

# Dashing Through the Snow (and Gravel)

How the *Dash 8* got **R1 Airlines** into the sky, and why they're not looking back.

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Photo taken by: Michael Vandermark



*Dash 8/Q- Series*

# ISAR

**0001****Applicability: Dash 8/Q100/Q200/Q300****R1 Airlines and the Dependability of the Dash 8**

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The *Dash 8* aircraft is a true representation of R1 Airline's heart, soul and spirit. It truly defines the airline charter company's purpose and reason for existence; getting their customers anywhere they need to be in the world with ease and comfort. With excellent performance, even on short, paved and gravel airstrips, the *Dash 8*, just like R1 Airlines, is boundless, as it is ideal for flights to remote and developing locations.

The *Dash 8* was the chosen foundation that first propelled R1 Airlines into the skies in 2003, and it is the primary reason the company exists today. The *Dash 8* is a versatile, reliable aircraft ideally suited for a variety of environments. It is this versatility that helps the company attract clients, evoking a sense of efficiency and confidence. R1 Airlines currently operates three *Dash 8/Q-Series* aircraft, namely a *Dash 8-100*, a *Dash 8-200*, and a *Dash 8-300*.

In Western Canada, R1 Airlines mainly flies their *Dash 8* aircraft for oil and gas companies, moving workforces to remote locations in and around Alberta and Northern British Columbia. In the rest of Canada, the company provides employee transportation to various industries, travel and leisure flying for remote fishing and hunting trips, tourism charters for golf and ski trips, and incentive travel for big companies. Internationally, R1 has successfully completed several contracts with different humanitarian organizations.

R1 also operated a *Dash-8 200* in Afghanistan for six years for a multinational humanitarian organization. The flights transported humanitarian workers around the

country, medical supplies to hospitals in need, computers and equipment to build offices, vaccines, and much more.

"While working in this environment presented several challenges, the R1 Airlines team and the aircraft met the task successfully – a testament to flying anywhere and at any time for our clients, while taking care of all their needs," says Matt Lomas, General Manager for R1 Airlines.

"The landscape is quite diverse, and you must overcome everything from the desert heat in Kandahar, to gravel runways high in the snow-covered Hindu Kush mountains, to Russian-constructed metal runways in the lush valleys of Faizabad, all in the same day."

R1 Airlines is an Avmax company. It is Avmax Aircraft Leasing that provides R1 with aircraft, and other divisions of Avmax support R1 by taking care of maintenance, spares, avionics repairs and upgrades, engineering solutions, aircraft modifications and interior refurbishing. Avmax refurbished the interiors of all of R1's *Dash 8s*, outfitting them with modern Avionics. Recently, Avmax installed a True Blue Power TB44 lithium-ion battery on R1's *Dash 8-100* after receiving a Part 25 Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) from Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA). The new installation promises efficiency and durability.

When R1's *Dash 8* fleet is away from home, availability to spare parts is not an option. The company's maintenance program reflects this and allows the



R1 Airlines' *Dash 8-103* has been reconfigured and re-pitched with only 20 passenger seats. The aft bulkhead has also been moved forward for extra cargo/baggage space. R1 refers to it as "The ultimate B1900D replacement," saying that "It can go places and carry loads the 1900 can only dream about." ▶

repair as required, beyond the regular maintenance schedules; this prevents unwanted breakdowns. As an operator, the maintenance is regulated by the approved aircraft maintenance publications, and enforced by Transport Canada.

R1 has a comprehensive maintenance program that ensures the safety and security of the fleet and its passengers. The Maintenance Control Manual (MCM) governs how maintenance is performed and controlled on the aircraft, and provides guidance to maintenance personnel on processes that are not covered in the aircraft manuals. The MCM is a manual that Transport Canada must approve on creation and each time an amendment is carried out. The MCM references the General Process Manual (GPM) that provides maintenance personnel with the correct forms and other information to use to ensure compliance with the MCM. Both of these manuals provide the basis for the control of maintenance on R1's *Dash 8* fleet.

"Maintenance needs to be as accurate as possible to ensure that we live up to our image and continued success," states Colin Mann, Maintenance Manager for R1 Airlines and for Avmax Chad. To ensure this accuracy, all members of the R1 maintenance team have undergone approved Transport Canada training through facilities like SAIT. R1 has



access to the largest privately-owned fleet of *Dash 8* through Avmax, which also comes with some of the best knowledge available. The senior maintenance personnel at R1 have in-depth knowledge of the aircraft due to taking a Transport Canada-approved *Dash 8* endorsement course.

As for the future of the R1 Airlines' *Dash 8/Q-Series* family, it will soon grow with a new brand ambassador; an additional *Dash 8-300* will be introduced in the first quarter of 2016. ▶

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**For more information regarding R1 Airlines, you can head to: [www.r1airlines.ca](http://www.r1airlines.ca)  
You can also follow R1 on Facebook, and on Twitter @R1airlines. ■**

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