

**MAS staff have 12 days to decide on job offer, says new CEO**  
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**By Muzliza Mustafa**

Malaysia Airlines (MAS) employees will be given 12 days to decide whether they want to join the new company, said the national carrier's new CEO Christoph Mueller today.

"June 1 is (when) new Malaysia Airlines starts trading. Its first transaction is to offer 14,000 jobs," he said.

He said although it was a good day to send out offer letters to the 14,000 employees, it is also a sad day for 6,000 others who would lose their jobs.

"I thank the employees of MAS for their tremendous services," he said to a room full of local media at the NewCo head office in Sepang.

Under Mueller, MAS plans to rebrand itself beginning September 1 and focus on turning the loss-making national carrier around.

He said today that another batch of intake would depend on how many of the 14,000 accepted the job offer.

"We have to indulge in a pretty harsh fitness programme and our restructuring will be based on three pillars. The main one would be to restore our revenue," said Mueller.

He said the restructuring exercise would tap into several key areas, including the renewal of products, renegotiating of major contracts, as well as improvement on IT and employees' skills.

"Our services are not bad but we lack of consistency. Everything is decentralised," said Mueller.

He said IT would play a big and important role in the restructuring of the new MAS as investors were only willing to invest on two key areas, namely IT and service quality.

As for the rebranding of the national carrier, Mueller said he would leave that to Malaysians to decide.

"The brand is strong among loyal customers. The symbol of wau (kite) I think is fantastic. Brand loyalty has increased ever since (the MH370 tragedy)."

He said despite the increase in brand loyalty, negative perception from outside, such as Australia, China and parts of Europe, remained.

"In some countries the brand is beyond repair. The constant repetition of MH370 tragedy, the constant news on searches in Australia, it refreshes everyone's memories," said Mueller.

One example of the impact, he said, could be seen when MAS decided to give away seats for free but could not fill the entire aircraft.

"How are we going to position our aircraft? How we can balance it. Our local market is good but we need to do something about the foreign market," said Mueller, adding that MH370 and MH17 last year had significantly impacted on its business.

During the briefing, Mueller also shared phases of the turnaround plan from this year right to end of 2018, with the aim of breaking even.

He said this year would focus on downsizing, identifying and eliminating sources of losses and renegotiating and resetting of key contracts.

He said that the NewCo only had two assets – two buildings for their operation in Sepang.

He said the OldCo would also be disposing of its assets and businesses in an exercise that may take between one and three years.

"Don't expect for such announcement in six months." – June 1, 2015.

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