



New BOI, GEG service offers taste of future growth

Alaska Airlines is expanding its service between Boise and Seattle and between Spokane and Seattle next January with two more daily roundtrips in each city pair. Horizon Air will operate the flights on behalf of Alaska with its 76-seat Q400s.

"This is great news for Horizon and Alaska Air Group as a whole, since these are key Northwest markets that feed into the entire Air Group network and this provides Horizon with the chance to experience a measure of growth in 2012," President **Glenn Johnson** says. "As luck would have it, Horizon will have accomplished enough of its business transformation plan by the end of the year to be able to seize this opportunity."

Currently six of Horizon's 48 aircraft (plus the whitetail on loan from Bombardier) are serving as spares or covering for Q400s undergoing modifications. The plan is to reduce the number of spares in the coming months as modifications are completed and the aircraft's dispatch reliability improves.

"By January, two of these Q400s are expected to become available for scheduled service, allowing us to add the seats on behalf of Alaska in Spokane and Boise," Johnson says. "Originally, these Horizon aircraft were being considered for possible deployment in the state of Alaska. Having Horizon fly in the state remains under consideration for a later date."

Days before Alaska's announcement, Southwest revealed it was exiting Boise-Seattle, Spokane-Seattle and 10 other routes on Jan. 8. Boise was the hardest hit – flights from the city to Reno and Salt Lake City were also axed. Southwest described the moves as "a continued pruning of unproductive flying due to high fuel costs." Southwest's load factors on the Boise and Spokane routes are estimated to be low – ranging from the mid-50s to the low 60s, according to **Ben Munson**, Air Group network planning manager.

"We wanted to get the news of our added service out quickly to show our responsiveness," says **Liz Phipps**, director of Air Group's network planning. "But we're still working through the details, so some fine tuning will be seen down the road."

The affected communities welcomed the news.

"We are delighted with the immediate response by Alaska Airlines to add these two new, daily flights, filling a need for our community," says **Lawrence Krauter**, airport director of Spokane International Airport. "Our business customers especially

will appreciate the well-timed departures and arrivals."

Boise Airport "is very appreciative of its long-standing relationship with Alaska Air Group and is



Reaction at the stations to the news

"Wow. This was a super-fast response from Air Group. Southwest announced they were pulling out, and two days later we had additional service. We're excited that Spokane gets to be one of the first locations to grow and benefit from our business transformation."

– **Dave Burris, Spokane Customer Services Manager**

"The news of additional flights is very positive for our Boise team. We've been in retract mode for a number of years, so to see something on the positive side of the departure ledger is outstanding. We look forward to the increased service to Seattle, as the existing flights in that market are very full and we anticipate that Southwest's traffic will spill to Air Group. Great job by those involved in reacting so aggressively to the opportunity."

– **Rob Livingstone, Boise Customer Services Manager**



Monica Brandner speaks at a recent 'Radiant' workshop.

GSA's nonprofit program teaches girls to shine

Body image concerns. Being bullied. Availability of drugs and alcohol. Peer pressure. These are just some of the issues that many girls face on a day-to-day basis, and **Monica Brandner** is striving to address them.

Brandner, a ground service agent for Horizon Air in Spokane, is an avid volunteer in Spokane and in her home state of Alaska, and her passion is helping girls to build up their sense of self-worth, respect themselves, and learn important life skills.

"I've seen all the destructive behaviors girls struggle with – I lived that out with my youngest daughter, who spent some time in residential treatment centers," Brandner says. "I saw a need for supportive and caring adults to be there for our youth, so they can live a life of confidence and become healthy emotionally, physically and mentally."

To that end, Brandner recently stepped up her volunteerism efforts by developing a nonprofit program called "Radiant" for girls ages 12-18. It consists of two-day workshops on topics relevant to teenage girls.

"These girls can be the next generation of leaders and influencers – we give them the tools and lessons to see their value and reach their potential, so they can shine," she says.

Brandner presents the workshops with the help of fellow volunteers, and she often invites guest speakers who have experience regarding the topics being discussed. Any girl of junior high and high school age is invited to attend.

"Just about anybody can be considered 'at-risk,' not just those who come from tough backgrounds or broken homes," Brandner says. "Even girls with stable home lives face a lot of issues."

Brandner's goal is to enlighten and empower.

"We challenge the girls to take personal responsibility and make changes in their own lives, but we never want them to feel worse than when they arrived," she says. "We want them to feel built up. A big message we try to convey to these girls is that they're not alone, that we have walked the same road, and that we're there for them. Our young people need to know we're not going to walk away from them, no matter what they have done."

It's an approach that's reflected in Brandner's relationships with co-workers in Spokane.

"If I'm needed to listen to someone dealing with a problem, I'll do that," she says. "It's up to all of us to show kindness and respect to others."

In addition to the Radiant events, Brandner has also served as a guest speaker for a number of organizations, such as the Girl Scouts of America and D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). She also works with the Women's Recovery Program at the Union Gospel Mission of Spokane.

Q400 transition nearly done for former CRJ-700 pilots

Two months ago, Horizon Air completed its transition to an all-Q400 fleet. Another related milestone is coming up in mid-September, when Horizon's final class of former CRJ-700 pilots will be fully trained and certified to operate the Q400.

"For most of 2010 and 2011, we've been running classes practically back-to-back to get all of our pilots trained on the Q400," says **Perry Solmonson**, director of flight operations standards and training.

By the end, more than 200 Horizon CRJ-700 pilots will have been transitioned to the Q400. Another 30 to 40 CRJ-700 pilots are currently on leave and will be trained on the Q400 in smaller groups when they return.

The training process represents a huge commitment for Horizon, both in terms of time and money. On average, it costs the company around \$30,000 to train one pilot who moves to a new aircraft.

"That figure includes the cost of the simulator, plus salary, hotel, transportation and per diem for both students and instructors," says **LaMar Hugaard**, chief pilot.

Although that one-time cost is substantial, Horizon is saving \$9 million annually by moving to a single fleet type.

Training is rigorous

"A lot of the technology on the RJ exists on the Q400, but there are some differences," says **Peter Baker**, lead ground instructor. "I compare it to learning to use an Apple computer versus learning to use a PC. Our RJ pilots bring a wealth of knowledge and experience with them, but it's a new airplane, so there are some points of discomfort."

Initial training is an extensive process. It takes about two months from the start of classroom training (known as ground training) at the Portland Ops Center to the time a pilot completes the initial operating experience (IOE).

"A class of ground training takes almost three full weeks," Baker says. "Each pilot is then required to take and pass an oral exam given by a check airman. Assuming they pass their orals – and our pass level is above 99 percent – they then proceed to simulator training in Seattle."

Simulator training takes another three weeks with a new set of instructors. That's followed by a check ride on the Q400, in which a check airman evaluates the pilot's skills. The process ends with the IOE, in which a



Horizon ground instructor Mark Crain (standing) leads a class of CRJ-700 pilots through Q400 ground training.

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Do you pursue volunteer work in your community?
Do you or a co-worker have a hobby outside of work
that's unusual or colorful? If so, let us know.

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take it from there.