

Lynn Frederick Dsouza
National President, Aviation Council

14th January, 2021

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman
Honourable Finance Minister
Ministry of Finance, Government of India

Subject: Seeking for Aviation sector-specific financial concessions, incentives and policies

Respected Madam,

I am honoured to introduce myself as the National President of the Aviation Council at the Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. At the WICCI National Aviation Council, we collaborate for mutual benefit and shared goals with corporates, governments and other authorities to help develop sustainable value and supply chains as well as define an inclusive regulatory framework for the future Indian aviation industry. We look forward to collaborating with the government for better coordination of industry and government needs, harmonizing regulation of our Indian Aviation Industry and governing and facilitating aviation systems to make aviation more inclusive in India, keeping in mind safety and on-time-performance as our key priorities.

We are dedicated to building a more inclusive and sustainable future for Indian women in aviation, by influencing more women aviators to drive economic growth, increase employment opportunities and generate impact. We are uniquely positioned to gather insights from experienced Aviation Professionals and Businesswomen and organizations from all over India and make recommendations that mitigate the safety risks and represent the interests of a broad array of aviation stakeholders to generate safe, secure and sustainable outcomes which benefit the nation.

Our Mission, Vision and Value Proposition are as below;

- **VISION: To create a sustainable and thriving aviation ecosystem for Indian women in the Aviation Industry for their greater representation and leadership, with engagement and collaboration with government, corporate and other stakeholders.**
- **MISSION: To empower an ecosystem where women in India can aspire and be inspired to step into the Aviation sector with education, access, innovation, solidarity and empowerment.**
- **VALUE PROPOSITION: Broadening the scope and possibilities of the Aviation sector to make it more inclusive, equitable and accessible to Indian women.**

We have a robust National Council which represents women professionals from the Aviation sector and industry from across India. I am privileged to introduce the Aviation Council members;

1. Rachana Gandhi, Vice President - Aviation Analyst Team Leader at Markets & Markets
2. Rakhee Biswas, Council Member - International Aviation Lawyer
3. Nandita Bhatt, Council Member - IAP+, Airport Director, Udaipur, General Manager Arch.
4. Wg Cdr Namrita Chandi (Retd.), Council Member - Sales Manager for India and South Asia at Airbus
5. Bharti Singh, Council Member - Aerospace/Aviation Consultant and Trainer at University of Petroleum and Energy Studies
6. Parul Aghi, Council Member - Co-Founder of AeroLogiks
7. Shalaka Bhardwaj, Council Member - Business Head Aviation with Krystal Group of Companies
8. Swati Ketkar, Council Member - Assistant Editor at MRO BUSINESS TODAY
9. Sandhya Nair, Council Member - Founder of Tailwind Aviation
10. Pooja Rana, Council Member - Sr. Research Analyst in Aerospace and Defense at Markets & Markets
11. Sudha Bhasker, Council Member - Independent Aviation Consultant / Associate - Kenyon International Emergency Services
12. Sahiba Chowdhary, Council Member - Senior Business Analyst at SpiceJet
13. Vijaya Gavhane, Council Member - Assistant Manager; Planning at Vistara
14. Amy Gracia, Council Member - Senior Research Analyst in Aerospace and Defense at BIS Research
15. Rikkee Mishra, Council Member - General HR Manager at AirCrews Aviation Pvt. Ltd.
16. Sonali Bindiya, Council Member - Senior Executive - HR (Aviation & IoT)
17. Rupali Avaghade, Council Member - Aeronautical Engineer R&D
18. Arbeena Khanum, Council Member - Technical officer CAMO and Nodal Officer for Flight Safety Department at Deccan Charters
19. Nilofar Thaaariq, Council Member - Director at Aldebaran Aero and Engineering Services Pvt. Ltd.
20. Hemangi Kadam, Council Member - Aircraft Maintenance Engineer at InterGlobe Aviation Ltd.

