

# Committee Corner

## News from ALPA's Committees

### ALPA Names Capt. Bob Hesselbein New National Security Committee Chairman

Capt. Bob Hesselbein (Northwest) became the new chairman of the ALPA National Security Committee on August 1, replacing long-time NSC member and chairman Capt. Stephen Luckey (Northwest, Ret.).

In announcing Capt. Hesselbein's appointment, ALPA's president, Capt. Duane Woerth, applauded Capt. Luckey, saying, "Because of your expertise in the field of aviation security and your sterling reputation with key personnel in government and industry, you have elevated ALPA's own reputation and standing in that arena. After the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, you were instrumental in developing recommendations that enhanced our industry's security and enabled the U.S. airline industry to regain the public's confidence. The Federal Flight Deck Officer program, an idea that you were the first to champion, has grown from a mere concept to a well-respected cadre of thousands of pilots who volunteer to serve as sworn federal officers to protect the flight deck."

Capt. Luckey will continue to serve the Association as its Special Security Advisor.

One of Capt. Hesselbein's first challenges will be to continue the work of Capt. Luckey in building the NSC's structure and increasing the Association's presence in the aviation security community. Capt. Woerth, in appointing Capt. Hesselbein to be the next NSC chairman, said, "I am confident that his experience and expertise in this field will ensure that the Committee continues the quality work it has performed over the years."

Capt. Hesselbein has served as his MEC's Security Committee chairman and as a resource to the NSC as the Chemical/Biological Threat program manager. A pilot for Northwest Airlines for 19 years, Capt. Hesselbein served as a U.S. Army helicopter gunship pilot in Vietnam, and flew A-10s and F-16s with the U.S. Air Force and the Wisconsin Air National Guard.

### Carry the 'Orange Card'

The "Orange Card" contains the information that ALPA pilots need in case of an accident, serious incident, or any other time-critical safety event. The card features guidelines on actions that Association flightcrew members should take immediately to protect themselves, other crew-

members, passengers, and their professional standing. The telephone numbers listed on the Orange Card will put the member in touch with



ALPA's Engineering and Air Safety Department staff at any time. The information is available on both a wallet-sized card and a sticker suitable for placing inside a uniform cap or flight bag. Additional cards and stickers are available by calling the Engineering and Air Safety Department during normal ALPA business hours (9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Eastern time, Monday-Friday) at 1-800-424-2470 or [EAS@alpa.org](mailto:EAS@alpa.org).

### United Pilots Negotiate Jumpseats For Offline Pilots

The United MEC announced on June 20 that it has reached an agreement with United management that opens United jumpseats to pilots of other airlines. The agreement will be effective soon and represents a significant benefit to many pilots—both those who fly for United and those who fly for other airlines.

Currently, several U.S. airlines offer unlimited jumpseats to offline pilots, but restrict that benefit to only those carriers that can offer reciprocal jumpseats. As soon as the new policy is in place, United pilots will be able to

participate in reciprocal agreements with those carriers. Combining this new agreement with the expanding list of airlines participating in the Cockpit Access Security System (CASS), United pilots will have many more options for commuting and personal travel.

Capt. Jim Frank, chairman of the United MEC's Jumpseat Committee, says, "This is a significant quality-of-life improvement for all United pilots who commute to work. Having United offer unlimited jumpseats to pilots of other airlines in the near future allows us to secure reciprocal agreements with those airlines who currently offer unlimited jumpseats, thus creating multiple options for our pilots. This has been a high-priority item [for the United pilots] for some time, and we applaud the efforts of everyone involved in making this happen."

The procedures and computer programming for implementing unlimited jumpseats are currently being written. When a time line for completion is available, the United MEC Jumpseat Committee will provide an update and projected time frame for implementing the new agreement.

## ALPA Advises Pilots On PRM Approaches At Minneapolis

On July 18, ALPA issued ALPA Operations Bulletin 2005-07, "Precision Runway Monitoring (PRM) Approaches at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP)," to alert pilots to errors and inadequacies of current charts for the four ILS PRM approaches that were scheduled to be resumed at MSP on July 5.

The ALPA operations bulletin notes that using ILS PRM approaches "can enhance the safety of approach operations while increasing [airport] capacity." ALPA safety representatives worked closely with the FAA, MSP officials, and Northwest Airlines management to resolve the current issues regarding the ILS PRM procedures and charts at MSP.

The current ILS PRM approach charts for MSP do not adequately reflect new operational procedures that require 1,000 feet of vertical separation between the glideslope intercept altitudes for the ILS PRM approaches to Runways 12R and 12L and the ILS PRM approaches to Runways 30R and 30L. The charts also indicate that an air traffic controller could instruct pilots to intercept the final approach at an altitude as low as 2,900 feet MSL. The FAA has agreed

that this close turn-on will not be allowed; the applicable charts will be revised during a future charting cycle.

