

Rick Leach is a long-time aviation industry veteran, having worked in the industry for 39 years. His airline career began after college with Air Illinois, where he started out working in Customer Service and Operations. Shortly thereafter, he was recruited by Jet America Airlines, starting as a customer service trainer at their new St. Louis operation. During his tenure at Jet America, he also held the positions of City Manager of the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area operation and City Manager of the St. Louis operation -- positions in which he was responsible for all aspects of the airline's operation throughout the region. When Jet America was acquired by Alaska Airlines, Mr. Leach assisted with the merger of the two airlines until it was completed at the end of 1987.

Choosing not to relocate his family back to the West Coast, in February 1988, Mr. Leach joined the privately held Resort Air as their Director of Stations. In this role, Mr. Leach was one of the principals who helped lead this small airline through a significant growth and certification process, assisting with the conversion from 135 to 121 operations, as well as the certification of its new ATR fleet. In 1989, the airline changed its name to Trans States Airlines, and Mr. Leach was promoted to Vice President. In 1998, he was promoted into the role of Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, and in 2003, he was promoted to President and Chief Executive Officer of Trans States Airlines, as well as President of Trans States Holdings, Inc., the airline's parent company.

In 2005, Mr. Leach founded GoJet Airlines, which became the second airline owned by Trans States Holdings. The Trans States Holdings family of airlines grew to three in 2010 when he negotiated the purchase of Compass Airlines from Delta and became President and Chief Executive Officer of these two airlines as well.

In 2019, GoJet was selected by United to operate the CRJ-550, an innovative new product within Bombardier's successful CRJ family of equipment. The 50-seat CRJ-550, which was designed and developed by Mr. Leach, has revolutionized the regional flying experience by offering enhancements unavailable not only on other regional jets, but narrow body mainline jets, as well. The CRJ-550 is the world's only multi-cabin 50-seat regional aircraft that offers true-first-class seating, an on demand First Class beverage and snack center, an economy Plus (extended legroom) section, Wi-Fi and inflight entertainment, in seat power, ample leg room throughout and enough space for every customer to bring a roller bag on board. The CRJ-550 has been widely lauded by industry analysts as "a Game Changer" and has proven that a true premium product is possible in the regional space.

From Mr. Leach's arrival, Trans States Holdings grew from a carrier with 12 19-seat Metroliners, to one of the largest and most innovative regional airline holding companies in the market.

Mr. Leach has served on the Board of Directors of the Regional Airlines Association for almost 25 years and has held executive positions including Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Chairman and Chairman. He currently serves as the Board's Immediate Past Chairman. He has also been recognized as the Regional Airline Executive of the Year by Regional Airline World.

Mr. Leach has been recognized by other professional and civic organizations for his accomplishments and has served as Chairman of the Board for various organizations throughout the St. Louis region. He resides in suburban St. Louis with his wife, Mary, and has five children.