



The Association's Record Keepers

▶ Accurate member records are critical to every aspect of an ALPA member's connection to the Association: the member's status, as documented in ALPA's database, will determine whether he or she can participate in any ballot, hold elective or appointed office, or buy and maintain any of ALPA's many member benefit plans. Communication with members and timely response to their needs is taken very seriously in ALPA's Membership and Council Services Department.

The Department's staff handles a myriad of responsibilities in its service to members, ALPA officials, and other ALPA staff. The Department carries out four primary functions in its day-to-day operation: it creates and maintains individual member records, administers the ALPA-sponsored member benefit plans, oversees elections and balloting, and provides administrative support for local executive councils. The hard work and careful coordination of this competent and knowledgeable 24-person staff is the key to keeping ALPA's record-keeping, and other member support services, functioning effectively.

The Department, like the rest of the world, has seen a shift in communication methods. As more members find themselves spending significant time away from home, they tend to communicate with staff via e-mail and request responses via e-mail or cellphone. "The days of receiving handwritten letters from members and answering their inquiries by the U.S. Postal Service are becoming a

thing of the past," says Betty Swisher, who has been an airline analyst for 10 years. "Members want to be able to ask and receive answers as quickly and easily as possible."

A recent enhancement has been the "My ALPA" portal on Crewroom.alpa.org. Department Manager Joan Gallahan and her team worked closely with the Communications and Systems Development Departments on the design and information flow in the hope that providing real-time account and contact information along with links to ALPA's insurance products, election guidelines, and representatives' contact information would better serve the members' need to access this type of information when convenient for them, which is often in the evening and on weekends.

"We have tried to find ways to automate information and make it convenient and available 24/7 on Crewroom.alpa.org," says Gallahan. "But we want to make sure that all members know that we're here to help any way we can, no matter how large or small."

Eight airline analysts maintain all member records for all member classifications. A common misconception

is that fewer active members means a reduced workload for the Department. The airline analysts are responsible for

- keeping member accounts (dues, insurance, assessments, etc.) and personal data records accurate and up-to-date as required for a member to participate in Association affairs, including receiving informational mailings and news about local council

Membership and Council Services is one high-tech department that periodically retools to improve efficiency.

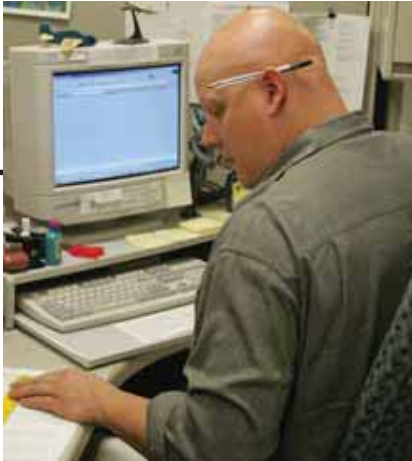
meeting activities and union elections;

- providing the appropriate member credentials to each member;
- protecting ALPA's members by treating all data concerning any member as confidential and making Association records available only to those authorized to receive them;
- addressing members' dues delinquencies to ensure that all members are treated equitably and that they

Some of the Membership and Council Services Department's 24 staffers are, from the left, Amy Eno, Joan Gallahan, Tyler Home, Sandra Titcomb, Duane Hyland, Debbie Chernay, Terrance Gibbs, Leslie Bernard, Josseline Wood, and Cecilia Lee.



PHOTOS: GARY DINIENNO



Membership and Council Services Department staffer Richard Bowers reviews ALPA members' information in the Association's database.

share in the financial support of the Association; and

- enforcing agency shop provisions.

ALPA also offers its members carefully selected and administered group insurance programs to support a member's need for life, loss-of-license, disability, long-term-care, and accident insurance. ALPA's National Retirement and Insurance Committee develops, reviews, and makes changes to the plans as dictated by ALPA members' needs and the economy.

The Membership and Council Services Department administers the plans and markets them via the U.S. Postal Service, e-mail, and the Internet. A member wishing to apply for any of the ALPA-sponsored insurances submits the appropriate application to the Membership and Council Services Department, and the insurance analysts will seek approval of applications and bill approved members.

Membership Services Supervisor Tyler Home is working closely with ALPA's Finance and Systems Development Departments to develop and implement new software platforms for database and pilot account management, which will improve efficiency and usefulness for ALPA's members. Primary among the platform changes will be ALPA's transition to a web-based accounts-receivable and billing system in the spring

of 2006. This system will replace ALPA's existing billing system and unify the maintenance of pilot demographic data and billing information in a single application.

The system will also provide ALPA's members with a single, easy-to-understand billing statement for all obligations, expand bill delivery and payment options, and afford pilots greater access to their own account information via online web interfaces.

Home is also looking to the future and the development of online membership applications. "This will allow new members to complete their membership applications via a secure website, and submit them to an electronic workflow through which local council representatives can approve them, and forward them to Hernon," he predicts.

All of ALPA's elections and balloting are initiated with a staff of two who ensure that all balloting is conducted in accordance with Association voting procedures and the ALPA Constitution and By-Laws. The balloting staff is well versed in ALPA election procedures and requirements on a variety of subjects such as local council nominations/elections, master executive council ballots and elections, Executive Board and Board of Directors ballots, and special ballots including all-member ballots and strike authorization ballots.

The elections and balloting staff's workload has changed significantly since 9/11 as more ALPA carriers have seen the need to ballot their members on issues such as furlough assessments and ratifications of tentative agreements and letters of agreement.

Currently, the staff is preparing for the fall nomination and elections for 38 local councils with terms of office expiring on Feb. 28, 2006. As each election season passes, the staff members are finding new ways to streamline

and improve processing. "This year," says Balloting/Council Services Supervisor Amy Eno, "we are expecting to communicate earlier and more frequently with the local council officers and members, alerting them to the nomination ballots they will receive in their mailboxes in early September."

The newest addition to the Membership and Council Services Department was the integration of the Council Services Coordinator (CSC) staff. When the ALPA Print Shop closed last year, the reengineering effort brought this staff under the Finance Department umbrella and ultimately the wing of Membership Services. The CSCs provide direct administrative assistance to local council representatives and officers and act as liaisons for all ALPA services. The five CSCs coordinate meeting notices with the Publishing Services Group, arrange meetings at hotels throughout the country, process council correspondence, and initiate orders for office automation equipment through the Purchasing Department.

Need Membership help?

If you ever have an issue with an account, a need to update your contact information, a request for new credentials, or any other membership inquiry, the staff is available 8:30-5:30 ET to help you. You can find your airline analyst's contact information in the back of *Air Line Pilot*, or you can call 1-888-FLY-ALPA (359-2572) and press 3 for the Membership and Council Services Department. If you are unable to call and leave a message, be assured that an e-mail message sent to membership@alpa.org will make its way to the appropriate person for response. The goal of the Membership and Council Services Department is to provide ALPA's members with the support they need and the service they deserve. 🌐