

STRENGTH IN UNITY

Airline Pilots Securing Their Future Through ALPA

Your Mother Should Know: The ALPA Code Of Ethics (Part 2)

When Capt. Ben Jutte, chairman of the ATA pilots' Professional Standards Committee, sits down to write his next article for his MEC newsletter, he reflects on the phone calls he's been getting and what he's been reading on the forums. Then he thinks about what mothers teach their kids.

As Capt. Jutte wrote on behalf of his Committee in *Above and Beyond*, January/February, "While we are not the hat police, we do deal with the issues that your mother taught you as a child, and which grown adults sometimes forget."

Capt. Jutte recognizes that those "mother principles" are also embodied in a 50-year-old document that is presented to every new ALPA member: the Code of Ethics. This article, addressing Sections 3 and 4 of the Code (see "Strength in Unity," March, for Sections 1 and 2), continues a three-part series. All the sections of the Code have a broad application to an airline pilot's responsibilities and behavior, but the third and fourth sections (see sidebar) seem particularly relevant to issues that fall under the guidance of ALPA's Professional Standards work.

"When you boil it down," Capt. Jutte says, "it's doing the right thing—to not offend or hurt other people. Hopefully, that kind of behavior starts in the home." And if by chance it didn't for some, the Code of Ethics, backed by Professional Standards pilot reps all over the Association, can serve as mentor.

For example, an airline pilot "will not falsely or maliciously injure the professional reputation, prospects, or job security of another pilot," says the Code. Capt. Jutte translates that dictum into recognizing "the difference between exercising your First Amendment right to free speech and making a personal attack on someone with whom you don't agree.

"Before you go spouting off in the cockpit," he advises his members, "you should make sure your comments aren't going to offend the person next to you. Don't let negativity affect CRM."

ALPA's Crew Resource Management program takes its cue from the Code. Bill Edmunds, ALPA staff support for the ALPA Human Performance Committee, equates the principles of Sections 3 and 4 with "some of the elements of a CRM program. The captain sets the tone. Everyone is a valued part of the crew, and that's an ideal way for a flight crew to operate."

- As the Code counsels, a captain in command of his crew
- "will be firm but fair, . . . efficient yet relaxed,"
 - "will expect efficient performance of each crew member's duties, yet he will overlook small discrepancies and refrain from unnecessary and destructive criticism,"
 - "will afford his flight crew members every reasonable opportunity . . . to learn and practice," and
 - "will avoid personal prejudices [and] make his reports factual and his criticism constructive."

"When I read [the Code of Ethics], I am proud to be an airline pilot. It makes me stand up a little taller."—Capt. John Rosenberg (Northwest)

Capt. John Rosenberg (Northwest) is chairman of the ALPA-wide Professional Standards Committee, one of four committees constituting ALPA's Human Performance Committee. His airline is mired in a bankruptcy, which creates many stresses for its pilots, not the least of which is management's disdain for pilots' contractual rights and standing in the corporation.

"At Northwest, one of the most frustrating things we have going is the change in corporate structure and attitude away from our main purpose of flying aircraft," Capt. Rosenberg said in a phone interview. "We used to have a VP of Flight Operations who was a pilot, and management eliminated that. Now, officers in the corporation can't talk pilot language, and the pilot group is handicapped by not having a voice at that level."

As Capt. Rosenberg points out, "A lot goes into being an airline pilot. We're under constant scrutiny from government regulations, company rules, the public, check rides—the daily grind. There's nothing glamorous about checking into a hotel at 2 in the morning, with no place to eat. You have to have internal fortitude and guttiness to make it through the profession for 30 years. A pilot's career is a roller-coaster ride, with constant major cultural changes.

"There's never a period when you can say it's a stable profession. When a new pilot says he's thinking of putting an addition on his house but will do it when 'things settle down,' we chuckle, because things will never 'settle down.'"

But pilots, who often have educational backgrounds in other professions, choose this work because they love it, he said, so they must rely on a standard beyond the vagaries of the particular company they work for.

