

STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL NEW AIRCRAFT DELIVERY: OPERATIONAL PREPARATIONS

Peter Zeeb | October 2019

In our previous article, we highlighted the closing preparations for a successful new aircraft delivery. While the technical and closing phases (insert hyperlinks to each article) are in motion, the operational preparations should be running in parallel.

The timing and structure of your aircraft delivery will vary. In some cases where you are acquiring and specifying a new aircraft, the lead time can be 12 months or more. In more aggressive scenarios like pre-owned or whitetail transactions, there could be a month or less for operational preparations. For the purposes of this article, we will assume the operational team is part of the transaction team and has adequate time to plan.

Step one: Three months before delivery

- Hangar – If this is your first aircraft or your existing facility cannot accommodate the new aircraft, this is a good time to begin to review hangar options. Hangar fees and fuel costs go hand-in-hand. Solicit proposals based on your projected usage. If you have multiple airport options, a more in-depth analysis is recommended to include airport capabilities, runway lengths, proximity to passengers, etc.
- Training – If your new aircraft is a type not currently operated, an initial training plan should be designed to accommodate the delivery schedule. Ideally, at least one pilot and one technician should be trained in time to participate in the delivery process.
- Budgeting – Based on your specific aircraft model and projected usage, develop an operational budget. Don't forget one-time start-up expenses and apply credits you may receive from your OEM.
- Manuals & Policies – Begin to draft or update your various manuals. These can include flight operations manual (FOM), maintenance operations manual (MOM), international operations manual (IOM), and usage policies.

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Step two: Two to four weeks before delivery

As your delivery date becomes more definitive, there are a few additional details to ensure a smooth operational start-up.

- Support Pilots – Based on staffing and training, review your needs to supplement your team with contract personnel immediately after delivery. If the aircraft model is new to you, consider bringing on an experienced contractor to show your team the ropes. Your OEM also has pilot and technical resources that can be invaluable too.
- Operational Standards – Determine your team's safety margins for the first 50-100 hours of operation. It is a smart practice to exclude certain operations or increase weather minimums until more experience is under the team's belt.
- Scheduling – Work with your user group and their executive administrators to coordinate the trip request process. Highlight operational and service elements that will be important to the success of the process.

In the event your aircraft will be managed by a third party, those organizations have a robust onboarding and start-up process. They will handle many of the details outlined above. However, having knowledge of the elements is important for all.

To learn more, contact VanAllen today.