," said Michael Garrett, Boeing Commercial Airplanes vice president of Airplane Marketing Management. "Regardless of the Boeing glass flight deck with which pilots have trained, the training for each model is the same. Because pilots are trained in pairs and there is no guarantee that both will have the same background, Star courses allow pilots with different Boeing glass experience to be paired up so they can take the same course."

The Federal Aviation Administration has approved the newly developed Star Program, as well as improved Transition pilot training courses for in-production Boeing models. The courses apply to the new 737 family, 747-400, 757, 767 and 777 models. European Joint Aviation Authority approval also has been granted for the new 737 family and 757 at FlightSafetyBoeing training centers in Luton and Gatwick/Burgess Hill East in the United Kingdom, and for the new 737 family and 767 in Seattle.

The concept of reduced training time based on flight deck commonality is not new to Boeing. Boeing pioneered the concept for the industry with the introduction of the 757 and 767, which require only four hours for pilots of one model to qualify for the other. The new 737 family followed with as little as two days required for pilots to move between the Classic and new 737s.

With the Star program, Boeing customers everywhere have the opportunity to significantly simplify pilot training programs and reduce pilot training costs. Not only will Star enable an airline to reduce the time out of service for its pilots due to training, but Star also will make it possible to consolidate many different existing training courses into just a handful. This will enhance the quality and consistency of an airline's training and reduce its costs for updating and maintaining the training courses.

"Several customers have been trained using these new courses," Garrett said. "The extremely high success rate for all Star program students is a testament of the high standard of quality inherent in the new program."

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