

TOPIC GUIDE FOR STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS [5 MINS]	2
1.1	EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH PURPOSE	2
1.2	EXPLANATION OF SESSION	2
2.	DETAILED DISCUSSIONS [50 MINS]	3
2.1	GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEE [5 MINS]	3
2.2	DEMAND FOR PILOTS AND POTENTIAL SHORTAGES [20 MINS]	3
2.3	FUNDING MODELS AND THEIR PROS/CONS [20 MINS]	4
2.4	FIRST OFFICER APPRENTICESHIP [5 MINS]	5
2.5	OTHER WAYS TO ADDRESS PILOT SHORTAGES [5 MINS]	5
3.	FURTHER INFORMATION AND CLOSE [5 MINS]	6

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS [5 MINS]

1.1 Explanation of research purpose

- Interviewer to introduce themselves/SYSTRA – an independent consultancy specialising in research within the transport sector.
- Thank you for sparing the time to take part in this research for the Department for Transport (and for completing the questionnaire if relevant).
- The purpose of today's interview is to talk to you in depth about:
 - Your perception of the risk of a shortage of pilots relative to demand, in the UK, and
 - Your thoughts on models for funding pilot training.
- We're collating information from an online survey (/the online survey you completed, if relevant), a number of interviews like this one with key stakeholders, and a literature review.
- The findings of the study will provide key evidence to inform decisions on government policy on funding models for pilot training.

1.2 Explanation of session

- The interview will last up to an hour.
- Just to emphasise:
 - There are no right or wrong answers;
 - You may leave at any point if you no longer wish to take part; and
 - You're not obliged to answer any questions you don't want to.
- If it's OK with you the interview will be recorded. The recording will only be listened to by the SYSTRA project team to assist interview write ups, and will be deleted at the end of the project. Everything you say will be reported anonymously.
- To ensure compliance with data protection legislation, please can you confirm that you've been informed as to the purposes of this project, that you have seen the privacy notice sent to you, and that you consent to the use of audio recording.

Once consent confirmed, SYSTRA moderator to start audio recording, and state
- The interviewee has been informed as to the purposes of this work and has consented to recording.

2. DETAILED DISCUSSIONS [50 MINS]

(Where question numbers exist, ask this question from the online survey, or if the survey has been completed, then confirm the answer provided)

2.1 General information about interviewee [5 mins]

- Q1 (type of organisation)
- Q2 (organisation activities)
- Q3 (if applicable, no. pilots employed)
- Can you tell me more about your role with [insert organisation] and how the shortage of pilots is impacting the your organisation?

2.2 Demand for pilots and potential shortages [15 mins]

- Q11 Do you think there is a **shortage of commercial airline pilots**, relative to demand, and if so to what extent: now / this summer / 2023 / 5 years / 10 years / further into the future..... in the UK / worldwide?
 - Will shortages be associated with any particular kinds of aircraft?
 - Ask those employing pilots who have not completed the questionnaire to answer Q5,6,7,8 during interview or afterwards
- Q12 What are **main/other factors contributing to current and potential future shortages** of pilots?
- What are the impacts going to be of any pilot shortages on passengers? Your airline? Airlines (operationally and financially)? The industry? The country? Now....medium term (5 years)....long term (10 years)
- Is there a **problem attracting enough trainees**?
 - Why? (prompts: cost, training schools, recruitment strategies, qualifications required?)
 - What could be done about it? (prompts: targeting under-represented population cohorts, re-consider the requirements/qualifications required for pilots/trainees)

(PILOT EMPLOYERS ONLY)

- Q9 What **recruitment methods** do you use – now – and what could be used in the future?

For each recruitment method used / used in the past / expected to be used

- Can you tell me a bit more about how you recruit like this?
- Why is this a good approach / not used anymore / something to consider in future?

(NON PILOT EMPLOYERS ONLY)

- What recruitment methods are most widely used? Used to a lesser extent? Should be considered?

