

3 July 2018

Canada Jetlines working toward 2019 launch

By: Ben Forrest

Canada Jetlines' new CEO won't say when in 2019 the ultra-low-cost carrier (ULCC) intends to launch, but he appears to be champing at the bit.

"Certainly we want to get going as soon as possible," said Lukas Johnson, who took over June 18, succeeding Stan Gadek.

"Having the aircraft secured and delivered is the first big step."

Canada Jetlines initially planned a June 2018 start-up date, but backed away from that target in March, citing "increased demand and decreased supply" of used aircraft available for lease.



Canada Jetlines is working toward a 2019 launch, citing several recent milestones. Canada Jetlines Image

On June 13, 2018, the airline announced it has signed a definitive lease agreement for two Airbus A320 aircraft, with delivery expected in the first half of 2019.

The sister aircraft are 12 years old, and will be familiar to Johnson, who spent eight years at Allegiant Travel Company, a Las Vegas-based ULCC that took delivery of the first U.S. produced A320 earlier this year.

Allegiant is in the process of converting to an all-Airbus fleet.

"It's the number one ULCC airplane in the world—by far and away the most dominant choice," said Johnson, referring to the A320.

"We're excited to get Airbus up and going in Canada with the ULCCs," he added. "It's the right choice there."

A pre-existing purchase agreement with Boeing for five 737 MAX aircraft was still in place as of June 13, with delivery expected in 2023, according to a news release.

Johnson noted the appointment of Javier Suarez, who will take over as chief commercial officer July 30, and other key hires, as milestones as the airline moves toward its launch date.

"Everything is green light for us as far as getting up and off the ground," he said.