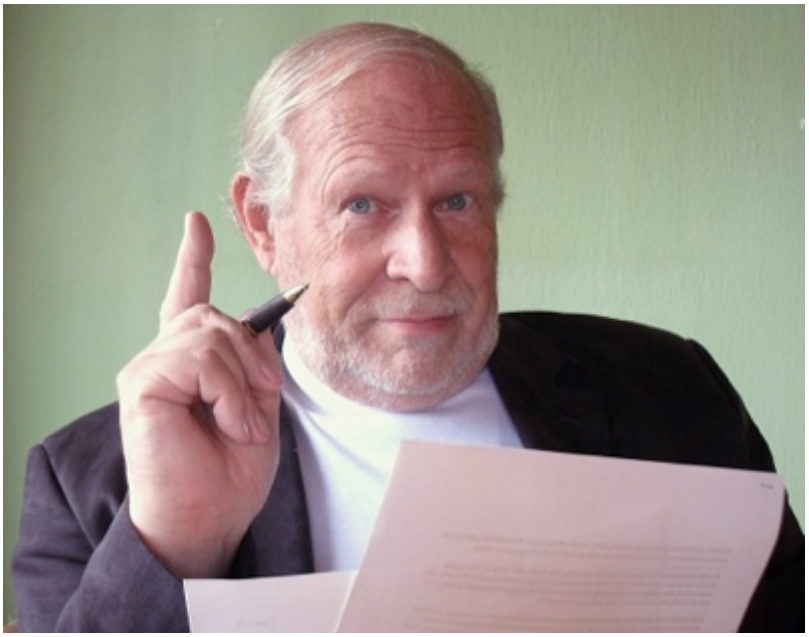
AN EVENT, A VISION, A FUTURE - THE CARIBAVIA VISION FOR CARIBBEAN AIRLIFT

News / Airlines, Business aviation, Events / Festivals

When visiting an aviation event, do you ask yourself a simple question - what is the background it this one, the history, the vision what is the result organisers see at the best result of the event?

I must confess, I do, sometimes, the decision to attend or not is based on same of answers for these questions. During Holiday Season 50skyshades had an opportunity to travel in our mind and to talk with Cdr.Bud Slabbaert, the engine of Carribean Aviation MeetUp, regarding the full concept and vision for Caribbean Airlift. We are glad to share it with you, in details, so please, be patient for two epidodes!



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As Cdr. Bud Slabbaert states - "A vision is the catalyst to raise aspirations for what can become, and to release energies to get there"

Q. What is the start point, when this all has begun?

A. In 2015, a visiting British aviation journalist suggested to me that I would be the designated person to create a Caribbean Business Aviation Association. Knowing the complexities and issues in the region, I rejected the suggestion. Instead, I considered it to be wiser to create a results and solutions oriented communication platform on airlift, and gathering the stakeholders in the region to explore how to proceed and with who. For that purpose, I organized the 1st annual Caribbean Aviation Meetup in 2016 which was held in Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica. Thereafter the Meetups were held in Nassau, Bahamas and on St.Maarten/St.Martin (twice).

Q. As you say - CARIBAVIA brings industries together?

A. 'Airlift' is the common denominator of the interests of stakeholders in the aviation, tourism, business development and investment industries. It is equally important to government decision makers. CARIBAVIA brings them all together for better understanding and increased collaboration. Matters like inter-island transportation and trade, its dilemmas and opportunities require increased attention since they are needed to prepare for future changes in the region.

CARIBAVIA is formatted and shaped towards the current needs and the future opportunities in the Caribbean region which is a dynamic process. Foresight and a view beyond current situations are essential. By heightening the level of communication between all stakeholders, the issues are amplified. The exploration of new ways and means to improve air transportation and the positive impact on economies and communities of the Caribbean region will be intensified. CARIBAVIA focuses on rising the quality and value of the content of presentations and information. Besides informing, much attention will be given to the development of education and training.

Q. It is obvious, you want something more from the concept created, it is not enough?

A. Just organizing an annual conference event is like operating a circus, yet instead of hopping from town to town, it hops from year to year. There needs to be more and more meaningful. It must lead to a long-term objective. After having successfully organized the Caribbean Aviation Meetup four times, I do have a clear picture of what is, what is needed and what the opportunities are to serve the region in the future. The time stretch between now and reaching the ultimate goal of a Vision is only depending on passion, commitment, support and cooperation.

