

Flight Times



Volunteer For The ASSIST Team

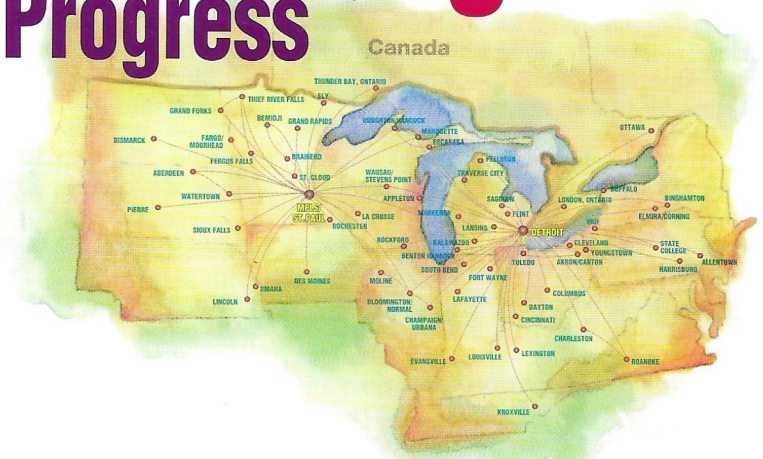
Northwest Airlines has developed a valuable training program called **ASSIST**. The acronym stands for Assistance Support Services Incorporating Specialized Teams. **ASSIST** is a proactive survivor- and family-assistance program that will provide Northwest and Mesaba with trained volunteers in the event of an aircraft accident.

ASSIST is an integral part of Northwest and Mesaba's comprehensive Emergency Response Plan. The primary role of an **ASSIST** team member is to aid in the communication process and be a liaison between survivors and family members and the company. **ASSIST** team members will guide family members during a crisis and may be required to:

- Fly into the emergency area and activate and maintain the command center
- Return phone calls to family members inquiring about the status of a passenger
- Arrange transportation and hotels for survivors and family members

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Planning For Progress



Mesaba Airlines has enjoyed phenomenal growth over the past year. This growth has been fueled by increased ASM (Available Seat Mile) production, an improved completion factor, and a strong marketing schedule. The market-planning function for Mesaba Airlines incorporates several functions and responsibilities. Jeff Jones, director of Market Planning for the airline, is responsible for managing the planning process along with senior scheduling analyst Cheryl Moline. Jeff has been with Mesaba since 1988. Prior to joining Mesaba, he worked for Northwest Airlines in a variety of departments, including customer service, reservations and area marketing. Jeff brings to the department a wealth of knowledge and experience as well as a strong education, with a degree in economics and international relations from Mankato State University and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas.

The market-planning department serves as the clearinghouse for schedule information for the company. This department gathers input from every area of the company as well as

from Northwest Airlines. Once the market-planning department analyzes this information, it begins to build a schedule. This process is carried out a minimum of 90 days in advance and is guided by the goal of meeting every department's needs. Some of the key issues that Jeff and his staff consider are maintenance requirements (how much aircraft downtime must be available, and at what location), flight operations (how many hours of crew time are available based on ongoing training, attrition, planned growth, etc.), individual community needs and, most important, the needs of Northwest Airlines. All of these issues must be considered in relation to weekend and seasonal adjustments as well as to coverage of Northwest flights in complementary markets.

The market-planning process has become more complicated since the contractual relationship between Mesaba and Northwest has changed. Since August 1995, Mesaba Airlines has been compensated on an ASM-based formula. With this new formula, Mesaba Airlines has relinquished schedule and pricing control to Northwest Airlines. This change

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Planning For Progress

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requires Jeff Jones to coordinate his work carefully. Jeff works hand in hand with his Northwest contact, Blaine Peters, to develop schedules that fit everybody's needs. Once the schedule is loaded and out for sale, Jeff and Cheryl, along with schedule analysts from Northwest Airlines, review individual flights' performance to see if any pricing or inventory adjustments are needed. In addition, the market-planning team reviews on-time performance and other operating goals to ensure that the flight schedule fulfills its maximum

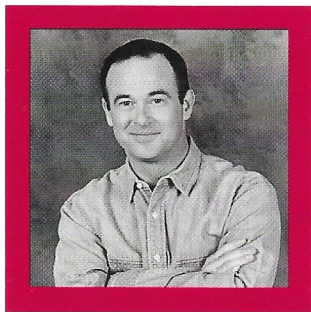
revenue potential.

