



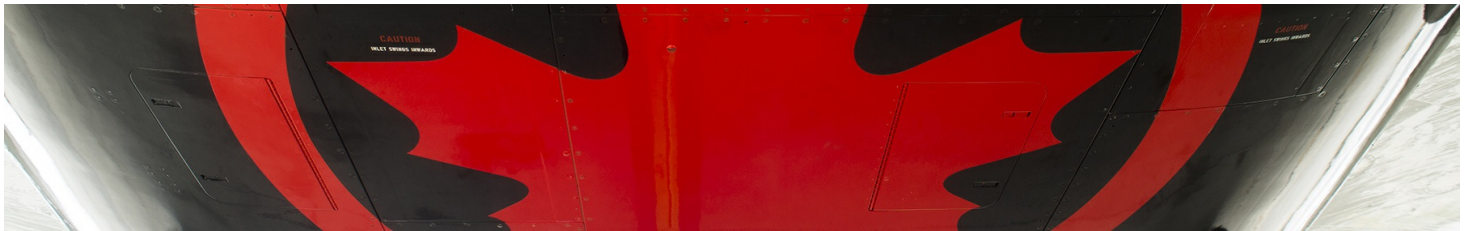
AIR CANADA

[Stories](#)

Letter from Calin Rovinescu, President and CEO: Rising to the Challenge



Mar 01, 2020



Adversity can bring out the best in people, and this is also true of airlines. It was a year ago this month that the Boeing 737 MAX was grounded worldwide following accidents in Ethiopia and Indonesia. It was a prudent move to give international aviation regulators the time to investigate fully, mandate additional safety improvements and revalidate the aircraft.

But for airlines like ours, which was scheduled to have 36 737 MAX aircraft in our fleet by last summer, the grounding also presented the most difficult operational challenges in my 10 years as CEO. It was an object lesson in crisis management of a so-called Black Swan event for all branches of our company, as overnight we lost 25 percent of our narrow-body fleet, carrying around 20,000 people a day or more than 500,000 people a month.

For summer 2020, we were due to have 50 of the aircraft in our fleet. Our company's agility was on full display as all departments – notably network planning, flight operations, fleet planning and maintenance – sprang into action. We rejigged our schedule to redeploy aircraft, scoured the world to lease additional lift, extended the life of older planes due to leave the fleet and drew on Air Canada Rouge and our regional partners to fill in schedule gaps.

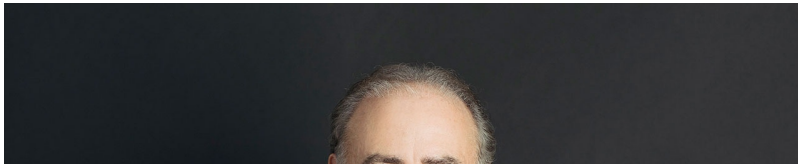
Exemplifying our nimble response, our maintenance division accelerated the entry into service of newly acquired aircraft, readying them for May, four months earlier than planned.

All our efforts were focused on minimizing customer impact, and we successfully operated 97 percent of our planned schedule in 2019. Admittedly, because we had to source substitute aircraft as part of our mitigation plan, you might find yourself occasionally on a flight without our award-winning mainline configuration and full amenities. But we believe that, given the choice, customers prefer an alternate aircraft to having their travel plans disrupted or cancelled altogether.

We are also actively preparing, training our pilots, crews and maintenance employees, for the day the Boeing 737 MAX re-enters service. And while we do not know the timing, we do know that when it does return to the skies, it will have been thoroughly scrutinized and tested by worldwide regulators. And, even then, we will be doing our own safety assessment and taking additional measures, because at Air Canada it is safety first, last and always.

Calin's column appears every month in enRoute Magazine, Air Canada's award-winning in-flight magazine found onboard all Air Canada, Air Canada Rouge and Air Canada Express flights. This edition is from the [March 2020](#) issue.





A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

