



Who Should Fly the SJs?

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Last month's SJ article reviewed the SJ fundamentals—history, industry SJ scope, and our competitors' routes. This month's Q & A focuses on the complex issues involved in developing an SJ deal: Who will fly the SJs?

This month, the MEC is sending the Interim Small Jet Agreement (Letter of Agreement 79)

out for membership ratification. An information packet is being mailed that includes a summary and explanation of the Agreement. Road shows will also be held in March.

Negotiations are expected to continue for a more comprehensive SJ agreement.

Q. What would have to happen for us fly them?

A. Management would have to agree that we fly the SJs. Our position since 1997 is that we fly all SJs over the 35 or 9 percent allowed in the contract. So far, management has not agreed to add them to US Airways.

- ALPA does not have to approve, only negotiate conditions under the new equipment clause.
- As written, SJs would count toward block hour guarantees in LOA 52.
- Similarly, SJ Captains would count toward the Minimum Captains provision.
- Competition for capital may be a concern. We would not want to have to buy SJs instead of larger aircraft.
- A flow-through agreement would appear unlikely.

Q. What would happen if there would be no agreement to fly them?

- A. • Feed deterioration would likely continue.
- Possible smaller growth during current Contract term.
 - No opportunity for job security improvements.

Q. Why should we fly them? What are the benefits?

A. The benefits include:

- Job security, which includes:
 - No transferring of jobs.
 - Downsizing protection for mainline.
 - No ready-made group of strikebreakers.
- Job growth, if the SJs actually lead to increased mainline aircraft.
- Job quality increases if the SJs actually lead to more widebody and Group 1 aircraft.

Q. Does it make economic sense for regionals to fly SJs?

A. It's no surprise that regional airlines have a cost advantage over majors because of lower labor costs. These cost differences are not just due to wage rates but it also includes benefits and work rules. Some pilot groups have attempted to "buy" the SJs onto their property. That begs the question: Should we attempt to "buy" the aircraft onto our property with pay rates? What about work rules and benefits? What about other employee groups? Is there another way to effectively get the aircraft onto our property?

Q. What kind of structure should accompany an SJ agreement?

A. First, any type of SJ agreement should protect Mainline. Those protections should include:

- Job Security
- Growth
- Enhanced Career expectations
- Modifications to the Parity Review

Finally, SJ negotiations only take place if the pilots determine that they should. There is nothing that compels us discuss SJs with management. Remember: if there are no pilot benefits, there should be no deal.

