

NATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION POLICY WILL HELP CREATE JOBS

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Aviation industry is globally recognised as a catalyst for economic development. As per an International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) study, the employment multiplier in the sector is an impressive 6.10. It is therefore surprising that it took India 83 years after JRD Tata heralded the birth of Indian civil aviation in 1932 by operating the maiden flight on the Karachi-Mumbai sector via Ahmedabad to have its National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP).

It isn't that the policy makers were not aware of the huge growth potential that the country had but they allowed foreign carriers to harness the Indian market potential rather than laying emphasis on developing the Indian aviation industry - airlines and airports. Since foreign airlines were dominating our skies and taking away our passengers by operating more and more flights into various Indian cities, the job opportunities for pilots, cabin crew, airport personnel, maintenance engineers and technicians were also taking place in foreign countries - UAE, Qatar, Singapore, etc. rather than in India.

Not only were our young people thus denied the employment opportunities that our market was offering but it also allowed foreign airlines to remit huge foreign exchange earnings garnered from Indian passengers. The past two decades can only be described as a period when domination of foreign airlines was encouraged at the expense of country's long term interests.

Better late than never, as they say! Now that the country has finally got NCAP, approved by the Modi government on 15 June 2016, after being under formulation and consideration for over two decades, it should give the much needed sense of direction to the industry.



The policy in its vision statement states that it will "create an eco-system to make flying affordable for the masses and to enable 30 crore domestic ticketing by 2022 and 50 crore by 2027; and international ticketing to increase to 20 crore by 2027". Further, in its objective, the policy states:

- i) Establish an integrated eco-system which will lead to significant growth of civil aviation sector, which in turn would promote tourism, increase employment and lead to a balanced regional growth.
- ii) Ensure safety, security and sustainability of aviation sector through the use of technology and effective monitoring.
- iii) Enhance regional connectivity through fiscal support and infrastructure development.
- iv) Enhance ease of doing business through deregulation, simplified procedures and e-governance.
- v) Promote the entire aviation sector chain in a harmonised manner covering cargo, MRO, general aviation, aerospace manufacturing and skill development.

The all encompassing NCAP covers all facets of the industry viz. Regional connectivity, Safety, Air Transport Operations, Route Dispersal Guidelines, 5/20 Requirement for International Operations, Bilateral traffic rights, Code-share agreements, Fiscal Support, Airports developed by State Govt, Private sector or in PPP mode, Air Navigation Services, Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), Ground handling, etc.

The two key areas that will boost aviation sector phenomenally are the regional connectivity and MRO. As both these areas will generate huge employment opportunities, let us focus on them.

CAREER AS...

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Career opportunities:

Commercial flying has high salaries and a large number of perquisites and benefits. Job opportunities are varied, such as corporate aviation (flying company airplanes), agricultural flying (crop dusting), or flying full time in the armed forces. You can, of course, work for any of the domestic and international airlines like Air India, Spice Jet, Lufthansa, Jet Airways, AirAsia, IndiGo, etc.

Who can become Pilot:

- ◆ Candidates whose age is above 18 years
- ◆ 10+2 in science discipline with Physics and Mathematics as compulsory subjects. OR who have obtained a diploma in any engineering discipline

Training Cost: India: Rs 15 to 20 lakh

Licenses to become a Commercial Pilot:

Student Pilot License (SPL)

The first step towards becoming a Commercial Pilot is getting an SPL, a license required to enroll in a flying club recognized by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Government of India, or by an authority abroad. To be eligible to apply, one needs to be at least 16 years old and be a 10+2 (with Physics, Chemistry and Maths and at least 50% marks in aggregate).

The application process starts with theory and oral tests on navigation, meteorology, air regulations, etc. Post that you are required to submit certificates of DGCA approved medical fitness, security clearance and a bank guarantee of Rs 10,000. When you successfully complete this examination, you climb your first step towards becoming a commercial pilot, armed with an SPL certificate. The DGCA website regularly updates new regulations, requirements and approved centres.

Private Pilot License (PPL)

PPL is the basic license required to take up flying as a recreation or private sport.

PPL allows its holder the privilege of flying as Captain or co-pilot of an aircraft not for the purpose of public transport or aerial work. He shall have passed Class Ten or equivalent Examination from a recognised Board and shall not be less than seventeen years of age on the date of application.

You start your air-borne career after a total of 60 hours of various flying exercises and rigorous training. A suitable flying school in India or abroad should be chosen for this after good research and considering factors like place, cost, reputation of the school, etc. To be eligible for PPL, the prospective pilot needs to appear for the flying school centre as well as DGCA theory tests about aviation and submit a medical fitness certificate from the AFCME (Air Force Central Medical Establishment) or IAM (Institute of Aviation Medicine).

