

# To Stop Poaching, Air India to Raise Bond Amount to 1 Cr

Air India proposes to increase the bond amount with a 5-8 years time-frame for the new pilots joining the airline. Earlier the airline had made new pilots sign a bond of Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 14 lakh. It is now being revised upwardly. This is in a bid to stop their migration to the competitors. This proposal could lead to a hike the bond amount as high as Rs 100 lacs. AI's new chief Ashwani Lohani is simultaneously working on a twin-pronged strategy -address the root cause of the exodus by promising pay parity between pilots of erstwhile Indian Airlines and AI by mid-December. This has been a long-pending demand and a bone of contention among AI pilots. Lohani says the airline's interests will be protected by introducing the bond of up to Rs 1 crore for new pilots.



Air India currently spends a Rs 25-60 lakh on training of a new entrant to fly a particular type of aircraft after his or her induction, which needs to be recovered if the pilot leaves airline before the mutually agreed time.

“We spend huge sums on type-rating these pilots. These well-trained pilots then leave us and join our rival carriers, who put them direct into flying without any additional training or incurring an extra cost; this is not fair.” Air India sources said. As many as 98 trained pilots quit Air India between April 1, 2014 and October 30 this year to and joined other airlines. (See : [Don't Go](#))



Type rating is a regulating agency's certification of a pilot to fly a certain aircraft type that requires additional training beyond the scope of the initial license and aircraft class training.

Significantly, several domestic airlines in the past have voiced their concern on the so-called poaching of skilled workforce, especially of pilots, engineers and cabin crew by the competitors.

AI had recently started making its new entrants sign a bond of Rs 10 lakh."In the past year, 78 pilots completed their training and joined us after signing the Rs 10 lakh bond. AI's LCC rivals are trying to poach them by offering to pay this bond amount apart from a hike of Rs 1 lakh per month in salary. As a result, as many as 48 of our pilots left us to join them in a one year.

"Instead of hiring unemployed pilots and training them, they use this route to get highly-trained pilots," said a senior AI official.



*After training Pilots become indispensable.*

Lohani told media persons, "It is best that such unethical poaching is avoided. This dirty game can be played with them too by even bigger players. (All Indian carriers are facing poaching by Gulf carriers which offer fancy tax-free salaries). We are contemplating very strict action ."

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Minister of State for Civil Aviation Mahesh Sharma acknowledges this situation. He has indicated putting in place some mechanism to check it. "We can ask the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) to frame guidelines to address this matter," Sharma had said.