

ALPA's Executive Board Acts to Protect, Strengthen Members' Future

By ALPA Staff



PHOTOS BY CHRIS WEAVER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

During the 105th ALPA Executive Board, union pilot leaders continued to move forward the union's strategic plan, passing several important resolutions that galvanize the essence of ALPA's mission: to be the ultimate guardian and defender of the rights and privileges of the professional pilots who are members of the Association.

You'll want to turn the page for details.

Clockwise from top left: The Railway Labor Act Group; Capt. Don Wykoff, executive administrator and chairman of the Association's Flight Time/Duty Time Committee, gives the Committee's presentation; Capt. Jerry McDermott, ALPA Pilot Assistance Committee chair, addresses the group; NMB Chairperson Elizabeth Dougherty speaks before the Board.

ALPA's pilot leaders continue to pound away at ALPA's year-old strategic plan—evidence that the priorities thoughtfully chosen were timely and relevant—demonstrating their determination to move it forward.

The 105th regular ALPA Executive Board meeting, held October 27-28, was no different. Several challenging issues were presented before the Board, and it tackled each one—defining new ALPA policy for flight-time/duty-time limits, building a framework to review the Railway Labor Act, and adopting a new structure that will fully integrate ALPA into a pilot's education and career from beginning to end. The Board also passed a unanimous resolution to aggressively address the recent events that threaten the integrity of aviation safety reporting systems.

ALPA's national officers set the stage

ALPA's president, Capt. John Prater, addressed each of these



Capt. Prater

important issues in his opening report, tying them to the union's strategic plan and highlighting how the issues demonstrate an organization that continues to evolve.

"It's important that we debrief every initiative, action, and goal when this Board meets to ensure that we are on track," said Prater. "It took all of us to advance these objectives, and it will take all of us to put new emphasis and new vigor into the new initiatives

of our plan for the next year."

Not coincidentally, the union's strategic planning accomplishments support the six tenets of the Association's mission statement. Prater emphasized the Association's airline-industry-leading role in safety and fatigue, as ALPA co-chaired the FAA Aviation Rulemaking Committee, which was tasked with recommending a new comprehensive flight- and duty-time rule (see "Seven ALPA Pilots Chosen for FAA ARC," August, page 7); in bargaining with the 4-year contract the Alaska pilots completed earlier this year, which includes double-digit pay increases; and in security as the union worked successfully with the Transportation Security Administration to push CrewPASS "from ALPA concept to reality."

ALPA's first vice-president, Capt. Paul Rice, during his report to the Board, shifted the discussion to the global arena. "My fellow ALPA brothers and sisters, a tremendous amount can be said about your union when you think about how the rest of the world views us—as the leaders of our profession and leaders of our industry," he said. "There are pilot groups who want to know how we accomplish what we do. There are government agencies that won't move forward on an aerospace initiative until we weigh in."

Rice talked about international efforts to curb pilot fatigue, ALPA's influence in Stage II of the U.S./EU air service talks, and the recent business of the International Federation



Capt. Rice

of Air Line Pilots' Associations, of which ALPA is a member.

"Whether it's our reputation as experts in the field of safety or our aggressive prowess in labor negotiations or our proven influence in the regulatory and legislative arenas, including in the international realm—the world has placed us on a symbolic pedestal as a group to emulate," he said. Rice reminded the pilot leaders about the individual roles each ALPA member plays in representing the union. "Every one of the 53,000 ALPA pilots who make up this remarkable, influential, effective union is the face of ALPA."

Just as ALPA continues to evolve and grow as an organization, so does the union's infrastructure. The services the union provides to its members are of utmost importance and are what sets ALPA apart from other organizations.

"Adding value for our members continues to be a high priority as we focus on streamlining processes, adding benefits, and offering additional conveniences," said Capt. William Couette, ALPA's vice-president-administration/secretary.

He reviewed new enhancements to the Association's website and voting procedures. These changes, Couette said, such as offering new options for voting and implementing RSS feeds and Twitter service (the latter of which was launched at ALPA's annual Air Safety Forum in August), were implemented to remain connected to ALPA members who prefer to receive information electronically, especially when traveling.

