



Alaska Airlines Leads the Industry in Safety with First FAA-Approved Flight Simulator Featuring a Full-Stall Model

Cutting edge innovation provides advanced, more realistic training for pilots

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May 05, 2016, 13:11 ET

SEATTLE, May 5, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Last week, Alaska Airlines became the first commercial airline in the world to receive FAA certification of an enhanced full-stall model in a flight simulator, which helps pilots train to recognize and recover from a full aerodynamic stall. While this type of mid-air stall is extremely rare, simulator training helps pilots prepare for worst-case scenarios.

In advance of the 2019 deadline set by the FAA, Alaska Airline's simulator engineering group completed the upgrade and certification process for one of its 737-800 simulators with a StallBox. The StallBox together with a set of instructor-led tools allows the simulator to more closely mimic the actual aircraft in a similar situation, making sure pilots are well-equipped if they ever encounter a full stall in real life. The Birhle Applied Research product meets the FAA's newly enhanced requirements for "upset prevention and recovery training."

"Safety remains our top priority and ensuring we have cutting edge training for our pilots helps us to maintain our industry-leading position," said Tom Kemp, Alaska Airlines' vice president of flight operations. "This project has been in the works for two years and is an example of how we continually strive to be ahead of the curve and go beyond the industry requirements to deliver excellence and ensure a safe operation."

Before this new model, training for full stalls has been primarily academic. The simulator could do the "approach to stall," but wouldn't show accurate behavioral cues once in the "stall." The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) looked at a number of stalls that took place during commercial operations, and determined that often times the pilots were unable to recognize the stall and that there was a need for more hands-on training for pilots. The key learnings from these incidents helped to refine this training and will not only help pilots recognize and recover from a stall, but more importantly, prevent them from occurring in the first place.

"The Air Line Pilots Association, working with Alaska, supports this valuable and ahead-of-schedule improvement to the first of Alaska's simulators," said Doug Branch, chairman of the Human Factors and Training Committee for the Alaska Master Executive Council of the Air Line Pilots Association. "This investment illustrates the value Alaska puts on providing industry-leading training, which leads to enhanced safety for our passengers and crews. We look forward to the benefits this enhanced training tool will provide, and applaud Alaska for moving so quickly to implement it."



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