Q. Bud, "simple" question: what are CARIBAVIA's Ultimate Goals?

A. The ultimate goal of the CARIBAVIA Vision is twofold.

- CARIBAVIA Institute of Higher Learning
- CARIBAVIA Airlift Council

It started with a conference:

- CARIBAVIA, Caribbean Aviation Meetup

the next steps towards the ultimate goal are:

- CARIBAVIA TV, video-on-demand platform

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- CARIBAVIA educational and training events
- CARIBAVIA Learning Resource Center
- CARIBAVIA Tele-Presence and Tele-Immersion Facility
- CARIBAVIA Research and Development Center

Q. We are familiar with Caribbean Aviation meetUp, can you tell us a bit more about how it was decided, created, realized?

A. The first phase was to create that platform for communication, the conference which will go by the brand name CARIBAVIA and it is growing in popularity and importance. CARIBAVIA is not just a Conference anymore. Because of the characteristics of the event, it will be renamed to CARIBAVIA Summit & Retreat. Summit stands for a top meeting of leaders. Retreat relates to an undisturbed time to get back on track, re-energized and focused. The event is held in an exotic tropic Caribbean environment, rather than in a metropolitan location adds to the appeal. The word conference is used everywhere and all the time for gatherings of people, be it live, or nowadays increasingly virtual. CARIBAVIA Summit & Retreat shall be an innovative conference model with added benefits for audience, speakers and sponsors. It will be reasonably priced for participants and cost-effective for sponsors. CARIBAVIA Summit & Retreat shall always remain CARIBAVIA's flagship event. It shall be a sustainable development in conferencing that will be unique and stand out and It shall be the 'mouthpiece' of CARIBAVIA's symbolic and philosophical values.

Q. After such a challenging and crazy 2020, we are very much looking forward Caribbean Aviation MeetUp 2021?

A. In 2021, the CARIBAVIA Summit & Retreat will be held June 15-17. Workshops or side events may be held in the days before or after the main event. The 2020 made us be "creative" so the idea of CARIBAVIA-TV was born. CARIBAVIA-TV will be developed as an online video-on-demand platform to air and stream audio-visual presentations.

Recording the presentations of the conference and making them available for larger audiences is a logical step. Separate from the presentation, professionals of interest may be interviewed. As part of the conference, workshops will be held. These may also be video recorded.Contrary to webinars and live streaming, the video-on-demand productions related to aviation, airlift and travel matters in the Caribbean region and beyond can be viewed at any convenient time, by individuals or audiences worldwide. With the development of CARIBAVIA-TV, online educational programs will be created.

CARIBAVIA will focuse on educational and training events: Learning will raise the levels of competence and capability. CARIBAVIA will arrange for workshops and other educational and training events. There will be a need for classrooms for the workshops that are not held during the annual conference. CARIBAVIA also aims to develop a pedagogical platform on the internet.

Now, something you've never heard about before -CARIBAVIA LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

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As the task of CARIBAVIA is growing and the activities are increasing, the organization needs to have a shelter and domicile. It needs office space, classroom facilities, and studio for video production. It may begin with providing CARIBAVIA with a location which may initially become a Learning Resource Center. However, it is possible that CARIBAVIA may operate from more than one location depending on the kind of activities that will be carried out.

From within the facilities of the CARIBAVIA CENTER

- the annual CARIBAVIA SUMMIT & RETREAT will be organized
- the CARIBAVIA-TV online video-on-demand platform activities will be executed
- the CARIBAVIA educational and training events will be organized

Q. Amazing, in fact each part of the concept, of your vision for CARIBAVIA is a logical base to generate the next one?

A. Exactly! The CARIBAVIA Learning Resource Center shall establish an Education and Public Outreach program created to advance awareness and understanding of all issues dealt with in the various CARIBAVIA activity segments. The CARIBAVIA Outreach Program aims to maintain contact with the community at regular intervals. The program shall become a powerful information and education platform to serve a wide range of audiences.

Since the Outreach Program is a variation of focused public affairs activities that are specific to education and dissemination of information, its programs shall include:

- Awareness, skill-building, activity and/or classroom supplements
- Create volunteer opportunities
- Student or community-based contests and awards

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To be continued! The information is so precious that we want to be sure you get every single phrase of it!

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