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## **Update on the Pilot Shortage in the US**

### **12 July 2022**

Good day,

We are delighted to announce that HLG has begun to receive a steady stream of I-140 petition approvals for Pilots.

Interestingly, the profiles of applicants which have been approved are incredibly diverse: from first officers with 5,000 flight hours to highly accomplished Line Training Captains with over 15,000 hours. In other words, it appears that the USCIS has acknowledged the urgency of the pilot shortage in the United States. This, however, makes it difficult for us to review the “optimum profile” but we believe we should be able to conclude on this matter by the end of July with the result that our present price policy will remain.

As we say in Quebec, “after the flowers, here is the pot” (literal translation): Note that we have received 2 denials. We have not yet got the full decision for these but, we are expecting these in the coming 10 days or so. While we will appeal such denials (notably because the clients profiles are similar to others that were accepted), they will also help us finalize the “optimum profile”. More information to come on this matter.

For those of you who have been accepted by USCIS and for all of you planning to move to the USA, we have specifically requested our friends at Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors, US CPA, to write an article on US tax planning with Pilots in mind. We strongly suggest that you take your time to read it since this could save you a lot of money and headaches to put it mildly (see article and link below).



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On another subject, it is clear that our recent success in obtaining approvals has disturbed some stakeholders not only in the legal field but also within the Pilot recruitment business. While most of them have adapted and contacted us to find ways to cooperate, others have adopted a less constructive approach by publishing negative articles doubting the feasibility of EB-2 for pilots etc. We took the time to contact the “culprits” and while a few of them did “see the light” some of the others are still trying their best to cast doubt on the process. I will not discuss this further, except to say that they remind me of an old friend who was telling me a few years ago that ride sharing apps, like Uber, have no future...

With this in mind, we have received numerous queries about an article regarding the Pilot Unions in the US complaining about “pilot hiring practices” (please see an article on this below). While this could be bad news notably to our friends in Australia and other countries, it is clearly good news for the EB-2 NIW program since the conclusion of the process is a green card and therefore is in line with the immigration policies in place.

As always, we aim to keep you informed of any other developments to come but for now, here is the latest news on the pilot shortage in the United States

Best regards,

**- MR. JEAN-FRANCOIS HARVEY**  
Global Managing Partner



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1. Lewis Kevelson, '[Pre-Immigration Tax Planning For Pilots Relocating to the U.S.](#)', Berkowitz Pollack Brant, 5 July 2022

- The U.S.'s EB-2 visa program offers foreign pilots a unique pathway toward lawful permanent residence in the U.S. However, without proper planning in advance of stepping foot on American soil, that path can be plagued with a variety of expensive tax traps.
- Whether your stay in the U.S. is temporary or a part of a longer-term plan, it is critical you take the time to understand U.S. tax laws and work with experienced accounting professionals to implement strategies intended to preserve your assets and minimize tax liabilities.

2. '[Cathay Pacific Back On Hiring Spree In Anticipation Of Take-Off In Global Air Travel](#)', Bangkok Post, 27 June 2022

- The Cathay Pacific Group is looking to go on a hiring spree that will add 8,000 new staff across its subsidiaries. Some 4,000 of them will be recruited for Cathay Pacific Airways between now and the end of 2023, of which 700 will be pilots and 2,000 are cabin crew.
- Cathay Pacific CEO Augustus Tang Kin-Wing said the "direction of travel was there" and the airline wanted to be prepared as it took time to train and recruit new staff.
- "We are very confident that Hong Kong will be opening up. We are making this preparation. We are making this commitment and investment in recruiting so many people ahead of time," he said.



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3. Pilar Wolfsteller, '[Pilot Union Complains To US Government About Pilot Hiring Practices](#)', Flight Global, 23 June 2022

- Pilot union Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) has complained to the US government about airlines hiring qualified pilots from overseas on specialised visa programmes.
- In a 23 June letter to Alejandro Mayorkas, US secretary of Homeland Security, the union says some airlines have “begun to misuse” visa programmes to fill their pilot needs with candidates from Australia.
- While several airlines have begun recruiting from abroad, the union specifically names ultra low-cost carrier Spirit Airlines as one of the perpetrators.

4. Keneisha Deas, '[Extreme Shortage' Of Pilots; As The Industry Grows By 13%](#)', Fox 54, 6 June 2022

- The Department Chair for Aviation at Wallace State Community College, Kyle Putnam, said "There's an extreme shortage of pilots right now, so much so that the airline industry is creating flight schools to provide a pipeline of pilots."
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of airline and commercial pilots is projected to grow 13% from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations.