The FAA has advised all operators that PRM approaches at MSP are permitted with current charts. Minneapolis Tower issued a Letter to Airmen (No. 05-03) outlining the facility's procedures for air traffic controllers to use during ILS PRM approaches at MSP:

1. Maintain at least 3 miles of radar separation or 1,000

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feet of vertical separation between aircraft during turn-on to parallel final approach courses.

2. Vector arriving aircraft to intercept the final approach course at an altitude not above the glideslope nor below the minimum glideslope intercept altitudes specified on the approach procedure chart.

3. Assign headings that permit pilots to intercept the localizer and stabilize their approach before discontinuing vertical separation between aircraft on parallel final approach courses.

4. Maintain at least 1,000 feet of vertical separation between aircraft on parallel final approach courses from localizer intercept to the following fixes where final approach monitoring begins:

- ALGIN for ILS PRM RWY 12L,
- WAYZA for ILS PRM RWY 12R,
- SISSY for ILS PRM RWY 30L, and
- BONNA for ILS PRM RWY 30R.

New approach charts are being revised and will include these changes. The new charts should be published not later than the October 2005 charting cycle.

ALPA issued three recommendations in Operations Bulletin 2005-07:

- Until the new charts are published, closely review your airline's procedures and this bulletin, and use the corrections when flying ILS PRM approaches at MSP.
- If you are unable to participate in PRM approaches, remember to inform your dispatcher *before* departure that you will not participate in PRM at MSP and ask dispatch to obtain an arrival reservation for you per the instructions in the Attention All Users page for the ILS PRM approaches.
- If an air traffic controller vectors you to intercept the final approach course without following the procedures detailed above, file an ASRS report and an ASAP and/or company safety report, and contact the ALPA Engineer-

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ing and Air Safety Department at 1-800-424-2470 or via e-mail at EAS@alpa.org.

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### ALPA Tells Congress: Too Soon to Approve Cell Phones in Flight

A proposal by the Federal Communications Commission to replace or relax its current ban on inflight use of cell phones and other actively transmitting personal electronic devices (PEDs) is “very premature,” ALPA warned Congress recently.

The Association’s response to a notice of proposed rulemaking issued by the FCC, a response that ALPA also submitted to a congressional subcommittee that held hearings on the issue in July, noted that several safety concerns regarding use of cell phones and other PEDs on airliners remain unresolved.

The NPRM not only would lift the ban on inflight use of 800-MHz cellular handsets, it also proposes other steps to facilitate inflight use of wireless handsets and devices, including those used for broadband applications. The FAA prohibits use of all types of PEDs on aircraft unless the aircraft operator has determined that using the PED will not interfere with the aircraft’s navigation and communications systems.

ALPA noted that it has been actively involved for the past 2 years with a special committee of RTCA, Inc. (a government/industry group that sets standards for avionics) regarding the technical aspects of the aviation safety issues posed by PEDs. The Association asserted in its response to the NPRM, “before the ban [on inflight use of PEDs] is lifted, additional studies involving safety, security, regulatory, and cabin environment concerns must be completed and those issues must be resolved satisfactorily.” Moreover, ALPA pointed out, any new regulations should cover similar wireless systems—those operating in the 1900 MHz band, plus land mobile radio, IDEN/Nextel systems, commonly known as “mobile phones.”

Testing by federal agencies and industry experts has shown that aircraft radios may be susceptible to radio-frequency (RF) interference from consumer electronics such as the PEDs that would be affected by the NPRM.

Part of the proposal for permitting inflight use of cell phones is the assertion that the cellular base station installed on an aircraft—the “pico cell”—would permit cell phones to operate with low power input. As the NPRM itself said, however, pico cell systems could actually *increase* the possibility of RF interference with the aircraft’s avionics, because failure of the pico cell would make the active cell phones on the aircraft suddenly begin transmitting at full power while they tried to find a station.

This situation could also interfere with ground stations.

ALPA is particularly concerned that no definite way exists to verify that a specific device will be problem-free without testing it. Moreover, cell phones and other wireless devices can house different technologies in very similar exterior packaging, making the task of determining their acceptability for inflight use impossible. The Association therefore opposes any policy that would require pilots, flight attendants, or any other airline employees to ensure that passengers are using only accepted PED technology.

Then there’s the potential for cell phones to ignite passenger rage: The weight limitations and confined cabins of airliners probably preclude airlines offering the aviation version of the “quiet cars” now found on commuter trains in the Northeast—a change that resulted from passenger demands for an oasis free of cell phone conversations. As ALPA pointed out, “If cell phones are permitted to be used in flight, flight attendants could more frequently be put into positions requiring adversarial interaction with passengers because of increased potential for arguments or disputes. The overall cabin atmosphere may more frequently deteriorate...perhaps even to the point of affecting the safety of all occupants.”

In addition, ALPA questioned the NPRM’s assertion that approving use of such devices on airliners would benefit those entrusted with maintaining homeland security. In fact, ALPA warned, terrorists could exploit this technology.

