

Aircraft Safety Comes First at SkyWest Airlines

“Safety First” is more than a mission statement; at SkyWest Airlines, it’s a way of life. SkyWest’s impeccable safety record spans more than 35 years, beginning with the highest caliber of trained professionals to a proven fleet of aircraft.

The People

Each day, thousands of SkyWest employees are responsible for the safety of hundreds of thousands of passengers. SkyWest experienced mechanics, pilots, flight attendants, and ground personnel have the know-how and ability to keep their passengers safe.

In the Flight Deck

You also have the comfort of knowing you're flying with some of the most experienced and thoroughly trained pilots the airline industry has to offer. It takes years of training and experience to become a commercial airline pilot, and many come to SkyWest well prepared averaging 1,500 to 2,000 hours of flight time. However, their training has just begun. Before they ever fly a passenger flight, SkyWest spends approximately \$30,000 on their training which is geared towards safety.

This is a two month process beginning with three weeks of ground school followed by 50 hours of flight simulator training. The final stage of their training is called the Initial Operating Experience, during which they actually fly one of SkyWest’s aircraft accompanied by a qualified check airman instructor for another 50 hours.

All pilots continue their training with mandatory recurrent simulator training for captains every six months and for first officers, every year. Additionally, each year both captains and first officers must participate in a two-day training session similar to ground school.

All pilots are also required to undergo a comprehensive medical examination testing their vision and overhaul physical and mental well being to determine if they are fit to fly for SkyWest. Pilots do this every six months and first officers annually.

In the Cabin

At SkyWest, a flight attendant’s first responsibility is your safety. Like pilots, SkyWest’s in-flight team undergoes comprehensive training before they take to the skies. Each SkyWest flight attendant must complete an intense three week training program emphasizing onboard safety and security. They are well-versed in emergency procedures, evacuation protocol and passenger service. While at SkyWest, flight attendants continue their training throughout the year and are required to recertify in First Aid and CPR annually.

On the Ramp

SkyWest stresses safety not only in the air, but also on the ground. SkyWest trains its customer service personnel for two weeks, both in the classroom and on the job in ground safety issues. These agents become specialists in aircraft weight and balance. They know the best way to load and unload hundreds of pounds of cargo and luggage without damaging the luggage, cargo, the aircraft and themselves. They are also trained to operate the various ground equipment and park the aircraft once it arrives at the gate. This navigation can often be challenging in airports with busy ramps. In colder climates, they must learn how to properly deice an aircraft allowing for a safe take-off and flight.

Under the Wing

For every hour one of SkyWest's aircraft spends in flight, one of their mechanics spends two hours servicing that aircraft. SkyWest maintains a strict maintenance schedule and undoubtedly, an experienced SkyWest mechanic has recently inspected or serviced the aircraft you are flying in.

All mechanics come to SkyWest with extensive training, including three years of A&P (Airframe and Power) training and certification. Additionally, SkyWest mechanics undergo three weeks of mandatory training every two years to keep them sharp.

Each day, all of SkyWest's aircraft are given attention by a mechanic. Every third day, it receives standard service. On the fifth day, a more thorough service and inspection is conducted. Extensive maintenance is scheduled every 54 days with a major inspection every 540 days.

The Safety Department

SkyWest has a department wholly dedicated to the operational safety of the airline. They monitor all aspects of safety and ensure that the highest standard of safety is maintained. The safety department coordinates with all the departments involved with ground and flight operations and acts as a compliance liaison between the airline and the Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration. They are also responsible for the safety and well being of all employees and equipment at the airline.

The safety department conducts internal safety audits and evaluations of all operational departments. Additionally, SkyWest's safety department voluntarily participates in the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP); a reporting program for pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers to flag potential safety concerns.

The Aircraft

While SkyWest's employees are truly what set the airline apart, the equipment used also plays a significant role in passenger safety. SkyWest's fleet of 244 regional aircraft is one of the industry's newest with an average age of five years. The fleet consists of four different aircraft types; the 30-passenger Embraer

Brasilia (EMB 120), the Bombardier Canadair Regional Jet 200 LR (CRJ200), and the CRJ200's sister aircraft, the Canadair Regional Jet 700 ER (CRJ700), and the latest introduction to the SkyWest fleet, the CRJ900.

EMB 120

Commonly referred to as the "workhorse" of the regional airline industry, SkyWest has safely been flying the EMB 120 since its introduction to the fleet in 1986. Don't be fooled by the propellers you see, the same technology that powers jet aircraft actually powers the EMB 120 as well. Like jet engines, the EMB 120 is powered by a gas turbine design, allowing for the superior reliability and power that jet engines enjoy. The EMB 120 is also economically sound, allowing it to serve communities that may not support jet service.

Additionally, the EMB 120 possesses state-of-the-art technology which allows for maximum passenger safety. Each SkyWest EMB 120's is equipped with a Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS). GPWS is a warning system designed to alert pilots when the aircraft is not in landing configuration or getting too close to the ground. GPWS detects terrain ahead of and below the aircraft and warns pilots when there's an obstruction ahead.

Each EMB 120 also has an on-board Global Positioning System (GPS), which uses satellites to calculate an aircraft's position on the earth's surface.

Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance Systems (TCAS) are also included for your safety. A more advanced radar system, TCAS in the flight deck is similar in theory to the equipment used in air traffic control towers to detect the position of all aircraft in the area.

CRJ200, CRJ700 and CRJ900

SkyWest has operated the 50-passenger CRJ200 since 1994. Ten years later, in 2004, it welcomed the CRJ200's sister-aircraft, the CRJ700, and SkyWest welcomed a fourth aircraft type in summer 2006, the CRJ900.

The CRJ200, CRJ700 and CRJ900 are arguably the most technologically advanced commercial aircraft in the world boasting the Collins Pro Line 4 Avionics Systems. This on-board technology allows pilots to better observe the environment they are flying in. All three regional jets have the ability to monitor performance of aircraft systems as well as track nearby aircraft and terrain clearances. The aircraft is also equipped with a weather radar system which helps pilots see potentially treacherous weather long before they may encounter it.

Passengers can rest easy knowing that the technology on-board SkyWest's aircraft provides for safer, smoother flying experience for both passenger and pilot. That's safety first!