5. Taylor Rains, ['American CEO Says The Airline Has Grounded 100 Planes Because It Doesn't Have Enough Pilots To Fly Them'](#), Business Insider, 4 June 2022

- The pilot shortage is continuing to take a toll on US airlines, forcing some to park planes because there aren't enough pilots to fly them.
- For instance, American Airlines CEO Robert Isom has said that the carrier is grounding about 100 regional jets due to the pilot shortage.

6. Errol Barnett, ['National Pilot Shortage Leads To Memorial Day Weekend Cancellations'](#), CBS News, 31 May 2022

- Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg said the pilot shortage is a nationwide issue which is affecting the whole domestic aviation industry.
- Notably, data from the Regional Airline Association shows that the past two years saw a steep dip in pilot graduations as flight schools were closed and airlines stopped hiring.
- As a result, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 14,000 pilot openings are projected for each year over the next decade.

7. Daniel Martínez Garbuno, ['Delta Cuts Hundreds Of Flights From Schedule As Summer Approaches'](#), Simple Flying, 28 May 2022

- The pilot shortage in the US is impacting the schedules of US carriers.
- Delta Air Lines, for example, announced it would reduce about 100 flights daily between 1 July and 7 August.



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8. Edward Russell, [‘U.S. Pilot Staffing Situation Is Complex And Will Take Years To Sort Out’](#), Airline Weekly, 23 May 2022

- Proposed relief measures for the current staffing situation, including raising the mandatory retirement age for airline pilots or providing new exemptions to the 1,500-hour requirement as Republic Airways has requested, would only provide “near-term relief,” Raymond James analyst Savanthi Syth wrote.
- Longer term, the industry needs to continue and build on its coordinated efforts with flight schools and other training programs to increase the supply of new pilots.
- No matter the cause of the situation, Syth agrees with most in the industry that relief may be years in coming.

9. Rich Thomaselli, [‘Now Delta, American Consider Trimming Pilot Requirements’](#), Travel Pulse, 22 May 2022

- Earlier this month, regional airline Republic Airways asked the Federal Aviation Administration to cut the amount of training time for pilots in half, a move the carrier hopes will help combat the pilot shortage in the industry.
- Now major commercial carriers Delta Air Lines and American Airlines are taking a page from Republic’s playbook as both companies are considering similar measures, including trimming the number of flight training hours pilots need to become certified.



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10. Taylor Rains, [‘US Airlines Are So Desperate For Pilots They Are Dropping Some Requirements And Considering Cutting Training Hours To Get More Pilots Flying Sooner’](#), Business Insider, 21 May 2022

- US airlines are once again grappling with the pilot shortage as travel demand skyrockets.
- On 13 May, Alaska Airlines CEO Ben Minicucci apologized in a YouTube video for continued flight cancellations that have been plaguing the carrier.
- Minicucci blamed the pilot shortage, saying "we had 63 fewer pilots than what we planned for when we built our scheduled," which caused a "ripple effect."
- In addition to reduced training and education requirements, Senator Lindsey Graham could propose a bill that will increase the mandatory pilot retirement age from 65 to 67.

11. Leslie Josephs, [‘A Severe Pilot Shortage In The U.S. Leaves Airlines Scrambling For Solutions’](#), CNBC, 15 May 2022

- The US is facing its worst pilot shortage in recent memory, forcing airlines to cut flights just as travelers are returning after more than two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- “The pilot shortage for the industry is real, and most airlines are simply not going to be able to realize their capacity plans because there simply aren’t enough pilots, at least not for the next five-plus years,” United Airlines CEO Scott Kirby said.



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12. Joe Hiti, [‘Airlines Are Suffering From A Huge Pilot Shortage’](#), Audacy, 16 May 2022

- With travel returning to somewhat normal almost two years after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, airlines say they are struggling to find pilots for their flights.
- As a result, Airlines like Frontier and SkyWest have moved to recruit from Australia.
- Kit Darby, a pilot pay consultant, shared that the major U.S. airlines are in the midst of trying to hire more than 12,000 pilots in 2022 alone, a single-year record.
- No matter how airlines decide to adjust their training and hiring process, Darby shared that the answer isn't going to be simple with such a complex job.

