



Stability Requires Change

By Capt. Chris Beebe, ALPA Vice-President-Finance/Treasurer

As we stand poised on the marking of the 75th birthday of the Air Line Pilots Association, it is more than appropriate to reflect on the past 75 years and, keeping that heritage in mind, to plan for the next number of years.

First, let's understand that in many ways ALPA looks very little like it did in 1931. None of our members had a contract with their airlines on Day One, copilots were ineligible to join, and the dues for first pilots, or captains, was established at a fixed amount—originally \$60 per year.

Change has been driven by the fact that, from its founding, ALPA was built as a member-driven entity. One need look only at the changes in governance as it evolved from the simple Central Executive Council, made up only of pilots who flew through Chicago and the national officers, to our current structure of airline groups and the executive vice-presidents elected by them.

Change has also been driven by the personality characteristics of pilots, who excel in crisis. That's probably why, even though ALPA is a living organization with a need and willingness to adapt as necessary, we generally have done so in response to crises. For example, ALPA established the Major Contingency Fund as a direct response to lessons learned during the 1983 Continental Airlines strike and the 1985 United strike.

Fortunately, the MCF was in place to support the Eastern pilots in their 1989 strike, and it continues to be a major bulwark of ALPA in resisting the almost irresistible forces of bankruptcy and hostile management. Who knows what would have happened if ALPA's financial cupboard had been bare?

Another less-heralded crisis oc-

curred in 1999, when ALPA reached financial rock bottom. We were broke. The decision at that point—to run our union as a business—required us to conduct considerable planning and to make difficult choices to shape ALPA to be financially prepared for whatever lay ahead. Little did we know how much was just around the corner.

Today, we are all the beneficiaries of the decisions that ALPA leaders

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have made over the years. In spite of the devastation that has wreaked havoc with our pay, benefits, and working conditions, the planning that began in 1999, and continues today, has kept ALPA viable and capable of maintaining services in the face of shrinking revenue. As the last of the major airline bankruptcies plays out, we can look to the future without being concerned if we have the resources necessary to move forward in resuming an upward march instead of a downward spiral.

Prudent planning has given us the freedom to make the best choice, not just the most economic one. We can look

to enhancing our profession without the shadow of liquidation over us. We can reach out to other pilot groups and bring them under the ALPA umbrella making them, ALPA, and our entire profession stronger. We can bring resources to bear that will allow all of our pilot groups to negotiate improvements instead of concessions. All we need now is the will to act on our vision.

While we act on our vision, though,

from time to time prescribed by the President and the Board of Directors.

Treasurer
The Treasurer shall receive and hold all monies and securities belonging to, or receivable by the Association, and pay all bills with the approval of the President upon certification from the Administrative Secretary to the effect that accounts rendered are correct and just. All payments of any nature shall be made by check, signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the President, or any officer, director, or official he may designate.

He shall at the annual convention of the Association, submit a statement of his receipts and disbursements for the preceding year.

He shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the President and the Board of Directors. He shall at the expense of the Association, give a surety bond, for such amount as shall be fixed by the Board of Directors, for the faithful discharge of his duties before taking office. All funds shall be deposited in the name of the Association, in such bank or banks as the President, Secretary and Treasurer shall mutually agree on, and with the approval of the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President, the Treasurer shall with the Secretary, sign all written contracts and obligations of the Association.

The Treasurer shall furnish through a Certified Public Accountant a monthly audit of the Association books and accounts up to January 1, 1932, after which it shall be furnished quarterly and just following the posting of the quarterly membership dues.

In compliance with the above, a Certified Public Accountant performed an audit and installed a permanent set of books, according to accepted recognized standards of bookkeeping.

At the expiration of his term of office, the Treasurer shall deliver to the President and the Board of Directors a statement of his receipts and disbursements, and a statement of the Association's financial condition.

we must continue to remember the lessons learned and applied by the past generations of pilots and how they built our union to what it is today. We must remember that, while ALPA has changed, the struggle has not.

The forces arrayed against us are many and powerful. Managements will never stop their efforts to put a pilot in the cockpit as cheaply as possible. The best antidote to their poison is a strong, unified ALPA.

The past has kept us strong. But the choices we make today will be what future generations will judge us by. It is up to all of us here today to choose wisely. 🌐