

Cascade, Horizon expect few changes

Walla Walla's maintenance center for Cascade Airways Inc. will "probably not" be affected under a purchase agreement with Horizon Airlines Inc., officials from both companies said this morning.

Horizon announced Friday it will buy 98 percent of the outstanding shares of Cascade stock. But Brook Fox, president of the Spokane-based Cascade, said today the plan is to operate the airlines as "two separate entities for the foreseeable future."

In addition to serving as Cascade's maintenance center, Walla Walla is also the home base for the airline's crews. "As of this moment," Fox said, "we have been led to believe that will not change after the purchase."

Milt Koult, chairman of the board of Horizon, said, "We anticipate very little change in operations with the purchase. It won't all be put under the Horizon name."

The companies expect the transaction to be completed within 30 days. Officials would not disclose the purchase price.

Cascade, in operation since 1969, serves 15 airports in Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Montana. The 2-year-old Seattle-based Horizon serves 14 locations in Washington, Idaho and Oregon.

In January, Horizon announced it had acquired an option to purchase all outstanding shares of Transwestern Airlines of Utah Inc., and planned to operate it as a wholly owned subsidiary. Horizon also merged with the Portland-based Air Oregon within the last year.