

# Worth a medal

## How a Boeing team is helping strengthen Chinese aviation before Olympics, 787 arrival

By MARIBETH BRUNO

**G**ood morning!" the waitstaff chanted. "Good morning!" The workers at a family restaurant near Boeing China headquarters in Beijing had evidently been among the thousands of residents who had received instruction in English and etiquette as part of the city's preparations for hosting the 2008 Summer Olympics.

New English speakers, construction cranes and promotional signs around Beijing are a constant reminder of China's efforts to pull off "the best games ever." The country's aviation industry is part of this picture. Its recent purchases of dozens of new airplanes, including 57 Boeing 787 Dreamliners, were spurred in part by the need to transport visitors to and from the games.

Beyond this defining event, Boeing forecasts that China will need 2,300 jetliners over the next 20 years, making it one of the world's largest airplane markets. That's a lot of change in not very much time. To ensure that its successful relationship with China will continue, Boeing is working closely with the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) and airlines as they prepare for the Olympics and continue to develop one of the world's safest and most efficient aviation systems.

Assisting in this unique task is the equally unique China Support Organization, a Beijing-based customer-support division of Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. "The team that's now known as the China Support Organization started with a major sale of Boeing aircraft to China in the early '90s," said CSO Director Michael Paone. "Both sides understood focused assistance would be required for the country's aviation industry to develop safely and efficiently."

The program's instructor pilots and

engineers provided "miniaudits" and guidance on flight-crew training, flight-operations engineering and maintenance engineering as China's airlines transitioned from their previous Russian systems, training and organizational structure to Western equipment and business methods. One of the first Boeing employees to work on the program was Senior Instructor Pilot Frank Hankins, who became an object of great curiosity on some of his early business trips to rural China.

"The students have always been very receptive and appreciative," Hankins said. "Many of the students I taught years ago are now managers or high-level executives at the airlines or the CAAC."

CSO has grown to two instructor pilots, four flight-ops engineers and four maintenance engineers, plus Paone and one office administrator. Each year, it conducts about 100 classes and seminars for 2,500 to 3,000 aviation professionals in Beijing and around the country—mostly in Chinese, thanks to the group's six Chinese engineers.

Plus, the group jointly hosts about five conferences per year with organizations such as the CAAC, U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, International Air Transport Association, International Civil Aviation Organization and the American Chamber of Commerce.

"We're like unofficial consultants," said Andrew Madar, CSO Associate Technical Fellow for Flight Operations Engineering. "We help with organizational structure, skills training, route design, airport design, regulations—and each skill here keeps in touch with its home [Commercial Airplanes] organization."

Commercial Airplanes Flight Operations Safety regularly sends pilots to make presentations at CSO events and exchanges information with CSO on how Boeing products are being operated in China.

"Long-term relationships are very important in China," said Flight Operations Safety Chief Pilot David Carbaugh. "To have individuals dedicated to supporting the Chinese who are familiar, accessible and understanding is a key element in our China strategy. ... I know when I go home in the evening [in Seattle] our CSO team is starting their day supporting our customers, and that makes my job much easier."

"We also work closely with Commercial Airplanes Sales and CAS Sales," said CSO Technical Specialist Ray Tang. "We identify opportunities for them, or they ask us to assist particular customers."

Pat Gaines, CAS vice president of Customer Support—Asia Pacific, said "Boeing has developed very close relationships with the Chinese carriers, based on a foundation of trust and world-class customer support.



A China Eastern Airlines 737-700 demonstrates an advanced navigation system from Jeppesen, a Boeing subsidiary, with a landing at Linzhi in Tibet. Boeing's China Support Organization helped coordinate the technology demo, translated necessary documents and provided interpretation at the event.

(JOE BURKHARDT PHOTO)

Young Wang (from left), China Support Organization technical specialist, and Andrew Madar, CSO Associate Technical Fellow, Flight Operations Engineering, discuss cost index data with Li Lin, a performance engineer for China Southern Airlines, during an April visit to the airline's offices in Guangzhou.

CHENGGUAN LONG PHOTO



The CSO team, in conjunction with our Field Service offices, has been absolutely vital in providing a solid link between Seattle and the customer.”

One of CSO's most important partnerships with Commercial Airplanes is in preparing 787 buyers Air China, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Hainan Airlines and Shanghai Airlines to take full advantage of the new airplane's e-Enabled capabilities, digital support data system, and training strategy. The group has engineers assigned to each of these areas. It also helped conduct a Service-Ready Conference in Beijing in

October that provided details on the 787's advanced technologies, while addressing infrastructure gaps, materials in need of translation and updates to regulations. CSO continues to act as a liaison in these discussions.

One thing that's already certain is that the 787 “is going to be a life-changing airplane,” Paone said. “It will expand Boeing's presence here and be a major factor in the growth of China's aviation industry.”

It's fitting that a country as determined to grow as China would focus its Olympics on not one but three concepts. “People's Olympics” promises comfort-

able accommodation and a harmonious meeting of China and the West. “Green Olympics” centers on environmental protection. And “High-Tech Olympics” covers the expansion of China's information technology.

It may be a coincidence that these themes—comfortable, environmental, high-tech—fit with the promise of the 787. Or it may be yet another indication of how Boeing, through organizations such as CSO, is listening to its customers and providing them with the tools they need to compete and win. ■

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