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Boeing Forecasts Asia Will Lead Pilot Additions Over 20 Years

By Chan Sue Ling

Sept. 16 (Bloomberg) -- Boeing Co. said airlines will need to add 466,650 pilots within two decades, double the size of the current global workforce, to support fleet expansion as travel demand recovers.

The commercial aviation industry will need an average of 23,300 new pilots and 30,000 maintenance personnel annually from 2010 to 2029, Boeing Training & Flight Services, a unit of the world's second-biggest commercial-jet builder, said today. The pilot additions include new hires and replacements, it said.

Boeing forecast the Asia-Pacific region, led by China, will account for the biggest growth in airline personnel during the period. Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd. and Emirates Airline are among carriers increasing their fleet as air travel demand rebounds from the worst decline since World War II last year.

"Our challenge is adapting our training to engage the future generation of people who will fly and maintain the more than 30,000 airplanes that will be delivered by 2029," Roei Ganzarski, chief customer officer for Boeing's training and flight operations unit, said in a statement distributed at a briefing in Singapore.

Ganzarski said there are 233,000 pilots and about 100,000 mechanics worldwide at present. Among Asia-Pacific countries, China will need 70,600 new pilots and Southeast Asia 42,200 in the 20-year period, he said.

Boeing predicted in July that airlines will buy 30,900 aircraft valued at \$3.6 trillion between 2010 and 2029, 6.6 percent more than its previous estimate. The airplane maker expects the Asia-Pacific region to be the biggest buyers of twin-aisle planes.

Carriers ordered 588 commercial jets with more than 100 seats this year, according to Ascend Worldwide Ltd., a London-based aviation forecaster and data provider.

Airbus SAS, based in Toulouse, France, is the world's biggest maker of commercial aircraft.

--Editors: Lena Lee, Dave McCombs.

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