When Mesaba or Northwest discovers a new-market opportunity, the market-planning department interacts with many of the company's departments. The flight-operations department reviews airport runway data to ensure that the airline can operate safely into the location. The customer-service department reviews facility requirements and potential service requirements. The legal department reviews any potential government requirements. The marketing department explores potential partnership opportunities that could reduce the financial risk of entering the market. These are the efforts that Mesaba Airlines undertakes when exploring new-market opportunities. In addition to this work, the Northwest Airlink planning department completes

a thorough flight-profitability analysis. If the analysis is favorable, detailed market plans are developed by area marketing managers incorporating almost every marketing and sales function at Northwest Airlines. This includes passenger sales, reservations, WorldPerks® advertising, corporate communications, airport customer service and several other functions.

The market-planning department at Mesaba is intricately involved in the growth and success of the airline. Schedules that Jeff and Cheryl and their counterparts at Northwest develop drive the budget and staffing requirements of every other department. The efforts of this small and dedicated group are always focused on the future of Mesaba Airlines.

A Comic Christmas



Jeff Altman

This year's Mesaba holiday party is sure to be a laugh. On Saturday, January 11, at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza at Detroit Metro Airport, Mesaba Airlines will host its holiday party for its associates. Last year the airline decided to rotate Christmas parties between hubs, and this year's party in Detroit should prove to be very memorable. The festivities begin at 6:30 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres and complimentary beer and wine. Of course, there will be soft drinks and a cash bar as well. The menu will feature many food stations offering a variety of delectable foods.

The evening really will get going when comic Jeff Altman takes the stage. To witness a performance by Jeff Altman is to realize that there are still a few people in show business who desperately need medication. Out walks a man who looks like "Larry the lawyer," and suddenly he transforms

into various strange characters who emit spontaneous vocalizations and bizarre incantations. It is the way in which Jeff combines physical comedy with keen honest observations about life that makes him unique and interesting as well as one of the most sought-after comedians in the country — in both television and live performances.

Jeff's first experience with performing came early in life. His dad was one of the finest sleight-of-hand artists in the country, and it wasn't long before Jeff, as well, began to work with cards and coins. He considers sleight-of-hand a rare avocation today, and he has achieved notoriety for publishing many tricks.

Deluded by academic aspirations, Jeff spent four years in Baltimore, where he managed to graduate from Johns Hopkins University. While there he earned not only a diploma, but also a reputation for being a disturbed young man. It wasn't uncommon to see Jeff being escorted out of the Hutzler Reading Room dressed as George Bush. Twice during his college days he visited Los Angeles, spending most of his time at the renowned Magic Castle, an exclusive magicians' club in Hollywood. Intoxicated by the West Coast, Jeff began to realize that his days as a "scholar" were numbered, and soon after graduation he packed up his car and made his way to California. After a six-month stint at the Magic Castle, Jeff began working at the world-famous Comedy Store. It was here, in the club's heyday, where he developed a stand-up act and started to think of himself as a comedian.

It wasn't long before Jeff was tapped for several appearances on

"The Merv Griffin Show" and started performing in clubs across the country. "Suddenly, I was rich," recalls Jeff. "I was amazed that I was able to generate an income over \$3,000 in one year by being a comedian." That wasn't bad; his apartment rent was only \$100 a month, and sometimes if he vacuumed the halls, his rent was cut in half.

Jeff's stand-up and acting has come a long way since then. He is a regular on "The Late Show With David Letterman," has guest starred in dozens of network prime-time shows, such as "Caroline in the City," "Land's End" and "Baywatch," and has produced and starred in two critically acclaimed Showtime specials, "Jeff Altman's Scrapbook" and "Sweet and Meaty." In 1990, he recorded a well-received live album ("I'll Flip You Like a Cheese Omelette," Mercury/Polygram) at The Comedy Store. It features several of his most popular signature pieces. Film credits include "Highlander II," "American Hot Wax," "Soul Man" and "Easy Money." Jeff is one of the most highly pursued comedians by advertising agencies, and he has appeared in more than 30 national campaigns, ranging from Budweiser to Panasonic.

After Jeff's performance, a disc jockey will be playing great dance music well into the night. Don't miss a party that will be unforgettable. Mesaba has secured a great rate (\$59 a night) at the Crowne Plaza for associates and their spouses. Be sure to make reservations and get your tickets early to this year's party. Tickets are only \$10 per person or \$20 per couple. See you there!

