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MAS expected to announce 4 new top posts this week

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FOUR months after taking over the helm of Malaysian Airline System Bhd (MAS), Datuk Mohd Nor Md Yusof is said to be planning to re-organise the operations of the national carrier as well as revamping the company's top management.

Md Nor, who is MAS managing director, is expected to announce the creation of four new posts under a major management restructuring exercise, which will also see the formation of nine divisions and an office for a foreign technical adviser.

Sources said he will be submitting the names of candidates as chief financial officer, chief marketing officer, chief information officer and chief personnel officer to the Government this week.

These posts are expected to be filled externally, sources told Business Times over the weekend.

Sources described the candidate for chief financial officer as the "top finance man" from Commerce International Merchant Bankers Bhd.

Md Nor had, during his first media briefing in March, said that he had been given the mandate by the Government to acquire new managers, Malaysians or foreigners, to turn around MAS.

He targets to turn around the company within the next two years.

These new appointees will report direct to Md Nor, and will, among them, take charge of nine divisions. Current profit centres - including MAS Aerotechnologies Sdn Bhd, MAS Academy, Malaysia Airlines Cargo Sdn Bhd and MAS Catering Sdn Bhd - will be brought back into the fold of the respective divisions.

The profit centres, most of which have been operating at a loss, were set up following a restructuring exercise a few years ago.

It is understood that under the new corporate structure, the posts of executive vice presidents, namely corporate services, currently held by Datuk Abdullah Mat Zaid; airline, Datuk Bashir Ahmad Abdul Majid; and information technology/corporate planning, Rodzlan Akib Abu Bakar; will be scrapped.

Sources also pointed out that under the new management structure, the managing director will be advised by a team of advisers headed by a foreign technical adviser.

It is understood that Md Nor had over the last few months held talks with the potential candidate, who has had an illustrious career with a well-known airline.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had in February indicated that a foreigner with aviation background may be appointed as MAS technical. He had said that the Government needs someone with the technical knowledge of running an airline.

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