

Holland's King Lives His Other Life

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Commercial /kə'mərSHəl/ (adjective) relating to businesses and their activities
Example: The average American sees and hears thousands of commercial messages each day.
2. Obtain /əb'tān,äb'tān/ (verb) get, acquire, or secure something.
Example: The police obtained a confession..
3. State visit /stāt 'vizi/ (noun) a ceremonial visit to a foreign country by a head of state.
Example: She paid a state visit to England.
4. Disengage /,disən'gāj/ (verb) separate or release (someone or something) from something to which they are attached or connected.
Example: A crew member disengaged the autopilot after the second turn..
5. Welcome /'welkəm/ (verb) greet (someone arriving) in a glad, polite, or friendly way.
Example: Hotels should welcome guests in their own language.



Next time you fly, the pilot might be a king. Holland's King Willem-Alexander has been flying planes for 26 years. He used to fly for KLM for 21 years without his passengers knowing. When the airline retired the type of jets that he was flying in 2017 that's when his royal highness revealed his secret to the public. Now, he is flying the Boeing 737.

The 54-year-old king got his military pilot's license with the Dutch Air Force in his twenties. He developed a love of flying and became a **commercial** pilot. He **obtained** his license to fly Boeing 737s in June 2017. He also flew himself and Queen Maxima to Norway for a **state visit** last November 2021.

King Willem-Alexander said flying meant he could relieve his stress. He explained: "You can't take your problems from the ground into the skies. You can completely **disengage** and concentrate on something else. That...is the most relaxing part of flying."

He said it was easy to keep his secret. He said very few passengers knew he was their pilot. He said he always **welcomed** passengers on behalf of the captain and the crew. He never told them his name.

DISCUSSION

1. What kind of secret life would you like to lead?
2. Should the king get a salary for his flights?
3. Who would you like to be pilot of your plane?
4. Do you think KLM should have told passengers the pilot was the king?
5. What do you do to relieve your stress?
6. Should all kings and other royals do normal jobs too?