

# Status could add Cascade flights

Federal airline certification for Cascade Airways could have a "significant impact" on Walla Walla.

The new status, if approved, possibly would mean more traffic for the airline, along with additional flights out of the Walla Walla airport, according to a Cascade official.

And, new, faster planes for its air fleet.

The president of the airline commuter airline, Mark M. Chestnutt, said Monday that the firm plans to ask the Civil Aeronautics Board for the new status.

The airline firm, based in Spokane but with its maintenance operations based in Walla Walla, presently is exempt from CAB, Chestnutt said.

He said the airline seeks certificated status because of increasing passenger loads.

"We can't operate any longer as a commuter," Chestnutt said.

He said Cascade now is handling about 16,000 passengers a month. For December 1976 the firm had fewer than 9,000 boardings.

"To date in 1977 we have in excess of a 60-percent-increase," said Mark

Nilson, director of sales and passenger service for Cascade.

He said the December 1977 totals could "possibly double" those of one year ago.

Nilson said the approval of a certificated status for Cascade would provide major advantages and opportunities for expansion by the firm.

He said that under certification, fares and schedules of Cascade would be published throughout the United States, making it easier for travel agencies outside the Northwest to book passengers into this area.

"This is a mandatory program and would be a big benefit, enabling us to market our service over the U.S. and hopefully would add traffic," Nilson said.

In recent weeks, Cascade expanded its Walla Walla flights from 92 a week to 144 weekly.

The certification status would have another benefit, Nilson said. It would provide capability for the firm to obtain a federally-guaranteed loan for Cascade's plans to upgrade its air fleet.