ALPA FACT SHEET

Pilot Supply by the Numbers

Regardless of what the airlines are saying, there is no pilot shortage and there are more than enough certificated pilots to meet demand here in the United States. The aviation industry is currently producing more pilots capable of immediately stepping into the right seat than there are jobs available to them.

However, there is a need to hold airlines accountable for the $63 billion in taxpayer subsidies they received during the pandemic, money that was designed to maintain their workforce and prepare for the economic recovery we are experiencing today. Instead, they are cutting service to small communities and trying to blame the frontline aviation workers who saved their businesses during the pandemic.

According to the FAA's *Civil Airmen Chart** (Table 17), a total of 15,591 new air transport pilot (ATP and R-ATP) licenses were issued between 2019 and 2021. During that same time, approximately 9,671 pilots retired. Simply by the numbers, there remains a surplus of approximately 6,000 pilots available to meet the needs of the airlines.

While the pandemic accelerated some early retirements at the airlines in 2020, the average yearly attrition of pilots reaching age 65 is approximately 2,500.

The average number of ATPs issued per year since 2012 is 6,500. Growth is expected, yet even if that numbers stays the same, that equates to a ***surplus of 4,000 pilots annually***.

Five of the seven largest passenger air carriers currently have more pilots now than they did in 2019 prior to the pandemic.

Hiring at the major airlines has also increased at a rate never before seen. Between September 2019 and February 2020, the total number of pilots hired at the majors was 2,812. By comparison, from September 2021 to February 2022, the total number of pilots hired was 5,313—still under the total number of ATP and R-ATP certificates issued during this time period.

**https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation_data_statistics/civil_airmen_statistics/*

The 618 pilots hired in January 2020 was a new monthly record at the time. Recent data by month exceeds that figure (October: 791, November: 720, December: 982, January: 1,136, February: 1,049, March: 1,247).

After being propped up by American taxpayers, airlines are now canceling routes, cutting service to small and rural communities, and adding newer routes to more profitable leisure destinations. They've also increased by nearly 65 percent the number of delayed or canceled flights due to their mismanagement.

Airlines are looking for ways to boost revenue and many are looking to shed labor costs in any way possible, all while trying to blame the hardworking Americans who flew throughout the pandemic at great risk to themselves and their families—and kept their airlines operating.

SkyWest in particular has been misleading Congress in multiple ways, even after banking more than $1 billion in taxpayer subsidies under the CARES Act. They currently have 466 more pilots than they did in 2019, yet are only flying 85 percent of their 2019 schedules. They claim there is a lack of available pilots, but there is simply a lack of pilots willing to work for the meager salaries offered.

Other airlines in direct competition with SkyWest and other regionals are offering far greater salaries, and SkyWest offers no flow-through or direct-hiring opportunities with any major airline, providing little incentive to join the company.

- Avelo boosted captain and first officer pay, plus signing bonuses.
- Breeze, Sun Country, CommutAir, and GoJet recently increased pay to attract new pilots.
- PSA/Envoy/Piedmont still have retention bonuses of $150,000.

For more information, see: *alpa.org/pilotsupply*.