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21. Pearlita Lydia Mendes, Council Member - Assistant Manager - Safety & Quality at Jet Airways Ltd.
22. Neha Dhole, Council Member - FEA Engineer - Aero Engines at Capgemini Technology Services
23. Lt Cdr Dhriti Sahay (Retd), Council Member - Senior Research Analyst at Jane's by IHS MARKIT

The National Aviation Council would like to propose the recommendations / policy interventions in the area of Aviation for women, with respect to the upcoming budget:

1. With the ongoing pandemic crisis, we need more testing facilities set up at all regional airports to ensure safe travel and build trust as well as regain load factor on our domestic routes. An appropriate number such as 50% of this testing capacity can be devoted to women led testing centers or with significant women deployment.
2. An appropriate number such as 50% domestic airport stores can be run by female entrepreneurs for which the airport infrastructure companies can be incentivized in order to make preferential allotment of stores.
3. For ferrying passengers to and from airports, all domestic airports can have dedicated taxi services and public transport services. Uber, Ola and other cab aggregators can enjoy reduced airport parking charges if the driver is a lady. This will promote employment of women in the cab aggregation space too.
4. For female passengers, a one percent reduction in base fare as a suggestion to the airline industry can promote more frequent air travel and families encouraging more frequent air travel for women students, family members and corporate executives as well.
5. International cargo only flights could be restarted globally in line with public health corridors and guidelines. An appropriate number such as 50% of staff at these terminals could be women.
6. The Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy have a number of air traffic controllers that are trained in handling military as well as civil air traffic. A significant percentage of these experienced controllers are women, who serve the armed forces on a Short Service Commission (SSC). Well-versed with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPS), these women come with more than ten years of experience in air traffic control as well as airport management. Many of them also hail from tier II and tier III cities, which may fall under the UDAAN scheme. This trained talent pool can be utilized for providing air navigation services at various airports in India. An appropriate number such as 50% capacity of Air Traffic Controllers could be women.
7. The government needs to engage with the DGCA to leverage a broad and inclusive stakeholder community engagement platform of aviation users, an appropriate number such as 50% of which comprise of women, to help make aviation more sustainable in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals by UN.
8. The government needs to engage with the DGCA to leverage a broad and inclusive stakeholder Building resilience is key to analyzing the bigger picture and countering future crises, leveraging regulatory oversight capability and capacity through harmonization to enable better growth and sustainable operations in line with the safety norms, the situation, as well as authorities and ministries. For this, the government is urged to engage their efforts and willingness to contribute to the formation of a COVID Aviation Recovery Strategy for India with an inclusive task force or team with appropriate number of women such as 50% women on board to continuously gather insights on the situation to help counter the ongoing turbulence and mitigate the risks.
9. This is also an opportunity for horizontal diversification and vertical integration in the Indian Aviation Industry. There is opportunity for increasing scope for example by venturing into air ambulance and emergency services and aviation crop dusting, spraying and farming services. Such acquisitions if sought could be preferably from women owned companies.
10. Women entrepreneurs setting up aircraft leasing companies should be provided with appropriate grants and/or loans for the same.

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11. India can further develop its economies of scope in its MRO sector by providing better training and upskilling facilities to support employment opportunities and development. An appropriate number such as 50% of such training and upskilling facilities can be reserved for women to promote equal opportunity.
12. The government must ensure women are hired in equal capacity as men in the Indian aviation industry, especially in MROs to promote Gender Equality. Additionally, all glass ceilings and sticky floors should be eliminated in this sector.
13. Though India has the highest number of women pilots in the world, women representation in MROs is minimal. This anomaly should be addressed by undertaking special drives for women enrolment in AME schools by offering suitable incentives.
14. More financial support in form of lease and rent could be provided by the government to lessors providing infrastructure and facilities for setting up aviation innovation incubators and accelerators to train and upskill aviators as well as launch new aviation businesses and entrepreneurs in the market, to advance innovation and sustainability. Women entrepreneurs should be given an equal opportunity by these incubators and accelerators being dedicated to women trainees and entrepreneurs.
15. Women need to be given better support, grants and opportunities for further postgraduate research studies and R&D in aviation as well as for aviation startups and investment opportunities such as venture capital pitch competitions, etc., especially in Aviation and Space Law, Air Navigation, Aviation Finance and Aviation Cybersecurity, to bridge the Gender Gap in the Indian Aviation Industry.
16. Scholarships for MPL Pilot Training should be provided for the single female girl child in India who wishes to pursue pilot training under this scheme.
17. An appropriate number such as 50% capacity of internship and apprenticeship opportunities should be given to women.
18. Sufficient COVID insurance cover should be made available to women working in the aviation sector as well as for their immediate families.

We look forward to your kind attention and support on the requests that have been proposed.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Frederick Dsouza
National President, Aviation Council
Founder and Director of ESPIRIDI LLP