

In the Name of All Airline Pilots

Since ALPA's inception, this union's founders and leaders have never rested on their laurels. Constantly, one might even say compulsively, ALPA pilot leaders have developed new initiatives, methods, and plans to advance the piloting profession.



A distinct measure of that ambition is ALPA's plan to one day represent *all airline pilots*. ■ Within the next few pages, you'll read about ALPA's newest pilot groups, the welcome news of a potential merger of ALPA and the National Pilots Association, and a handful of past noteworthy mergers that have all helped ALPA's efforts to be the voice of *all airline pilots*. This *Air Line Pilot's* history department (page 37) takes a page from ALPA's narrative and briefly retells the story of the creation of the Association of Independent Airmen and the Union of Professional Airmen. ■ ALPA has faced its share of growth as well as setbacks, but the resounding and renewed commitment from the union's Board of Directors in October 2008 was quite clear: Representing *all airline pilots* has been and continues to be a top priority. 🌐

Colgan Air Pilots Vote to Join ALPA

By ALPA Staff

Membership Drive, MEC Work Under Way

On Dec. 17, 2008, the National Mediation Board (NMB) announced that 313 of 449 eligible Colgan Air pilots (70 percent) cast a ballot in support of ALPA representation, well above the threshold required for certification. Prior to the election, the Colgan pilots were unrepresented.

“The strong show of support for ALPA by the Colgan pilots’ vote makes us an even stronger union,” says Capt. John Prater, ALPA’s president. “They are eager to build on the unity generated during the organizing campaign, and we are excited to work with the Colgan pilots to improve their careers and help them benefit from ALPA representation.”



WILLIAM A. FORD

Improving their careers and gaining greater job security were key factors in why so many pilots voted for ALPA. In the 15 months since the previous organizing drive, there have been significant changes at the airline. Colgan Air is a wholly owned subsid-

iary of Pinnacle Airlines Corp., which acquired Colgan in January 2007. With that change in ownership, there was a shift in corporate culture. As a family-owned airline, the Colgans had fostered an atmosphere in which employees felt as if they were part of



RON RINDELEISCH

The pilots of Colgan Air officially became ALPA members on Dec. 17, 2008, when the National Mediation Board announced the results of the Colgan representation vote. Joining the Colgan pilots for this celebratory photo are (from left to right) ALPA organizing drive volunteers and staff F/O Richard Murase (Pinnacle), Capt. Tom Wychor (Mesaba), Capt. Terry Fenningham (former Independence Air), Capt. Matt Marsh (former Champion), Jeff Loesel (Representation), and Capt. Chris Belcastro (ExpressJet).



CAPT. MATT MARSH (FORMER CHAMPION)

Capt. Prater, left, welcomes Capt. Tim Newkirk and Capt. Scott Gates to ALPA. Both were previous ALPA members.

that family. The transition of ownership to a large holding company that also controls Pinnacle Airlines created an environment of uncertainty and the recognition that a collectively bargained contract was required to protect and enhance the careers of Colgan pilots.

New ownership also led to expansion of the airline: In February 2008, Colgan added Bombardier Q400s to its fleet, prompting new hiring that nearly doubled the size of the pilot group. While this expansion has meant more opportunities for Colgan pilots, it has also placed major demands on the pilots and the airline. The need for stability led some Colgan pilots to revive the Organizing Committee, which quickly grew to more than 30 pilots who actively worked to secure ALPA representation. The Organizing Committee's efforts were supported by ALPA pilots from many of the same airlines that Colgan pilots work side by side with, including Continental, ExpressJet, and Pinnacle.

Now that the pilots have achieved their goal of ALPA representation, Capt. Mark Segaloff, one of the leaders of the Colgan Pilots ALPA Organizing Committee, expressed the group's eagerness to get to work. "It is now our duty as Colgan pilots to take the unity we have built, along with ALPA's vast

resources, and transfer that into negotiating a first contract that we deserve," he said.

They aren't wasting any time. One month after they selected ALPA as their collective bargaining representative, the pilots are moving forward with a membership drive and setting up the representation structure for their Mas-

ter Executive Council. Three local councils have been established for the 450 Colgan pilots who fly the Bombardier Q400, Saab 340, and Beech 1900 from numerous bases in the Northeast and Texas. Local Council 156 will represent pilots based at La Guardia (LGA), Local Council 157 will represent pilots based at Newark (EWR), and Local Council 158 will represent pilots based at Houston (IAH).

Temporary status representatives and secretary-treasurers have also been appointed. Some of them—along with other pilots from the Organizing Committee—will take part in leadership training that will familiarize them with ALPA's staff, financial resources, and other tools they can use to represent their pilots. During this meeting, they will also learn about the process and preparation for negotiating their first contract. 🌐



A Colgan flight for Continental Express heads back to Newark from Washington National on a quick turnaround. In the cockpit are Capt. Paul King and F/O Steve Stark.