Membership numbers are also positive, Couette said. "The past 6 months have brought some changes to ALPA's membership base. Despite the economic environment we have dealt with this year, membership has increased to 53,361, thanks to bringing in AirTran and Colgan. I see this as a solid step in affirming ALPA's Unity Resolution, adopted at the 2000 BOD to reach ALPA's goal of representing all airline pilots in the U.S. and Canada."



Capt. Helling

Capt. Randy Helling, ALPA's vice-president-finance/treasurer, noted during his report to the Board that as the union continues to increase its arsenal of resources, it has done so while aggressively confronting financial challenges brought about by the global recession and fluctuations in the airline industry. ALPA continues to exercise fiscal responsibility while meeting the needs of its members.

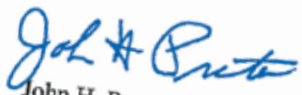
"Because of our collective



Capt. Couette

...similar with u...ive safer...
 ...pressur...jeopardizing them, and compromising aviation safety as a result.

In closing, I would reiterate that ALPA pilots expect and demand professional performance of ourselves and our peers. In turn, we expect the FAA to fulfill its responsibilities in a professional manner and not be influenced by news media pressure to forgo deliberative processes. We stand ready, as fellow safety professionals, to participate in all efforts to improve aviation safety through complete investigation and protection of vital aviation safety programs.

Sincerely,

 John H. Prater
 President

Excerpt of a letter from Capt. Prater to FAA Administrator Randolph Babbitt on the Aviation Safety Action Program, Oct. 29, 2009

efforts—your efforts—we have stabilized ALPA’s finances. We are doing more with less, we are functioning efficiently, and we are living within our revised budget.” (See “Strengthening Our Union: A Financial Perspective,” page 8.)

Fighting fatigue

ALPA’s quest to stem pilot fatigue has been a 70-plus-year struggle. Leading the most recent efforts to combat fatigue through defined science-based requirements and limitations, ALPA has played a prominent role in what will potentially be the new FAA regulations governing flight-time and duty-time regulations.

To position itself to have maximum influence over the

(ICAO) and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Associations (IFALPA).

Jumping the gun

Recent events catapulted another safety issue to the top of ALPA’s Executive Board agenda: preserving the integrity of voluntary aviation safety reporting programs. The leaked information from the recent Northwest Flight 188 incident is of grave concern to the Association, which has been a supporter and promoter of such programs as the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) as a way to use confidential data to prevent future accidents and incidents. Prater said that leaking this information “undermines voluntary reporting programs that are proven to help make our already safe air transportation system even safer.”

In letters to FAA Administrator Randolph Babbitt and NTSB Chairman Deborah Hersman, Prater underscored that ALPA supports the highest standards of professional behavior for airline pilots, but “at the same time we expect aviation safety professionals throughout government and industry to adhere to similarly high standards in ensuring that all facts surrounding incidents and accidents are allowed to be brought to light.” (Visit www.alpa.org to read ALPA’s statement, along with the



ALPA Members: To read more information about ALPA’s landmark pilot fatigue policy, visit www.alpa.org and login to the Members’ only site. The November 3, 2009 FastRead provides a summary of the policy, a link to the new policy, and four additional articles that discuss ALPA’s history, the scientific principles behind the revised ALPA FTDT policy, the FAA’s NPRM process, and ALPA’s role in the FAA’s Aviation Rulemaking Committee.

pending revisions to FAA’s flight-time/duty-time regulations, it was essential that ALPA’s Executive Board decide whether to amend ALPA’s current policy. After a thorough briefing by Capt. Don Wykoff (Delta), chairman of ALPA’s Flight-Time/Duty-Time Committee, Delegate Committee 4 created a resolution to support the change. ALPA’s Executive Board, in turn, unanimously endorsed the resolution regarding ALPA’s new policy on flight- and duty-time limitations and rest requirements. (For more details, see “ALPA’s Leaders Approve New Flight-Time, Duty-Time, and Minimum Rest Policy,” page 19.) The new policy also calls for supporting fatigue risk management systems and brings ALPA policy in line with current guidelines issued by both the International Civil Aviation Organization

letters sent to Babbitt and Hersman.)

ALPA’s Executive Board also passed a resolution that “directs the ALPA president in the strongest terms to use all available means to ensure that the NTSB and the FAA take necessary actions to prevent the release and/or misuse of voluntarily submitted information and recommit to protect the integrity of the programs to ensure robust data protections are in place now and into the future.”