Finally, the Association said, “Perhaps as never before, the proposal to permit actively transmitting PEDs in flight enters new regulatory territory that overlaps both FCC and FAA responsibilities and interests. However, the NPRM does not satisfactorily establish, define, or clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the FCC and the FAA in governing airborne wireless technology.”

ALPA pointed out the RTCA final report on airborne use of PEDs is not scheduled for publication until the end of 2006, and the FAA is unlikely to make regulatory changes regarding PEDs before then. The Association called for “a coordinated effort” by the FAA and the FCC to develop harmonized regulations for PEDs.

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### ALPA Cautions Pilots About Honeywell Transponders

On July 19, ALPA alerted pilot safety representatives at American Eagle, Continental Express, Mesaba, PSA, and Skyway that Honeywell has discovered an anomaly with transponders that are part of the Primus II communications system.

These avionics systems are installed on several types

of corporate jets plus British Aerospace Jetstream J-41 turboprops, Dornier 328 turboprops, and Embraer 135 and 145 regional jets.

Moving an individual knob, dial, or tab on the Radio Management Unit (RMU) to change the 4096 ATC Code (also referred to as Mode A Code) for more than 5 seconds will make the transponder revert to standby mode. As a result, the aircraft symbol and the label associated with the airplane's position will disappear from the air traffic controller's radar display.

The transponder's reversion to standby mode also will compromise the aircraft collision avoidance system (ACAS) on the airplane and those on other aircraft.

Honeywell has issued a service bulletin to correct the problem. The FAA and other airworthiness authorities are evaluating proposed airworthiness directives to mandate correcting the problem.

Meanwhile, Honeywell has suggested that operators experiencing this problem use an "operational work-around" procedure as a temporary solution—i.e., tell pilots they need to check the transponder mode after changing the squawk. If the transponder is in standby mode, the pilots should re-enter the desired code.

Honeywell has recommended adding to the AFM for the affected airplane types these words: "After completion of any 4096 (Mode A) transponder code change, check the status of the transponder. If the transponder indicates that it is in STANDBY mode, reselect the desired mode (i.e., the transponder should be in the ACTIVE mode)."

ALPA members having questions about this or any other aviation safety concern should contact the ALPA Engineering and Air Safety Department at 1-800-424-2470 or via e-mail to [EAS@alpa.org](mailto:EAS@alpa.org).

## ALPA Warns Pilots About Possible SATCOM Loss In Oceanic Airspace

ALPA has recommended in ALPA Operations Bulletin 2005-08, issued August 1, that pilots flying in oceanic airspace in aircraft equipped with Rockwell-Collins satellite communications (SATCOM) data units (SDUs) prepare for the possibility that they will lose SATCOM service.

The Japan Civil Aviation Board was scheduled to begin system testing on a Multifunctional Transport Satellite (MTSAT) on August 26.

The new MTSAT will make the North Pacific the fifth Oceanic Satellite Region. The Japan Civil Aviation Board testing will result in all INMARSAT satellites broadcasting new system-table information.

When the fifth satellite is added to the system broadcast, the SDU will try to process information in a section

of non-volatile memory that was not previously initialized. Depending on the data stored in the noninitialized memory, the SDU may perform calculations that will result in multiple attempts to reset.

Not all SDUs will exhibit this problem. However, if a unit does contain a set of random data that triggers a reset, the unit likely will continue a cycle of powering up, observing the fifth satellite, and trying to process the noninitialized memory.

Ultimately, resetting voice or data communication using SATCOM will not be possible with affected SDUs. Regardless of which oceanic region the aircraft oper-

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ates in, all affected SDUs are susceptible to this service interruption.

Rockwell-Collins has developed a software service bulletin that will correct the problem when loading the system with the fifth satellite.

While the number of affected flights per day is not known, INMARSAT estimated that as many as 180 flights per day in the North Atlantic region would be affected initially. The number of affected flights will decrease as the software service bulletin is implemented.

ALPA recommends that pilots initiate SATCOM communications either before flight or as soon as possible (and before entering oceanic airspace). Failure of the SDU will require using high frequency (HF) radio for oceanic communications.

When SATCOM failure causes a datalink failure, pilots should notify the air traffic controller of the failure via HF voice communications using this phraseology: "Data link failed. Selecting ATC comm off. Continuing on voice." (Note: This procedure and phraseology are consistent with the FANS Operations Manual and regional agreements.)

ICAO Annex 2 requires that flight crews have SELCAL, or its equivalent, available and that they monitor HF voice communications.

Pilots of airlines that have a minimum equipment list (MEL) waiver to operate over oceanic airspace with an operational SATCOM and a single HF radio should make sure that a second operational HF radio is available to them before departure.

If SATCOM communications fail, pilots should file an ASAP and/or ASRS report after the flight ends.

ALPA members who have questions or comments about this bulletin or any other aviation safety issue should contact the Association's Engineering and Air Safety Department via ALPA's toll-free, 24-hour air safety reporting line, 1-800-424-2470, or via e-mail at [EAS@alpa.org](mailto:EAS@alpa.org).