

Air India gets DGCA nod for cross utilisation of wide-body pilots

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 12 March, 2023



Aviation regulator DGCA has approved Air India's long-pending request to allow the same pilots to operate two types of Boeing wide-body aircraft, according to officials. Initially, Air India can train a total of eight designated examiners for operating Boeing 777 and 787 aircraft. Four designated examiners will be trained for operating 777s and another four for flying 787s, a senior official at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

Generally, a designated examiner is an experienced pilot who has been authorized by the regulator to carry out various tests and checks in accordance with civil aviation requirements. The examiner is an employee of the airline concerned. The official said that under the scheme approved by the DGCA, each of the eight designated examiners should have 150 hours of flight time with at least 10 landings in case of separate operations of Boeing 777 and 787.

Air India's proposal was approved by the watchdog on March 3. An Air India official said the airline has received regulatory approval for multi-seat flying (MSF), which roughly means a single pilot can fly two types of aircraft. A heavy training process.

The DGCA official said cross utilization of pilots is being followed by airlines in about 16 countries. Currently, Air India has around 700 wide body pilots.

There was no immediate comment from Air India on queries about the DGCA approval.

Air India, which was acquired by the Tata group in January last year, has around 1,825 pilots and is hiring more pilots as the airline expands its operations. Last month, Air India placed orders for 470 aircraft, including 70 wide-body aircraft, from Airbus and Boeing.

-B