



## CAREER PROFILE: PILOT LEIF AUSTAD



Aircraft pilots are critical to the mining industry for their roles in gaining access to remote exploration camps and mine sites. Pilots are responsible for safely transporting people and freight. They have a broad understanding of aircraft, weather, and navigating mountainous terrain. Their work is challenging and technical as they oversee the operation of multiple aircraft types.

Leif Austad completed training for his commercial pilots license with Whitehorse Air flight school in 2008. He has worked at Alkan ever since and currently has about 6500 hours and is type rated on 4 aircraft.

### KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, & SKILLS

- Safe operation of all flights
- Critical reasoning skills and problem solving skills
- Attention to detail
- Excellent teamwork and communication skills
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Pilots in the Yukon will gain experience with remote flying, sometimes to unmarked or gravel airstrips

### EDUCATION, TRAINING, & CERTIFICATION

Getting a Private Pilot License (PPL) is the first step towards becoming a pilot. This license includes 60 flying hours, and the average time for full-time students to finish their PPL is around 3-6 months. Next, a Commercial Pilots License is needed. This license includes 190 flying hours and 20 flight simulator hours; the average time for a full-time student is approximately 12 months. Both licenses can be done in Whitehorse at the Alkan Air Flight Training Unit.

The cost of a Pilots License is a significant undertaking. However, like all higher education courses, this is an investment into yourself and your career. Medical examinations will be required to determine if students are medically fit for aviation.

### SALARY RANGE\*

\$90,000 - \$125,000/year

\*Wage average as of June 2023.



*“Watching the seasons change across the landscape on the way to and from site is one of my favorite things about being a pilot. One of the best perks of the job is the view from the office.”*

*- Leif Austad*