Aircraft Cleaning

In the last issue of Flight Times, readers were introduced to the concept of "Perception is Reality." In that article, readers learned that passengers draw a lot of conclusions about quality of service based on what they see. In



fact, anything that passengers see, feel, touch, hear or smell concerning our airline shapes their opinions of our service, for better or worse. Nowhere is this concept more relevant than in the cleanliness of our aircraft. Cleaning Mesaba Airlines' fleet of aircraft every night is a monumental task and requires a lot of planning, labor and resources. As we have grown over the past year, it has become evident that we need help in keeping up the appearance of our fleet.

Mesaba Airlines has negotiated a contract with H and H Services to perform many aircraft-cleaning functions for the airline. Beginning in early 1997, approximately 10 aircraft a night in the Detroit hub will undergo a regimented cleaning process. This will be in addition to the cleaning program

already in place at the Minneapolis/St. Paul maintenance hangar. The contract, valued at over \$500,000

annually, includes two levels of cleaning.

The first level — overnight cleaning — will include the following items on all overnight aircraft in Detroit:

Lavatories will be cleaned thoroughly, including mopping floors, wiping down all surfaces with disinfectant, and thoroughly cleaning the

lavatory unit. Once the cleaning is finished, lavatories will be completely restocked. The galley will be cleaned, including scrubbing the vinyl floor, cleaning galley counter tops and the interiors and exteriors of storage compartments and scrubbing coffee pots and hot jugs. Also, the service cart will receive a thorough cleaning. The cabin will be straightened up, including removing all trash from seatback pockets and lowering and cleaning all tray tables. Cleaners will remove all smudges and marks from sidewalls, kickplates and bulkheads; brush seats and clean interior windows and frames with glass cleaner; remove trash from overhead compartments; and vacuum all carpeted areas. The cockpit also will be cleaned, with all areas being wiped down and all

smudges being removed from the cockpit and flight-attendant jump-seat area. The airstairs will be swept, handrails will be wiped down, and the cargo bins will be cleaned and all trash removed from them.

On several aircraft every night, a second, even more extensive, cleaning will be performed. This will include the above work items as well as the following: Lavatory compartments will be wiped inside and out. In the galley, all walls will be scrubbed and all light fixtures wiped down. In the cabin, debris under seat cushions will be removed, and all lower seatback surface braces and armrests will be cleaned. Additionally, cleaners will damp wipe fire extinguishers and recess areas, clean PSUs and recesses, and clean cabin/entry ceilings, vents, and exterior and interior surfaces of overhead compartments. They will clean and treat leather seats, steam clean carpet and replace soiled or worn carpet. In the cockpit, cleaners will damp wipe visors, armrests and window sills, and will clean the instrument panel, the cockpit door, inside surface bulkheads, and ceilings and walls. Finally, the exterior of the aircraft will be drywashed with a polish to maintain a bright and shiny exterior.

Turn Concern Into Confidence

Flying To The Highest Standards

Regional airlines operate under the same strict federal safety regulations as do major airlines. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) describes the regulations as providing a single standard of safety for all airlines. That means that passengers can be assured that every plane that they board — from jumbo jet to regional turboprop — meets an identical set of safety standards.

Some travelers question the safety of regional airlines. They wonder how closely we are regulated. And often they assume that our personnel are less qualified than the people who work with the major airlines. The truth is, regional airlines are flying to the

highest standards — matching the major airlines in safety and expertise.

This article is an installment of a four-part series from the PLANE SENSE Kit: "Regional Airlines Assurance Campaign." PLANE SENSE is part of a comprehensive communications program developed by the Regional Airline Association to help employees answer passenger concerns with the facts about our industry.

Safety Record Equals That Of Major Airlines

The United States commercial-aviation system — including regional airlines — is the safest and largest in the world. However, many travelers mistakenly believe that flying with regional airlines is less safe than flying with major airlines. The fact is that regionals achieve the same level of safety. According to the FAA and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) statistics, the safety record of regional airlines is equivalent to that of

the major airlines.

On the issue of safety, David Hinson, former FAA administrator, says, "Regional airlines are the fastest-growing segment in the airline industry, but this growth has been surpassed by even stronger improvements in safety. The safety record this industry has achieved and maintained represents aviation's best."

