

# Air France gets new CEO

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Air France on Wednesday appointed a new chief executive, who will have the difficult task of piloting the airline out of difficult relations with its unions that have hobbled its performance.

The airline, which is allied with Dutch airline KLM, promoted its deputy CEO in charge of customer service, Anne Rigail, to the top job.

Her appointment caps a difficult year for the airline.

A series of strikes in early 2018 caused hundreds of millions of euros in losses and forced Air France-KLM group CEO Jean-Marc Janillac to leave as well as the leadership of Air France.

Unions representing a majority of Air France employees eventually accepted a management offer of a four-percent pay rise to be spread over 2018 and 2019 in October, but two pilots unions are still holding out for additional raises.

The airline group also has a new CEO, Canadian Benjamin Smith, who was previously chief operating officer of Air Canada.

Rigail, who has worked at Air France for over two decades, also has the challenge of leading the airline's continued restructuring efforts to compete with low-cost carriers like Ryanair and Easyjet.

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