



EIGHTY EMIRATI PILOTS GRADUATE AS EMIRATES KEEPS EXPANDING

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Emirates airline is optimistic about meeting its rising demand for pilots after **80 Emirati pilots graduated** from its national cadet pilot programme.

It was the largest graduating class in the programme's 23-year history. Emirates also said that it would open the Emirates Flight Training Academy by the end of next year.

The Dubai airline, which aggressively keeps on adding routes and frequencies, needs pilots to meet its expansion plans – especially as it has 262 new planes on order valued at US\$120 billion at list prices.

This year Emirates said close to 500 Emirati pilots had graduated from its pilot training programme.

“We will have our own training facility that will open at Al Maktoum at the end next year,” said Gary Chapman, the president of group services and dnata at Emirates Group.

“[The pilot training programme] is a two-and-a-half-year cycle, so in about three-and-a-half years from now, we will be actually training and graduating [pilots] from here in Dubai.”

Mr Chapman added that Emirates spends about Dh1.6 million per individual to send them through a phase of the cadet pilot programme abroad in Spain. Therefore, to have an academy in the UAE would be “a much better solution” for the airline.

“With the ability to accommodate 400 pilots training at the same time, the academy will bring the full training programme back home to the UAE. It will offer training programmes using the latest available technology and advanced aircraft to prepare our cadets to succeed in this ever-changing industry,” Emirates said.

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