WILLIAM A. FORD

Confluence of Cockpit Crews

By ALPA Staff

ALPA and NPA Pilots Pursue Merger

ALPA's strategic plan and renewed commitment to bring pilots together for bargaining leverage, more vigorous contract enforcement, and the power to achieve benefits, safety, and security improvements is well under way with merger discussions with AirTran pilots, who are currently represented by the independent National Pilots Association (NPA). Both ALPA's Executive Council and the NPA Board of Directors recently passed resolutions endorsing the merger.

"If they elect to join ALPA, AirTran pilots would continue to make the decisions on the issues that affect them, but they would also gain access to unmatched resources and decades of experience in collective bargaining, contract enforcement, aviation safety, and many other aspects of the piloting profession," said ALPA's president, Capt. John Prater.

Working together

ALPA has provided technical assistance to the NPA over the past few years under "service agreements" that the two unions executed. These agreements offer non-ALPA pilot groups limited access to the Association's resources to familiarize them with what ALPA has to offer.

The most recent service agreement between ALPA and the NPA outlined the need for cross-union participation and affirmed that "Members of the Air Line Pilots Association and the National Pilots Association have many mutual goals and objectives. This service agreement provides a

framework for cooperation and coordination between our two unions..." and foreshadowed the possibility of merger discussions.

AirTran pilots coordinate grassroots effort

During the summer of 2008, a group of AirTran pilots concerned about their future representation formed AirTran Pilots for ALPA (APfA) to raise aware-

presentations by both ALPA and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. ALPA's representatives emphasized the union's exclusive focus on pilots and their issues (as opposed to other unions that have diverse memberships), ALPA's unparalleled resources, its unique strategic planning approach, which is used frequently by master executive councils, and the value of working with other

ALPA pilot groups recognize that it's in the collective best interests of all airline pilots—regardless of their payload, aircraft size, or industry niche—to welcome AirTran pilots into ALPA and to work closely together toward common goals.

ness of the advantages of representation by the world's largest pilot union. APfA members created a website (www.airtranpilotsforalpa.com) and issued communications explaining their goal. Their Nov. 28, 2008, newsletter reported AirTran pilot interest in "better representation and a brighter future for our fellow AirTran pilots." The APfA newsletter stated that the pilots' goal was "an NPA merger with ALPA as we believe that will give the AirTran pilots the best representation structure to accomplish [our] objectives and an improved collective bargaining agreement, stronger contract enforcement, better benefits, enhanced job security, and world-class safety support." It described ALPA as "a union exclusively for pilots, by pilots, and of pilots."

The NPA Board conducted a 4-day meeting in November that included

pilot groups to achieve common goals. After the presentation, the NPA Board passed a resolution on December 12 endorsing a merger with ALPA.

On December 16, ALPA's Executive Council unanimously passed a resolution endorsing the ALPA/NPA merger. The resolution "directs the (ALPA) president to proceed with negotiations over a merger agreement between ALPA and NPA."

Looking ahead

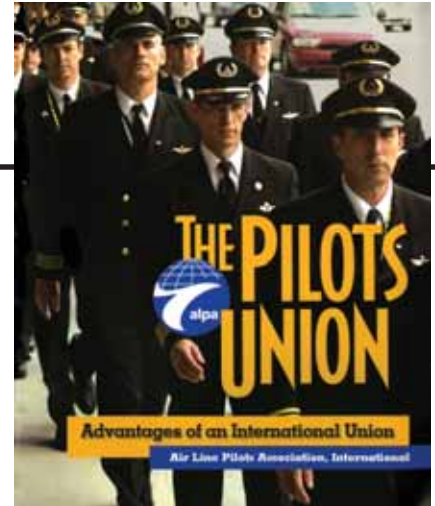
As *Air Line Pilot* goes to press, representatives of the two unions are scheduled to discuss a merger agreement starting on January 8 and into the following weeks. ALPA is also scheduled to conduct road shows for the AirTran pilots in January and February that highlight the Association's coordinated approach to its work in bargaining, contract enforce-

“The Pilots Union: Advantages of an International Union” is an effective recruiting tool that details the overall benefits of joining ALPA.

ment, benefits, aviation safety and security, aeromedical support, and in influencing public policy and regulations. If NPA and ALPA representatives reach a merger agreement, as ALPA believes is likely, NPA members will then vote on the agreement, and ALPA’s Executive Board will be asked to approve the agreement in April at its next meeting.

Advantages of ALPA membership

“ALPA respects independent pilot unions and the work they do,” says Bruce York, director of ALPA’s Representation Department. “But many independent unions lack the member and staff resources and the coordinated strategic approach that the Association can offer. The support from other



Come Together

Recent Elections And Merger Activity Fortify ALPA's Position as the Voice For Airline Pilots

ALPA history is rich in successful efforts to bring pilots together to speak with one voice and strengthen their collective work to bargain and enforce contracts, but recent alliances have revitalized the union’s goal to represent all airline pilots. In a little more than a decade, pilots across Canada have joined ALPA, pilot groups who have left the union have returned, and ALPA has attracted other pilot groups that recognize the member and staff resources that help them win favorable pay, benefits, work rule, and job security improvements and enhance safety and security.

