

## CAL denies refusing to hire Jamaicans

General Manager of Caribbean Airlines (CAL), Jamaica Operations, Clive Forbes has dismissed claims that the airline has refused to employ Jamaicans.

Forbes said CAL, which operates the Air Jamaica brand, is promoting the best of skills set from across the Caribbean and this involves integrating the best of service and crew. "We are an integrated airline and have the same zeal and passion that was known of prior to the merger. Most of our employees are Jamaicans and the bulk are employed from Air Jamaica. Basically, we rotate staff and place them on different routes as part of the integration process. This is not done frequently either," Forbes said. The general manager said there were more than 60 Jamaican pilots and more than 140 Jamaican flight attendants employed to Caribbean Airlines. "Our in-flight team and security has had an enviable record and are some of the best in the world. We have, in most cases, a full Jamaican outfit that stretches to most operations locally," Forbes said. Forbes, who joined CAL in May of this year, said they are raising the bar in terms of service, more so since they acquired the rights to all the routes used by Air Jamaica. CAL, he said, has the rights to both Caribbean Airlines and the Air Jamaica brands, with the Trinidad and Jamaica governments being joint owners of the Air Jamaica brand. However, Trinidad and Tobago are the major stakeholders with 84 per cent of the ownership, with Jamaica holding the other 16 per cent. He said there is a mixed fleet with dual branding. "Air Jamaica's is still on the aircrafts and Caribbean Airlines's, which is below that, states that it is operated by CAL," Forbes said. Drop Air Jamaica brand Recently, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in Trinidad instructed Caribbean Airlines to drop the Air Jamaica brand from its aircraft. CAL is not licensed to operate two brands but has been doing so for more than a year, following its acquisition of Air Jamaica's routes. For CAL to use the AJ brand, it would have to register a new airline in the name of Air Jamaica. Forbes said CAL had received recommendations from CAA and "a task force has been formed to sort out the concerns regarding the brand utilisation and route profitability, and other issues going forward";