

Oman Air to seek more government, market funding

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Oman Air (WY, Muscat) requires more funding due to the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and will both ask the government for aid and raise debt on the capital market, Chief Executive Abdulaziz Al Raisi told Reuters.

Al Raisi declined to comment on the amount of capital needed but said the injections would help the state-owned airline cover its 2022 operating costs. Oman Air currently foresees a return to profitability in 2024. For now, it is continuing to bleed cash, although, at a slower rate than in previous months, Al Raisi underlined.

He said that Oman Air received public funding during the pandemic but would not disclose the amount.

Al Raisi added that Oman Air had taken strict measures to minimise losses during the pandemic and laid off around a fifth of its 5,800 staff. As demand returns, it will rehire some of these employees. The airline is currently operating at 50% of its pre-pandemic capacity but hopes to increase the utilisation of its aircraft to 60-70% in early 2022. Oman Air resumed 2x weekly services from Muscat to Bangkok Suvarnabhumi on November 11, 2021. In December, it plans to reactivate flights to Munich, Zurich, and Kuala Lumpur Int'l.

The ch-aviation fleets advanced module shows that Oman Air operates 51 aircraft: four E175s, fifteen B737-800s, five B737-900(ER)s, eight B737-8s, four A330-200s, six A330-300s, two B787-8s, and seven B787-9s. It has a further seven B737-8s and nine B787-9s on firm order from Boeing. It is currently pursuing membership in Oneworld, with Qatar Airways its sponsor. In early November, the two carriers signed an agreement establishing reciprocal frequent flyer programme recognition.