"We are a profession unto ourselves, while managements come and go. Because we ensure that profession-

ALPA's Code of Ethics—Sections 3 and 4

3. An Air Line Pilot will accept the responsibilities as well as the rewards of command and will at all times so conduct himself both on duty and off as to instill and merit the confidence and respect of his crew, his fellow employees, and his associates within the profession.

- He will know and understand the duties of each member of his crew. If in command, he will be firm but fair, explicit yet tolerant of deviations that do not affect the safe and orderly completion of the flight. He will be efficient yet relaxed, so that the duties of the crew may be carried out in a harmonious manner.

- If in command, he will expect efficient performance of each crew member's duties, yet he will overlook small discrepancies and refrain from unnecessary and destructive criticism, so that the crew member will retain his self-respect and cooperative attitude. A frank discussion of minor matters of technique and performance after the flight will create goodwill and a desire to be helpful, whereas sharp criticism and peremptory orders at the moment will result only in the breakdown of morale and an inefficient, halting performance of future duties.

- An Air Line Pilot will remember that his is a profession heavily dependent on training during regular operations and, if in command, will afford his flight crew members every reasonable opportunity, consistent with safety and efficiency, to learn and practice. He will endeavor to instill in his crew a sense of pride and responsibility. In making reports on the work and conduct of his crew members, he will avoid personal prejudices, make his reports factual and his criticisms constructive so that actions taken as a result of his reports will improve the knowledge and skill of his crew members, rather than bring discredit, endanger their livelihood, and threaten their standing in the profession.

- While in command, the Air Line Pilot will be mindful of the welfare of his crew. He will see to it that his crew are properly lodged and cared for, particularly


during unusual operating conditions. When cancellations result in deadheading, he will ensure that proper arrangements are made for the transportation of his crew before he takes care of himself.

4. An Air Line Pilot will conduct his affairs with other members of the profession and with ALPA in such a manner as to bring credit to the profession and ALPA as well as to himself.

- He will not falsely or maliciously injure the professional reputation, prospects, or job security of another pilot, yet if he knows of professional incompetence or conduct detrimental to the profession or to ALPA, he will not shrink from revealing this to the proper authorities within ALPA, so that the weak member may be brought up to the standards demanded, or ALPA and the profession alike may be rid of one unworthy to share its rewards.

- He will conduct his affairs with ALPA and its members in accordance with the rules laid down in the *Constitution and By-Laws* of ALPA and with the policies and interpretations promulgated therefrom. Whenever possible, he will attend all meetings of ALPA open to him and will take an active part in its activities and in meetings of other groups calculated to improve air safety and the standing of the profession.

- An Air Line Pilot shall refrain from any action whereby, for his personal benefit or gain, he takes advantage of the confidence reposed in him by his fellow members. If he is called upon to represent ALPA in any dispute, he will do so to the best of his ability, fairly and fearlessly, relying on the influence and power of ALPA to protect him.

- He will regard himself as a debtor to his profession and ALPA, and will dedicate himself to their advancement. He will cooperate in the upholding of the profession by exchanging information and experience with his fellow pilots and by actively contributing to the work of professional groups and the technical press. 

alism, we have an airline system that is the safest in the world. The company we fly for merely employs us. Our ability to do our job comes from the ticket in our pocket that the FAA gives us—our airman's certificate. And it is symbolized by the wings we wear—not from our company, from ALPA. No matter what color your uniform is or the name on the side of the airplane, your approach to the job doesn't need to change."

Professional Standards, Capt. Rosenberg said, is the gatekeeper of the Code of Ethics, "to protect and keep safe the document that quintessentially defines what it

means to be a professional airman." He added, "I truly love the Code of Ethics. I really admire its original authors, they really had it figured out—creating the boundaries, the set of disciplines we operate within to maintain what we do as a true profession. When I read that document, I am proud to be an airline pilot. It makes me stand up a little taller."

As Capt. Jutte advises his pilots, "Remember, when you wear the uniform, you represent all of us. Act professionally, do the right thing, and make your mother proud. She'd want that."—*Susan Burke, Publications Specialist*