13. David Adam, [‘Shortage Of Pilots Forces Cape Air To Submit 90-Day Notice To End Passenger Air Service To Quincy; Airline Can’t Leave Until Replacement Is Found’](#), Muddy River News, 4 May 2022

- After agreeing to a four-year, \$10.8 million contract in September to be the essential air service provider for Quincy Regional Airport, Cape Air notified the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) on Tuesday of its intent to end passenger air service in Quincy.
- Andrew Bonney, senior vice president of planning for Cape Air, signed the 90-day notice that was submitted Tuesday to the DOT.





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- “Cape Air gives this notice with reluctance and regret — and principally due to a shortage of pilots,” senior vice president of planning for Cape Air, Andrew Bonney wrote.

14. Jacqueline Matter, [‘Pilot Shortage Could Impact Summer Travel Plans’](#), Fox 5, 27 April 2022

- Since 2019, airlines have seen a 4% decline in pilot numbers.
- Major airlines like JetBlue and Spirit have already cut 5% to 10% of their summer schedules to focus on recruiting as the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports 14,500 pilots need to be hired every year for the next decade in order to keep up with the shortage.
- "Every pilot union at every airline is talking about how far they're being pushed right to the edge," said Capt. Dennis Tajar, a spokesperson for Allied Pilots Association.

15. TW Starr, [‘Pilot Shortage Impacting All Levels Of The Aviation Industry’](#), KTBS, 26 April 2022

- Tubreaux Aviation at the Downtown Shreveport Airport has seen the commercial airlines gobble up their flight instructors.
- Some industry analysts are projecting North America will be short about 12,000 pilots by 2023 and by 2029 a potential shortfall of 23,000 pilots.



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16. Lindsay Rogers, [‘Pilot Shortages Could Last Through 2030’](#), Inside Hook, 25 April 2022

- Pilot shortages have plagued the airline industry for years and based on a series of new reports, we have still yet to see the worst of it, despite the onslaught of delays, cancellations and airfare increases travelers are currently being saddled with.
- It is reported that America produces only between 5,000 and 7,000 pilots annually and according to the Regional Airline Association, the U.S. is likely to lose about half of its current pilots to retirement in the next 15 years.

17. Patrick Reilly, [‘Airlines Hiring Buses To Transport Passengers Between Airports During Pilot Shortage’](#), New York Post, 24 April 2022

- Several US airlines struggling to find pilots amid a nationwide shortage are hiring bus companies to transport passengers to airports in cities.
- American Airlines announced a partnership with a coach company earlier this month to transport passengers between Philadelphia International Airport and airports in Allentown, Pennsylvania and Atlantic City, New Jersey.

18. Mike Sullivan, [‘Airlines Are Offering Hiring And Training Incentives To Combat Pilot Shortage’](#), Fox 59, 21 April 2022

- Lift Academy, owned by Republic Airways, is offering financial and tuition incentives for people looking to become a pilot.
- Specifically, Lift Academy is currently offering a \$15,000 subsidy from Republic Airways to that cost, and an additional \$15,000 upon completion of the program.



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19. Chelsee Yee, [‘Airline Ends Service To Hawaii For 2022 Due To Pilot Shortage’](#), Nexstar Media Wire, 18 April 2022

- A shortage of pilots in the U.S. has led to airlines cutting schedules.
- Sun Country Airlines is amongst the latest to cut services, in this case to Fairbanks and Honolulu citing that they anticipate “to be operationally constrained by workforce shortages”.
- Last week, union leaders said Southwest Airlines pilots are suffering through an epidemic of fatigue due to poor scheduling practices, which have now escalated out of control.

20. David Adam, [‘Pilot Shortage Blamed For High Number Of Canceled Flights In Past Two Months At Quincy Regional Airport’](#), Muddy River News, 13 April 2022

- Joseph Allman, chief financial officer for Republic Airways, told that he sees the shortage of pilot reaching its apex — or “its worst” — in the second and third quarters of 2023.
- “A lot of cancellations and issues have been related to that pilot shortage. We’re having some internal discussions trying to figure out where we are. There’s not much we necessarily can do, but we will try to do everything we can to serve the citizens of Quincy and the flying public.” He added.



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21. Alfred Charles, [‘Alaska Airlines To Cut Flights By 2 Percent Through End Of June Amid Pilot Shortage Woes’](#), Katu, 8 April 2022

- Alaska Airlines plans to reduce its total flights by 2 percent through the end of June as the carrier continues to grapple with a pilot shortage that has resulted in scrubbed flights and irate customers.
- The carrier canceled over 100 flights last weekend because of the pilot shortage.

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