Major Experience, Expertise

Regardless of the size of the airline or of the aircraft that they fly, all commercial pilots are held to the same FAA requirements.

Before ever flying a scheduled flight, regional-airline pilots complete a rigorous training program that includes intensive classroom study and aircraft-systems training. For both initial training and flight training, many pilots use state-of-the-art flight simulators. Captains' flying skills are evaluated by FAA examiners every six months. Co-pilots are evaluated annually.

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Feedback Is The Breakfast Of Champions

As Mesaba Airlines continues to grow, the airline is challenged to maintain a cohesive sense of purpose and vision. This is one of the main reasons why the airline developed and published a corporate vision. As the letter introducing our corporate vision stated, Mesaba Airlines is becoming a great airline because of its people. We would like to believe that all of our associates strive to emulate our corporate vision and its guiding principles. However, it is more realistic that certain associates would identify with these principles more than others and in many ways be considered visionaries of Mesaba Airlines' growth and potential.

Mesaba Airlines will inaugurate a new employee-recognition program that will identify associates who consistently strive for excellence in everything that they do and who emulate our guiding principles and corporate vision. To easily identify and reward associates who exemplify behavior that most consistently matches our vision, the marketing department has abbreviated the airline's 10 guiding principles into the following five general, tangible aims for associates:

- ***Always put our guests' needs first, while acknowledging that safety is our primary concern.***
- ***Treat everyone as you wish to be treated, always beginning with a smile.***
- ***Always strive to do the job right the first time, with the goal of achieving excellence in everything that you do.***

- ***Support, respect and inspire each other, all the while "tearing down walls."***
- ***Treat this business as if it is your own, never use "It's not my job" as an excuse.***

These five principles will be used in identifying individuals in the four employee groups: flight operations, maintenance, customer service and administration. For purposes of acknowledging our large and growing operation, the program will differentiate the east and west regions. This will allow for recognition of associates in both operating environments and will include more employees in the recognition program.

Following the above guidelines will produce the following number of recognized associates per quarter:

	East	West	Qtrly Total	Annual Total
Flight Operations	6	4	10	40
Maintenance	3	3	6	24
Customer Service	6	4	10	40
Administration	-	-	4	16
Total	15	11	30	120

The program is designed to be administered quarterly. The selected associates will be given a special award — the Spectrum Award — signifying their contributions to Mesaba Airlines, and will be invited, along with their spouses or special

friends, to the annual Spectrum Awards banquet to be held in Minneapolis in July.

In the coming weeks, Spectrum Award nomination forms will be available. All associates who have been with the company for at least three months prior to the awards period are eligible to be honored. Any associate can nominate an employee by completing a nomination form. All nomination forms will be reviewed by the Spectrum Award advisory committee, composed of select members of management and the associate group.

Once a year, prior to the annual awards banquet, our president will select five of the Spectrum Award winners to be honored as President's Award winners. These people will have distinguished themselves above all others. Their actions can be and should be used as model behavior for all associates. President's Awards winners will be acknowledged by their peers at the annual awards banquet as well as throughout the entire system during the following year.

Look for the nomination forms at your station, in Detroit and Minneapolis/St. Paul, or at the company's general offices.

Going far beyond the call of duty, doing more than others expect — this is what excellence is all about. It comes from striving for and maintaining the highest standards, looking after the smallest detail, and going the extra mile. Excellence means caring — it means making a special effort to do more.

MESABA AIRLINES

SPECTRUM

A W A R D



Volunteer For The ASSIST Team

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- Help obtain information related to passenger identification
 - Replace damaged or lost belongings of passengers and help in the identification of personal possessions
 - Provide ongoing support as needed
- Throughout the process, **ASSIST** team members will strive to make it easier for passengers and family members to take control of their own situations.

Dee Punton, manager of Ground and In-flight Service Audit, administers our corporate emergency-response program and built a creative partnership with Northwest that allows us to participate in this important program. Dee worked internally with Mesaba's Corporate Education department to bring this training event to Mesaba's volunteer employee group. Since the inception of **ASSIST**, Teresa Read of our Corporate Training department has spearheaded

Mesaba Airlines' involvement in this Northwest Airlines program. In fact, Mesaba Airlines is the only Airlink partner that is involved in **ASSIST**. In an interview with Flight Times, Teresa offered some insight into Mesaba's involvement. "Mesaba and Northwest Airlines have learned a lot from the recent accidents of some other airlines. Should an accident occur, the extent of the company's concern for passengers, crew and the flying public will be measured by the manner in which we react. Prompt, compassionate and positive action will benefit all concerned. We will be judged by how we appear during a time of crisis and by the manner in which we conduct ourselves under the most trying circumstances."