2.3 Funding models and their pros/cons [20 mins]

- Q10/Q13/Q14 Which routes have you used / are you aware of for funding pilot training?
 - Which will be most effective in the future and why?
 - How can they be encouraged / what needs to happen?
- Q15 Are you aware of other routes for funding pilot training currently used for pilot training in the UK or elsewhere?
- Q16 Do you have any other ideas for routes to funding, including ideas from other industries or specialist operational/licensed trades in similarly skilled, certified and responsible operational jobs (e.g. air traffic controllers, military aircraft, train drivers, bridge-level officers on ferries and other forms of marine transport)
- If cadet scheme / sponsorship not already covered from the above – ask the same prompts below for each

For all 'other' models mentioned in Q13 Q14 Q15 Q16

- How does this model work? (collect as much detail as possible)
 - Which countries / industries is it used in?
 - Have you run it?
 - (if yes collect details – if no longer ask why, and what would encourage it)
 - How common is it? / should it be? (now, and in the past)
 - What are the pros and cons (including impact of current model on numbers / type of trainees, and why it may or may not work in the UK)
 - Why is it not used? How can it be encouraged?
 - If this was adopted what are the timescales to get it set up and running?
 - How practical / feasible is it (administrative / legal issues etc.)?
 - What is the cost to trainees/sponsors?
 - Should it be supplemented with Government grant funding to employers/another form of govt intervention, and how affordable is it to government
 - How can government and industry best collaborate to pursue this option
 - How effective you consider these routes are likely to be in helping to deliver the UK's current and future need for Pilots?
 - Is there any further information you are aware of that we can access on this funding model
-
- Should balance between different training funding models be changed? If so in which direction & why?
 - Should the Government be intervening? If yes/No why?
 - How can government and industry best collaborate?
 - To what extent are training costs rising for the trainee? Can they be expected to continue to rise? How could they be reduced?

2.4 First Officer Apprenticeship [5 mins]

- Have you **heard of the First officer Apprenticeship**?

(If needed: The First Officer Pilot Apprenticeship is a training programme that was designed by the aviation industry and approved by the UK Government to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be a competent co-pilot. On completion of a 24 month training programme and after a successful End Point Assessment the apprentice will be qualified to co-pilot the aircraft on commercial operations).

- Q17-20 What do you think of the First officer Apprenticeship?
 - **Pros / cons**
 - (if employ pilots) Have you **considered** it?
 - **Why** did you/do airlines decide against it?
 - What would **encourage you/airlines to consider** it? (prompt cost? Risk of apprentice being 'poached' by another airline after qualifying? Anything else to make it more attractive?)
 - What would be the **advantages/disadvantages** of these actions to make it more attractive?
 - Do you think this could be done **within current legislation**?
 - Do you think there are **any associated legal risks**?
 - Could the FOA **be combined with financial support from DfT in the form of grant funding to employers** (i.e. airlines)?
 - **How much grant funding** would be required per apprentice to encourage your airline/airlines to run it?

2.5 Other ways to address pilot shortages [5 mins]

- Q21 **What else will help to address pilot shortages in the future** - Short term (next 2-3 years) Medium term (next 5 years or so) Longer term (next 10 years or so?)
 - **How important are simulators in the training process**? Are there sufficient simulators? If not how can investment in simulators for training be encouraged? Would this help with pilot shortages?
 - Will **new aviation technologies such as AAM/AI/autonomous planes** have a positive or negative effect on pilot shortages now or in the future? How?
 - Should there be **Government intervention to help with pilot shortages**? In what form do you think that ought to be?
 - Should there be an **attempt to recruit more female pilots, more ethnic minority pilots**? Would this help address shortages? How can it be done?
 - Should there be **changes to training requirements** e.g. shortening flying hours, co-locating desk based and air based elements of training, increasing competition in the pilot training sector? Would this help address shortages?
 - Is there a **way to ensure small regional airlines have enough pilots/can access trainees/keep their pilots**?
 - **Any other ideas** to address pilot shortages?

3. FURTHER INFORMATION AND CLOSE [5 MINS]

- Are you aware of **any studies, reports, academic articles or data sources** that you think might be useful to us in undertaking our work, specifically regarding:
 - Existing commercial pilots (e.g. Age, Rank, Type Rating,)
 - Future pilot requirements/demands
 - Pilot supply/demand bottlenecks / potential for future pilot shortages
 - Alternative pilot training funding models from UK/other countries/similar industries
 - Options for addressing the cost of pilot training through different funding models

What are they? How can we access them?

- Are there any **final comments** you would like to make on anything we have discussed?
- **Thank you** very much for taking the time to talk to me. The findings will be **fed back anonymously** to the Department for Transport as part of a wider study to assess the level of risk of a shortage of qualified pilots relative to demand over the coming years, and the range and merits of potential alternative models for funding cadets' pilot training. The study will provide key evidence to inform decisions on government policy on funding models for pilot training.
- Should we wish to use **quotes** from what you have said today, would you be happy for us to do so – we would check with you before providing them in a report, either anonymously or against the name of your organisation?