

# Tips to Ensure a Safe Flight with Private Jet Charter

When choosing a private jet charter company for your next flight, there are several questions you should ask to ensure you are receiving not only the safest flight, but the best value for your money.



## What is the experience level of your pilots and how often do they train?

The most important safety component during your private jet charter flight is the experience level of the pilots. To save money, some operators will hire less experienced pilots that meet FAA minimum standards. More experienced pilots cost more money to employ, while a less experienced pilot is willing to work for a lower salary as they "pay dues" and gain experience.

The FAA requires that the pilots for your private jet charter or fractional flight have between 1000 and 1500 hours of flight experience. Many fractional operators, such as Netjets or Avantair, require 2500 hours of flight experience from their pilots. A few jet charter operators just adopt the FAA minimums and only require 1000 hours of experience from their pilots.

Some jet charter operators might hire an experienced captain, but place a low time pilot in the right seat. What if the captain became incapacitated during the flight and the low-time copilot had to take over? What if the pilots experienced an emergency they were not both equally prepared to deal with?

The higher-end private jet charter operators that are safety-minded recruit pilots that far exceed these minimum requirements. Best practices in aviation demand that both pilots assigned to your flight have at least 5000 hours of flight experience, with both pilots captain-qualified. Additionally, top notch operators mandate their pilots attend simulator-based emergency training, such as provided by FlightSafety International and CAE Simuflite, at least twice per year.

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## What is your safety record?

The safety record of an operator is the most important factor in choosing a private jet charter company. An operator who has been accredited by an independent third party places high importance on safety,

and has met a higher operational and safety standard than that regulated by the FAA. You can determine the safety record of the operator in several ways:

- 1) Call the local office of the Federal Aviation Administration, known as the Flight Standards District Office, and ask if the operator has ever had any accidents or incidents.
- 2) Request a third party report from Wyvern, the industry leader in aircraft charter operator safety reports. This report, known as the PASS (Pilot and Aircraft Safety Survey), covers the experience level of the pilots, their training currency, and safety data regarding the charter operator and aircraft.
- 3) Ask the operator what their safety rating is, and if they have had a third party audit of their operations. The main industry auditors are ARG/US, Wyvern, IS-BAO and the Air Charter Safety Foundation. A successful completion of an audit by any one of these organizations is critical to ensure the highest level of safety for your flight.

The right answers to these questions will ensure you have chosen the right private jet charter company for your next charter flight.

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