



ARE YOU READY FOR TAKE-OFF - AIRWAYS AVIATION ON PILOT EXPO 2024

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The doors of Pilot Expo 2024 had barely opened when we caught up with Alexandre Alves, CCO & CCO of Airways Aviation for a chat. Why so early? Because for the next two days it would have been mission impossible for one simple reason - the number of partners, collaborators and interested parties on their stands would keep the team 200% busy. We admire the company's responsiveness to market demands, always coming up with new ideas, surprising with new locations and partnerships. Below are the highlights of our discussion:

T.O. You're starting Pilot Expo 2024, what do you expect from this happy event?

A.A. It's always a happy event. First, because we meet a lot of partners, airline partners, companies like Symbiotics that we do the assessment with them, pet pilots. They all attend this

event, which is also a great opportunity to meet with them. share ideas, forecast plans for next year. So, this is number one. Number two - we always get students from this event, which is also interesting.

T.O. How many?

A.A. It depends on the year. Pilot Expo is becoming a truly European event. People come from all over Europe to find the training location. That's why you see schools here from Italy, Spain, Portugal France, like us. And third, we are launching our Italian school during this event. Finally, it's a project that took some time, but we are launching it now. So, anybody that wants to train with their reservation can now choose between Italy or France. It can be also a combined program, which is interesting. So, they can start in Italy and then do the final part in France, which is interesting. They have the experience of flying in two different countries, sharing the same type of fleet. We work with Diamond aircraft, same standards, but two completely different airspaces. I think it gives them a very good experience.

T.O. Alex, you told me that the scholarship for women in aviation or getting more female students is not going that well. How many students did you already get, and do you want to persist to attract more girls and women in aviation?

A.A. We don't have enough women in aviation, that's for sure. That's why we launched this. it's not working bad. We have quite a few women, but I was expecting much more. Honestly last year we had twelve only. And imagine it's like 12%. It's nothing. 12% of our students I want to reach three times this. I don't know if we need to do something else. If it's not enough. We are open to any suggestions. we really feel that if everybody talks about pilot shortage, but if you just appeal to women, if we have more women entering in aviation, there will be no pilot shortage. Because it's still pretty much focused on men. that's what we try to tackle. We try to help people that probably have the capability, but don't have the financial background to support them and try to attract women as well.

T.O. I would say we need to address much younger girls, starting from college and to show them what is aviation, what is the diversity of career in aviation, because they don't have enough information. And they are not dreaming, so they are not looking. And they will not find your booth at Pilot Expo for sure.

A.A. I agree! When kids are growing up, we don't give aircraft or cars to girls, right. We give them dolls. And it must start from the beginning. We are doing that in France. So, since January, we already attended around ten schools, especially in the south part of France, of course, where we are based. We go to college open days or education fairs. We are targeting specifically really young age. But this is a long-time investment.

T.O. Absolutely, long time investment. But having witnessed some girls in aviation day events, I can tell you the feeling to give at least some of them a goal, a dream, a target in their life is more than satisfying. And girls like that keep learning through years and then they will become your students.

A.A. The ones that you see that are coming and joining schools to become pilots, there's always some kind of connection with aviation. Either somebody in the family or they were exposed to flying from a young age, and they got that and asking our students, so why do you thought becoming a pilot? And that's why because we moved around a lot. So, I got to know the aircraft and pilots. So, it's the same as men, right? But we really need more women in aviation. So, I agree with you. We need to expose more. It must be long term program.

T.O. My last question for now – can 50skyshades have more details about the launch of your entity in Italy?

A.A. Sure – we are going to open ground school in Milan. Our facilities are in Volandia museum. I think it's a great location. And then for the flying practical part, it will be done in Sicily, in the south. You have the best of both Right. Good weather... I don't know if I told you – we are opening also in Paris in September.

T.O. NO, this is a completely new information for us!

A.A. Yes, it will be a new location, new partnership for us. From September onwards we'll be able to offer ATPL theory in Paris and then flying in Montpellier and also cabin crew courses in Paris.

T.O. I wish you a great Pilot Expo and let's talk after, to get into more details about results and trends for year 2024!

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