

# Brett Vance, Host of Jet Jockeys, Warns of Certain Single-Pilot Operations and Aviation Safety: High Stakes in the Sky

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EINPresswire.com/ -- [Brett Vance](#),

aviation expert and host of "Jet Jockeys," the popular docu-reality series focusing on pilots and the planes they fly, warns of the dangers of allowing routine single-pilot operations of two-crew aircraft. According to [Simple Flying](#), Airbus recently announced plans to allow single-pilot operations for their aircraft. Vance says Airbus' announcement raises severe concerns about the safety and reliability of single-pilot operations in aircraft designed for a two-pilot crew, especially in high-pressure situations or emergencies. He argues that while automation has advanced, flight complexities often require a second pilot's judgment and teamwork in the cockpit to ensure optimal decision-making. Vance emphasizes that reducing crew size could potentially compromise passenger safety, as critical issues may arise that a single pilot might struggle to manage alone, ultimately placing lives and the aircraft in jeopardy.



Brett Vance



"In addition to all my years flying as a military and civilian test pilot, I also flew as a line pilot for Delta Air Lines at one point in my career, and shortly after I joined the company, I heard the first rumblings about the idea of the single-pilot flight crew. The big picture for what that looks like, for the unfamiliar, is having only a Captain on the flight deck—and no one else. If that wasn't bad enough, the proposal included a virtual First Officer. That concept was even more brilliant in that

one person in the company's Operations Center would be assigned to serve as the FO for ten separate flights, connected by radio to all ten aircraft. Imagine if that person became engaged with other aircraft having a bad day when you needed that virtual FO for your own aircraft malfunction!" exclaims Vance. Workload would skyrocket, and safety margins would plummet.

Flight crew duties have evolved over the years, especially when the three-pilot crew was reduced to two due to increased technology, safety, and efficiency in modern aircraft. The flying public now takes the two-crew concept for granted, and rightly so, explains Vance. He adds that this reduction in crew size was not just a cost-cutting measure but was facilitated by significant advancements in aviation technology.

"But here's the rub that companies are ignoring for the sake of additional profits. We airline pilots train extensively for the emergency of the 'Incapacitated Crewman.' In that scenario, should one pilot become unresponsive and unable to carry out their duties, the other pilot is trained for—and regularly practices in recurrent training simulator sessions—the emergency recovery of the aircraft and passengers to the nearest suitable airfield while coordinating with emergency responders to handle the medical issue. This is a high-stress and very busy operation for the now single-pilot crew! All pilot duties—flying the jet, running checklists, coordinating with the cabin crew, managing radios, and handling the emergency—fall on the remaining pilot," Vance points out, stressing the urgent need for such training in single-pilot scenarios and "acknowledging that lifelong aviation axiom that no situation is so bad that it can't possibly get worse, imagine that incapacitated-crew emergency divert scenario complicated even more by an aircraft malfunction."

Now, consider what would happen if the pilot of a single-pilot commercial jetliner carrying hundreds of passengers experienced the same incapacitating medical emergency as in a two-crew jet. While the concept of a relief pilot is currently applied to long-haul flights, it is likely being explored for all types of operations. A few single-pilot certified business jets are equipped with an automatic recovery system called Emergency Autoland, which a passenger can activate to automatically land the aircraft safely. However, this technology has not yet been implemented in commercial airliners. Historically, pilot incapacitation in single-pilot operations has almost always resulted in fatal accidents. Although the technology for single-pilot certified—or even autonomous—large-scale commercial flight is beginning to emerge, it is not yet fully realized, Vance concludes, urging caution in its implementation.

Brett Vance, a native of Odessa, Texas, was inspired by the flight operations at Webb Air Force Base and attended the U.S. Air Force Academy.

After graduating, Brett began his military aviation career as a T-38 Instructor Pilot and later flew the A-10 at RAF Bentwaters in England. After graduating from the USAF Test Pilot School, he transitioned to flight testing, serving with the F-16 Test Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base.

Throughout his distinguished career, Brett held vital roles, including positions at the Pentagon,

Deputy Commandant of the USAF Test Pilot School, and Commander of the 514th Flight Test Squadron at Hill Air Force Base. After retiring from the Air Force, he flew for Delta Air Lines and later worked with the FAA as a test pilot, instructor, and evaluator.

Brett Vance has made lasting contributions to aviation safety and innovation in the military and civilian sectors.

[Click here](#) for more information about Brett Vance and Jet Jockeys.

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