Commercial Pilot License (CPL)

The final step to becoming a commercial pilot, CPL, is obtained after you have finished at least 250 hours of extensive flying. CPL is granted to pilots after an intensive theory exam at their center and DGCA exams on aviation and submitting medical fitness test certificate from the AFCME or IAM. Post the CPL, certifications of instrument rating and type rating are also necessary.

Top Indian Institutes for Aviation

While choosing an institute, factors like cost of flying and staying (a significant investment), reputation of the school and its review from its past students provide valuable insights. Many education loans and scholarships are available.

The top flying clubs/institutes in India:

- ◆ Government Aviation Training Institute, Bhubaneswar
- ◆ Coimbatore Flying Club, Coimbatore
- ◆ Indian Aviation Academy, Mumbai
- ◆ Jamshedpur Co-operative Flying Club Ltd, Jamshedpur

- ◆ All India Institute of Aeronautics, (AIIA), Dehradun
- ◆ Rajiv Gandhi Aviation Academy, Secundrabad
- ◆ Aviation and Aeronautics, Ahmedabad
- ◆ Government Flying Training School, Bangalore
- ◆ Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademy (IGRUA), Bareilly
- ◆ West Bengal Flying Training Institute, Kolkata

CABIN CREW

The staff on an airplane can generally be divided into two groups: the flight crew and the cabin crew. The first are those who fly the plane while the second are those individuals who work in the passenger area. The latter are referred to as the cabin crew and include flight attendants, stewards or stewardesses or air hosts or hostesses.

Airline cabin crew is responsible for the comfort, safety and welfare of passengers travelling on aircraft during flights.

Working as a flight attendant for a major airline is often perceived to be a glamorous and exciting job. However, the duties are mundane and down to earth and include:

- ◆ greeting passengers as they board and exit the plane
- ◆ showing passengers to their seats and providing special attention to certain passengers, such as the elderly or disabled
- ◆ serving meals and refreshments
- ◆ checking the condition and provision of emergency equipment and information for passengers
- ◆ demonstrating emergency equipment and safety procedures
- ◆ administering first aid
- ◆ dealing with emergencies
- ◆ supplying passengers with newspapers, magazines and in-flight entertainment
- ◆ selling duty-free commercial goods and pursuing sales targets
- ◆ producing written flight reports after completing a journey

The role can be physically and emotionally demanding; there is a high degree of responsibility involved and cabin crew are expected to

deal with all passengers diplomatically even when feeling the effects of travelling through time zones and spending extended periods of time on their feet.

Many airlines require cabin staff to live within close proximity of a particular airport, since crew members may be called at short notice. Working hours may involve long shifts and unsociable hours and it may be necessary to work during public holidays.

Qualifications required

Graduate degree from a recognized university, or Plus Two/Equivalent with 3-year diploma in Hotel Management and Catering from a recognized institution. Knowledge of the national language and at least one international language (English) is generally essential. The applicant should be physically fit with a pleasing personality and clear complexion.

- ◆ **Age:** Below 25 years
- ◆ **Height:** Minimum height should be 170-180 cms (bare foot).
- ◆ **Weight:** Proportionate to height as per the company's standards
- ◆ **Status (Marital):** Unmarried
- ◆ **Vision:** Preferably normal eyesight without glasses; or minimum uncorrected vision (distant) should be 6/24 in each eye.
- ◆ Visible tattoos and piercings are strongly discouraged and staff is required to look smart often involving wearing a uniform.

Air cabin crew members have multiple career options. They can seek job opportunities in public sector airlines, like Air India. However, most cabin crew members prefer private airlines operating on

domestic and international routes. Private airlines like Jet Airways, Spice Jet, IndiGo Airlines are some favored firms for cabin crews. With experience, they can become supervisors and assign and oversee the work of junior cabin crew members. Most airlines allow crew members to opt for other jobs within the airline, depending on their suitability for the positions available. Some airlines allocate routine administrative and other ground duties to senior flight staff members.

Top Training institutes for Cabin Crew

As the job demands for cabin crew are increasing day by day, numerous training institutes in India offer various courses for them. Prominent *institutes among them are:*

- ◆ Indian Airlines Ltd. Central Training Establishment, Hyderabad
- ◆ IATA
- ◆ Skyline Educational Institute, New Delhi
- ◆ Indian Aviation Academy, Mumbai
- ◆ Kuoni Academy of Travel, Delhi
- ◆ Air Hostess Academy (AHA) Delhi, Chandigarh, Mumbai
- ◆ Frank Finn Institute of Air Hostess Training, Delhi

All commercial airlines have their own walk in interviews for cabin crew and they provide training as well.

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