



AIR FRANCE - KLM: BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTS BENJAMIN SMITH AS AIR FRANCE-KLM CEO

News / Airlines, Personalities



The Board of Directors of Air France-KLM, meeting on August 16, 2018, has decided to appoint Benjamin Smith as Air France-KLM Chief Executive Officer.

Benjamin Smith is a reputed senior airline industry executive at international level. He has played a major role at Air Canada over the past two decades, where he has been a key player in the airline's economic and commercial development, its transformation, its value creation and the engagement of the teams. Until today, he was Air Canada's President Airlines and Chief Operating Officer.

Benjamin Smith will take up his duties at Air France-KLM at the latest on September 30, 2018. In the meantime, the interim governance structure established on May 15, 2018 will remain in place. Anne-Marie Couderc, non-executive Chairman of the Air France-KLM and Air France Boards, and the Management Committee consisting of three members, will continue to perform their duties until then.

On his arrival, Benjamin Smith will take over executive management of the Air-France-KLM Group and will establish its organizational structure. He will be in charge as a priority to revitalize Air France, to give a new strategic impulse to the Group and to work on a new leadership approach with all Air France-KLM's teams.

The Board has decided that Benjamin Smith will be appointed as soon as possible as director of Air France-KLM, with the full support of the French State. The Board will announce as quickly as possible an updated Group's governance structure as regards to the roles and missions of the non-executive Chairmanship of Air France-KLM and Air France.

Anne-Marie Couderc said: "The arrival of Benjamin Smith is excellent news for the Group. Benjamin is a world-renowned leader in the airline sector who successfully transformed Air Canada. As a man who prefers dialogue, he developed and implemented the historical long-term win-win agreements with the airline's social partners for the benefit of Air Canada's teams, the airline and all other stakeholders. Benjamin Smith will bring his in-depth knowledge of the sector and his unique energy to the job to resume dialogue with Air France-KLM teams around a shared vision and to define a new go-to-market plan that will address the challenges of strong global competition. His on-the-ground experience will ensure a team-oriented approach to increase customer satisfaction and brands value. On behalf of the Board, I welcome and assure him of our total support for the task ahead. The Board also wishes to thank the three members of the Management Committee for their unfailing dedication during this complex transition period."

Benjamin Smith said: "I am very enthusiastic about this new opportunity. Air France and KLM are both airlines well known for the professionalism and commitment of their teams. I am well aware of the competitive challenges the Air France-KLM Group is currently facing and I am convinced that the airlines' teams have all the strengths to succeed in the global airline market. I am confident in the Group's capacity to become one of the world's leading players. I look forward to earning the trust and respect of all teams, working together to win in this highly competitive and fast-changing customer service industry. I am approaching this new challenge with my passion for the aviation sector and with my deep willingness to listen to all stakeholders so we can work together and win. I have spent my entire career in this industry and I am convinced that the teams of the Air France-KLM Group are its strongest assets for its future success. I believe that over the past two decades I have developed very strong trust-based relations with my colleagues at Air Canada and I am looking forward to meeting the teams at Air France-KLM in September to begin working alongside them. I thank the Board of Directors of Air France-KLM to entrust me with this mandate".

18 AUGUST 2018

ARTICLE LINK:

<https://connect.50skyshades.com/news/personalities/air-france-klm-board-of-directors-appoints-benjamin-smith-as-air-france-klm-ceo>