Young participants selected for the Alitalia-Etihad Airways Cadet Pilot Program

- After a 10 year hiatus, the Alitalia Training Academy has resumed operation.
- Cadets will undergo two years of training in Italy and the UAE, co-funded by Alitalia.
- Successful cadets will start their piloting careers at Alitalia CityLiner

*Rome, Abu Dhabi 23 September 2015* – Alitalia today announced that it has selected 24 young participants aged between 18 and 27 years, to attend the joint Alitalia-Etihad Airways Cadet Pilot program.

More than 550 candidates applied to join the two-year training course, which will take place at Alitalia’s training centres in Italy, and at Etihad Airways’ training facilities in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Upon successful completion of the course, cadets will receive necessary licenses to become pilots at CityLiner, Alitalia’s regional airline, which operates a fleet of 20 aircraft including five Embraer 190 and 15 Embraer 175 regional jets. New pilots will commit to flying for Alitalia for a minimum period of 36 months.

Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, Alitalia’s Chairman, said: “Today is an important day for Alitalia and the Italian civil aviation sector as a whole, whose track record for the training of airline pilots is recognised around the globe.

"Training and investing in young people is a commitment which Etihad Airways shares with Alitalia, right from the very first day of this unique partnership, adding value to the commercial relationship between the two companies."

James Hogan, Etihad Airways’ President and Chief Executive Officer, said: “By ensuring that these talented cadets are exposed to the best pilot training at our world-class facilities in Italy and in the UAE, we guarantee our continued access to a pool of highly skilled aviators well into the future.”

The Alitalia Training Centre for Pilots, which in its 60-year history has trained thousands of Italian pilots, has resumed operations after a ten-year suspension of activities. Historically, the centre has been globally recognised as being a pillar of commercial aviation in Italy.

The first eight cadet pilots left for Abu Dhabi last week, where their initial training will take place. They were accompanied by Alitalia captain Giuseppe Borgna, who is in charge of the project.
The group of 24 participants was selected by Alitalia after completing an extensive set of aptitude, psychological and physical tests.

The start of each training course will be staggered over the coming weeks, and by the end of 2015, all 24 cadet pilots will have commenced their training.

The first part of the course is dedicated to theoretical and practical classwork, followed by the first training test flights at the Etihad Flight College in Al Ain, an hour’s drive from Abu Dhabi.

The second part the course will be held at the Alitalia Training Academy at Rome Fiumicino, which is equipped with seven flight simulators, and managed by a dedicated team of the airline’s pilot instructors.

Upon successful completion of the course, scheduled for summer 2017, Alitalia will employ the new pilots under long-term contract.

To assist cadets with the cost of pilot training, Alitalia is making a contribution to each trainee, investing a total of over one million Euros. Previously, pilot trainees were expected to shoulder the cost of training without sponsored assistance. The airline has also entered into an agreement with UniCredit to offer cadets a bespoke loan scheme.

In preparation for the addition of new wide-body aircraft to the Alitalia fleet, the airline, together with Etihad Airways, is currently in the process of planning more Cadet Pilot programs to meet future growth and demand.

The re-opening of the Alitalia Training Centre for Pilots, and the associated Cadet Pilot program, has been made possible due to the involvement of the Italian Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC), which reviewed and endorsed the training course.

In addition to the Cadet Pilot program, Alitalia and Etihad Airways also promote similar training initiatives for graduates and engineers, which to date have welcomed 47 participants in both Italy and the UAE.

**Photo caption:** The first eight Alitalia cadet pilots at the Etihad Flight College in Al Ain, UAE. Alitalia Embraer aircraft.

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About Etihad Airways
Etihad Airways began operations in 2003, and in 2014 carried 14.8 million passengers. From its Abu Dhabi base, Etihad Airways flies to 113 existing or announced passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas. The airline has a fleet of 116 Airbus and Boeing aircraft, and more than 200 aircraft on firm order, including 69 Boeing 787s, 25 Boeing 777-X, 62 Airbus A350s and eight Airbus A380s. Etihad Airways holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Aer Lingus, Alitalia, Jet Airways and Virgin Australia, and is in the process of formalising an equity investment in Swiss-based Etihad Regional, operated by Darwin Airline. Etihad Airways, along with airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Alitalia, Etihad Regional, Jet Airways and NIKI, also participate in Etihad Airways Partners, a new brand that brings together like-minded airlines to offer customers more choice through improved networks and schedules and enhanced frequent flyer benefits. For more information, please visit: www.etihad.com

About Alitalia
Alitalia - Società Aerea Italiana (alitalia.com) is Italy’s largest airline and commenced operations on January 1, 2015 after acquiring the operational activities of Alitalia - Compagnia Aerea Italiana, now named CAI. CAI has a 51% controlling stake in Alitalia and the remaining 49% of shares are owned by Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates. As part of its 2015 summer schedule, Alitalia flies to 102 destinations, including 27 Italian and 75 international destinations, with a total of 164 routes and about 4,500 weekly flights. Alitalia boasts one of the most modern and efficient fleets in the world with an average age of eight years. It is a member of the SkyTeam alliance and is part of the Transatlantic Joint Venture alongside Air France-KLM and Delta Airlines. Alitalia, together with airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Etihad Airways, Etihad Regional operated by Darwin Airline, Jet Airways and NIKI, also participates in Etihad Airways Partners, which brings together like-minded airlines to offer customers more choice through improved networks and schedules and enhanced frequent flyer benefits. Alitalia and Etihad Airways have been named Official Global Airline Carriers of Expo Milano 2015.