Teresa went on to say, "Mesaba Airlines was able to team up with Northwest Airlines to offer this type of training for our associates who want to help in the event of an accident. Mesaba and Northwest team members will work side by side in the event that either airline has an incident. This cooperation and teamwork give both airlines incredible coverage across the country, which will expedite the airlines' response time to a crisis."

If you are interested in being an **ASSIST** team member, contact your supervisor. Qualification consists of a comprehensive two-day training session that covers:

- Overview of Mesaba and Northwest Airlines Emergency Response Plan procedures

Regional-airline employees are committed to safety behind the scenes as well. Every aircraft is inspected each day by qualified FAA-licensed maintenance crews. In addition, flight crews inspect their aircraft before each flight.

Why FAA Regulations Changed

In December 1995, the Federal Aviation Administration mandated a new set of regulations that establish a single safety standard for regional and major airlines. These standards cover pilot training, rest requirements, safety equipment, dispatching procedures and every other area of airline and aircraft operations.

With the growth of the regional-airline industry and the increasing sophistication of the aircraft, the airlines and the regulators recognized the need for a single set of safety rules that would apply to all commercial passenger-carrying aircraft of 10 or

- Introduction to and background of the **ASSIST** program
- Role of the **ASSIST** team member
- Air disasters and human response to traumatic-stress factors
- Crisis communications skills
- Relating effectively with distressed people
- Making contact with family members
- Practicing crisis management
- Ensuring the team member's own well-being
- Real-life experiences
- Getting the job done
- Northwest Airlines and Mesaba Airlines policies and procedures

Upon completion of the program, employees will decide whether or not they wish to become team members. Should anyone choose not to, Mesaba and Northwest will respect that choice. Employees who choose to join the **ASSIST** team will join a group of associates who are better equipped to deal with people who, should an aircraft accident occur, will be in desperate need of help.

Mesaba Airlines enjoys a perfect 52-year passenger-safety record, and we plan to keep it intact. However, we need to be prepared for any event that may cross our path. The decision of Mesaba Airlines to participate in this program with our partner is evidence of our company's continued commitment to offering safe, reliable air transportation for our guests and a safe and secure work environment for our associates.

more seats.

The industry supported the new regulations. A single standard improves safety and helps to bring travelers' perceptions about regional airlines in line with our actual safety record.

Sharing these facts with our passengers can help them feel confident flying with us — and give regional airlines the credit that we have earned.

For more information, contact:
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Turn Concern Into Confidence

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Regional-airline pilots bring a wide range of civilian and military aviation experience with them to the job. With a median age of 35 years and an average of 6,000 flight hours in the cockpit, they are among the most experienced ever employed by the industry.

Flight attendants for regional airlines also are highly trained and dedicated. Their first priority is the safety of our passengers. For passenger comfort and safety, flight attendants serve on flights with 20 or more passengers. Flight attendants complete safety-based training programs as required by the FAA, followed by recurrent training at least every two years.

Avro RJ85 To Join The Mesaba Fleet

On October 28, 1996, Mesaba Airlines announced that it signed an agreement to fly 12 Avro RJ85 jets for Northwest Airlines under the Northwest *Airlink* banner. The aircraft will be configured in a 69-seat two-class configuration, offering two-by-two First Class seating with a seat pitch of 37 inches, and two-by-three Coach Class seating with a seat pitch of 31 inches.

Bryan K. Bedford, president and CEO of Mesaba Airlines, commented, "The RJ85 will offer cabin comfort that is superior to any other narrow-body aircraft. This jet offers a spacious interior unmatched in the regional market, overhead bins that offer truly ample storage, wide seats, and a convenient handrail built into the overhead bin." He went on to say, "The decision of Northwest Airlines to offer our airline this opportunity speaks volumes of the confidence that our partner has in our associates to deliver a quality product."

