

Honoured Safety Partners

By Merlin Preuss, Director General, Civil Aviation, Transport Canada



We at Transport Canada appreciate our strong partnership with ALPA, and we salute the Association in celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Your commitment to safety is evident in all of your active work on safety initiative after safety initiative, in Canada, the United States, and globally.

The dedication to your motto, Schedule with Safety, has been apparent since the creation of your organization, through to the first Air Safety Forum you held in 1953, and continuing right through the work you do today.

Our aim at Transport Canada is to assist the aviation industry in understanding Canadian safety regulations and to facilitate its ability to comply with our regulations. These two goals should be the cornerstone of any government/industry partnership because enhancing aviation safety is the core commitment that we all share.

Although Canada has an enviable airline safety record, we are ever vigilant and dedicated to doing even more. One of the crucial ways we do this is by building upon our regula-

tory framework and focusing on risk management practices.

This is why, in 1999, Transport Canada ushered in a new approach to managing safety risks in civil aviation and laid the foundation upon which to build a solid safety culture with the introduction of the concept of the safety management system—or SMS.

The requirement for an evolved

elsewhere through its development and delivery of training programs and its work with Canadian and other airlines.

Working with our partners, such as ALPA, is vital to continuing to provide Canadians with a safe and reliable air transportation system. Key to this partnership is ongoing dialogue with and between industry organizations and government. The strength

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and healthy SMS sits on top of everything—as an umbrella. It does more than just help airlines adhere to the current regulatory framework; it expands safety far beyond it.

Today, we are fully engaged in implementing the SMS concept with our industry partners, and safety-risk-management thinking is taking firmer root in wider aviation circles. By integrating risk-management systems and business practices, the aviation industry stands to gain better safety performance with less regulatory intervention.

At the heart of SMS is the idea that continually improving safety performance is the No. 1 priority in the aviation industry.

These are important steps toward improving safety and enhancing the public's confidence in the safety of Canada's aviation system.

Transport Canada recognizes and sincerely appreciates the leadership ALPA has shown in embracing SMS. The Association has played a key role in implementing SMS in Canada and

of our partnership will dictate how we respond to the challenges and opportunities that lie before us all.

To be effective, our engagement must reach broadly and deeply because aviation is a complex and interdependent system. Only in this way can we continue to build a partnership that embraces the complexity and growing influences of the 21st century.

We at Transport Canada are also gratified to know that ALPA helps bridge the border between our two nations. Because the Association represents pilots in both the United States and Canada, safety initiatives born here can be efficiently exported southward. And safety initiatives developed in the United States can easily move northward.

ALPA pilots' and staff members' investment in time, money, and expertise has had a tremendous effect on the safety of flight in Canada.

We at Transport Canada look forward to building on that record for the next 75 years. 🌐

***Merlin Preuss** was appointed director general for civil aviation for Transport Canada in March 2002. As such, he is responsible for the regulation, standards, and policies of the safety of civil aviation in Canada. An Alberta native, he is a professional engineer and maintains his airline transport pilot certificate on the Airbus A340. He has extensive background in aviation, first with the Canadian Air Force and, since 1988, with Transport Canada, where he began as an air carrier inspector, was assigned to the Airbus A310, and held posts of increasing responsibility, including director of commercial and business aviation.*