Preserving the integrity of ASAPs is clearly at the forefront of issues airline pilots are facing. The Board’s resolution prompted a discussion from the floor that demonstrated the pilots’ outrage regarding this breach of trust and their firm resolve to have ALPA aggressively address the issue.

“The process, I believe, has been breached and usurped

in this manner,” said Capt. Lee Moak, the Delta pilots’ MEC chairman and Delegate Committee 1 chair, who moved the resolution. “The ASAP program is set up to handle this incident. We just had to follow the process. Process matters.”

Prater, Moak, and other union leaders agreed that the Association must ensure that the data ALPA members submit to voluntary, non-punitive programs be protected and used *solely* to advance air transportation safety. Prater noted that the FAA’s ASAP has become a cornerstone for proactively advancing safety in airline operations.

“Pilots voluntarily provide information on incidents and accidents as part of a safety reporting program and based on the express agreement that the information will be used only to enhance the safety of flight operations,” said Prater. “If the information provided is then rapidly disseminated to the news media before all the facts are in or the investigation is complete, our industry risks compromising the effectiveness of a proven safety program and the loss of valuable safety data.”

Negotiating, enforcing ALPA contracts a top priority



NMB’s Dougherty

As part of ALPA’s strategic plan to identify and bargain favorable pay, benefit, work rule, and job security patterns and to strengthen contract enforcement, a panel of experts discussed with the Executive Board negotiations-related, administrative, and legislative changes to the Railway Labor Act (RLA) legal framework that could accelerate progress now being made at the bargaining table. The Board unanimously passed a resolution to “implement administrative, bargaining, and legislative actions as required to bring about change in the application of

the RLA as it relates to collective bargaining, mediation, representation, enforcement, and the fundamental right to strike” and report to the May 2010 Executive Board as to steps taken.

On the first day of the meeting, ALPA’s Executive Board also heard from all three members of the National Mediation Board (NMB): Chair Elizabeth Dougherty, Linda Puchala, and Harry Hoglander, who came to the meeting to have lunch with and address ALPA representatives. The NMB is the independent U.S. agency that governs mediation and supervises representation elections for the airline and railroad industries.

NMB chairwoman Elizabeth Dougherty briefed ALPA’s Executive Board on the challenges confronting the NMB’s mediation efforts, noting that 78 mediation cases are currently open. She pointed out that the NMB addresses labor concerns for more than 100 airlines as well as 670 railroads in the U.S. Both Dougherty and Hoglander encouraged



NMB’s Puchala



Rosen

“on the macro level.” The former flight attendant union president and senior mediator talked about participating on the Obama administration’s NMB transition team, along with former ALPA Representation Director Seth Rosen, which reviewed union and industry frustration with the working of the NMB and its administration of the RLA under the Bush White House.

NMB member Harry Hoglander, a former ALPA executive vice-president and TWA MEC chairman, urged pilots to work hard to resolve issues before bringing cases to the NMB.

“It’s impossible for the Board to move cases efficiently if you enter mediation with 256 unsettled items. Don’t come with a parcel full of stuff that as professionals you should do.”



NMB’s Hoglander

From solo flight to last flight

The Executive Board unanimously approved the creation of the Professional Development Group (PDG), and Capt. John Sluys (Alaska), an ALPA executive vice-president and Membership Committee chairman, will serve as chairman.

The PDG initially came about as a 2008 BOD resolution, and ALPA’s Special Representational Structure Review Committee (SRSRC), chaired by Capt. Dave Ryter (American Eagle), was solicited to determine if this new Group could more efficiently manage these various functions as an umbrella organization (see “Guiding Pilot Professional Development from High School to Retirement,” page 21).

The Board passed a resolution to appoint Capt. Jerry McDermott (Continental) the new executive chairman of ALPA’s Pilot Assistance Committee. Resolutions amended MEC voting and ALPA Internet/Intranet structure policies and reorganized the Airport and Ground Environment Group, which functions within ALPA’s air safety structure. Additionally, ALPA presented a “Year in Review” video, highlighting the union’s accomplishments.

To view the video, go to www.alpa.org, and click on the ALPA Channel logo.



Capt. McDermott