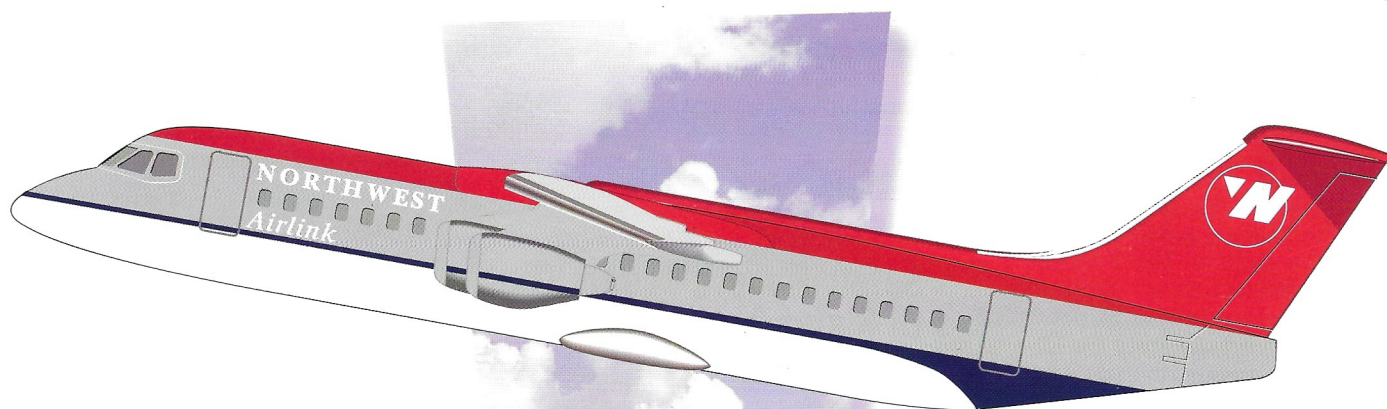
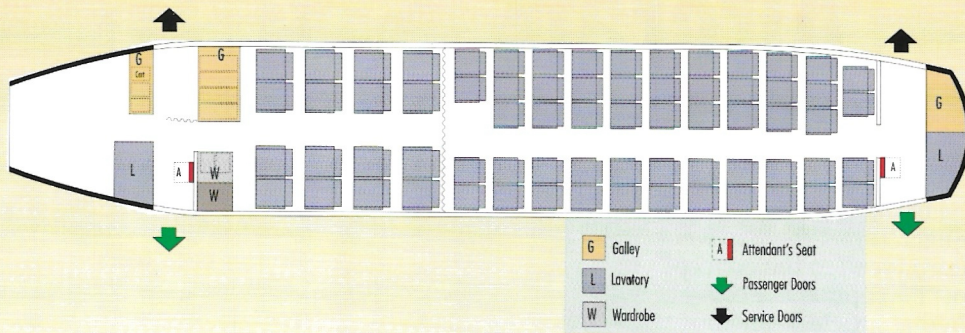
Northwest decided to replace the DC9-10 fleet for many reasons, the most important being that the average

age of these aircraft is 25 years. DC9-10s do not meet the Stage III noise performance requirements, and it is cost-prohibitive to install hush kits on all the aircraft. In addition, the Dash-10 interiors would require the same modifications that the rest of the DC9 fleet is receiving. The airline could not rationalize the cost of making such modifications to 25-year-old airframes.

When Northwest and Mesaba began the search for a DC9-10 aircraft replacement, they looked at a variety of regional aircraft, including the Canadair CRJ, the Embraer 145, the Fokker F-28 and the BAE 146-200, as well as the Saab 2000. All of the regional jets and the Saab 2000 were too small to replace the 78-seat Dash-10. The 50-seat capacity of the regional aircraft would have forced Northwest to sacrifice traffic to potential competitors, and the F-28 and the BAE 146-200 were not readily available and did not meet the reliability requirements for the business plan. Of all the aircraft

considered to replace the DC9-10, the RJ85 met more of the performance and economic standards than any other.

The RJ85 is expected to join the fleet in April 1997 and to go into service in June. Initially the aircraft will serve markets that currently are served with Northwest DC9-10 aircraft. However, the RJ85 has several unique performance characteristics that will allow Mesaba and Northwest to take advantage of many new-market opportunities. The high-performance characteristics of the RJ85 allow this aircraft to operate into airports that have unusually steep approaches (up to 6%) as well as airports that are located at higher altitudes. Northwest Airlines has been very aggressive in marketing to skiers who fly to ski-resort destinations, and the addition of the RJ85 to the Mesaba fleet will allow Northwest to expand its presence to several new resort markets, as well as offering additional flights to existing destinations.



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