ALPA initiatives such as the Global Pilot Strategy, which pilot leaders passed in 1992, and the union’s Board of Directors Pilot Unity Resolution of 2000, have been reaffirmed by the recent strategic plan passed by the 2008 BOD. ALPA continues to emphasize

the importance of organizing activities, whether through mergers or representation elections, that boost pilot leverage and make it easier to coordinate across pilot group lines to achieve pilots’ goals and objectives.

ALPA looks north ALPA’s organizing activities began in the early 1980s after the Union of Professional Airmen—a union representing pilots at a relatively small number of then-called “commuter” airlines—joined ALPA. Organizing continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s with representation election victories and mergers with many other airlines, including AirCal, PSA, and Reno.

ALPA began organizing pilots on a global scale in 1997 when it merged with the Canadian Air Line Pilots Association. Canadian pilot groups joining ALPA included Air Alliance, AirBC, Air Nova, Air Ontario, Bearskin, Calm Air, Canadian, Canadian Regional Airlines, Kelowna Flightcraft, and Northwest Territories. The Air Transat and Canada 3000 pilots followed suit the following years.

“This merger will be the first step toward ensuring that pilots of different nations will not be pitted against one another, and that the long- and hard-fought-for standards of the pilot-ing profession will not be eroded,”

commented then-ALPA president, Capt. J. Randolph Babbitt.

Following other mergers and operational shutdowns, four of the twelve pilot groups—Air Transat, Bearskin, Calm Air, and Kelowna Flightcraft—continue as individual ALPA pilot groups. AirBC, Air Ontario, Air Nova, and Canadian Regional Airlines combined to become Air Canada Jazz, whose members currently represent ALPA’s largest Canadian pilot group.

Reuniting former associates The Independent Association of Continental Pilots (IACP), representing more than 7,000 Continental and Continental Express (today’s ExpressJet) pilots, merged with ALPA in May 2001—years after management withdrew its recognition of ALPA in 1985 as the pilots’ collective bargaining representative following the pilots’ strike and after unsuccessful organizing drives to return to the union. The three IACP officers, including then-vice-president, Capt. John Prater, wrote to ALPA’s president, Capt. Duane Woerth, saying, “Without the support provided by the members of the many ALPA pilot groups, we could not stand here as brothers, true believers in the possibility of a global brotherhood of airline pilots.”

The FedEx Pilots Association (FPA) merged with ALPA in June 2002,

pilots across ALPA, coupled with the unity of AirTran pilots, could put all of us in a better position to negotiate favorable wage, benefits, and work rule patterns for AirTran pilots and the profession.” And AirTran pilots would benefit by having an administrative infrastructure that allows local pilot leaders to focus their attention on negotiations and contract enforcement

along with other member-oriented activities. More than anything, AirTran pilots would continue to set their goals and determine a course of action in their best interests while having the support and resources to achieve those objectives. In a December 20 APfA letter, AirTran pilots correctly noted that “While airlines may compete, pilot groups in ALPA

work collaboratively, recognizing that everyone benefits with the bargaining success of their fellow pilot groups.” ALPA pilot groups recognize that it’s in the collective best interests of all airline pilots—regardless of their payload, aircraft size, or industry niche—to welcome AirTran pilots into ALPA and to work closely together to achieve common goals. 🌐



In 1997 ALPA officers, from left, Capt. Duane Woerth, first vice-president, and Capt. Randolph Babbitt, president, welcome then-president of CALPA, Capt. John Dunlop, as Capt. Jerry Mugerditchian, vice-president-administration, and Capt. John Donnelly, vice-president-treasurer, look on.

2008 (First Air bought Northwest Territories Airways in 1997); and, most recently, the Colgan Air pilots in December 2008 (see page 19).

Of course, merger and election losses are also part of ALPA’s history. TWA pilots were absorbed by the APA after American Airlines purchased that airline. US Airways/America West and Atlas/Polar pilots left recently after well-publicized internal disputes caused different views about future representation between pilots in those groups. Yet ALPA leaders remain convinced that the Association provides the strongest and most effective pilot representation available and hopes that these pilot groups will resolve their internal issues and return to the one and only voice for airline pilots, the Air Line Pilots Association International.

—John Perkinson, Staff Writer

bringing another 4,000 flightcrew members into ALPA membership.

“The FedEx pilots returned to ALPA because they realized they could exercise a level of independence and, at the same time, have access to a wider array of tools and resources. One of the other advantages of being an ALPA member is the contact and ongoing dialogue with pilots at other airlines. This exchange is invaluable,” says Capt. Dave Webb, the FedEx pilots’ Master Executive Council chairman.

The FedEx pilots left ALPA in late 1996 after contentious negotiations with management and during divisive internal union discussion and events. However, once unified internally and

again represented by ALPA, the FedEx pilots secured a lucrative, industry-leading contract in October 2006.

And the trend continues. In recent years, numerous other pilot groups have followed the examples of CALPA, the IACP, and the FPA. Recent mergers with or representation votes for ALPA include the crewmembers of CanJet Airlines in June 2006; the Capital Cargo Crewmembers Association in June 2007; the Evergreen International Airlines pilots, previously represented by The Aviators Group, or TAG, in November 2007; the Wasaya Airways pilots in January 2008; the CommutAir pilots in May 2008; the First Air Pilots Association in June