



Jazz

Pilots Focus On Strategic Planning, Restructuring Committees

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

Ready for takeoff: Jazz Capt. David Berezuk gives the thumbs up from the cockpit of his B-757.

The pilots of Jazz have never backed away from challenges, and this year will be no exception. With their contract firmly in place, the Jazz Master Executive Council (MEC)

is focused on helping the company, Jazz Aviation, LP, evolve as a carrier of choice worldwide. "Jazz pilots will continue to work hard, providing passengers with safe and reliable transportation," says Capt. Claude Buraglia, the pilots' MEC chairman. "We're hoping that 2012 will bring opportunities for the airline to expand into new markets."

Buraglia and the other MEC officers, Capt. Terry McTeer, vice chairman; Capt. Chris Lohse, secretary; and Capt. Barry Turner, treasurer, are developing a new strategic plan for 2012. Included in the plan is a complete restructuring of the committees to ensure the most effective use of resources. "During our fall MEC meeting in Toronto, we began to look at our current committee structure to ensure that we have the most efficient means to deliver services to our members," Buraglia says. "A key component to achieving the goals outlined in the MEC's strategic plan is to ensure that the pilots have the appropriate support structures."

Some integral parts of the pilots' support structure are effective communications, including regular MEC bulletins; pilot unity-building events, which give pilots an opportunity to meet in an informal environment with their elected MEC officers; and the new flagship publica-

tion, *Jazz Chronicle*. The MEC believes that new-hire pilots should be educated about the benefits of belonging to an international union. "This education should also include an understanding of the nuances and language in our collective agreement so that Jazz pilots are able to defend the agreement when necessary," says Buraglia.

In 2010, the pilot group steadfastly pulled together to land an industry-leading contract that produced significant pay, pension, and benefit gains. After an intense collective bargaining round in Canada that spanned 14 months and caught the attention of airline indus-

try analysts and members of Parliament, Jazz pilots ratified a six-year collective agreement effective through June 30, 2015. The pilots achieved increases in their pay rates, per diem, and defined-benefit plans and a reduction in benefit costs. Unlike more traditional pilot contracts, the Jazz contract compensates pilots for their status, either as a captain or first officer, which is adjusted on an annual basis to reflect the current fleet composition regardless of the equipment they fly.

Last year, the pilots and the airline solidified a charter contract with Thomas Cook PLC, the world's second-largest tour operator, flying six B-757s to winter getaway destinations. The five-year charter contract has spread

beyond its original eastern operation and now includes travel from Vancouver and Calgary to Jamaica, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. Although the charter flying is currently a small percentage of the airline's business, it has provided the company an opportunity to diversify.

"The most effective tool we possess is a unified and professional pilot group that demonstrates strong support for the MEC," says Buraglia. "That support is fundamental to our collective success as we move



to meet the inevitable challenges that will face us, as well as exploiting the opportunities that will present themselves in the future."

JAZ at a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1997
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 1,500
- **Operations:** Jazz carries approximately 27 million passengers per year on 800+ flights daily to 85 destinations across Canada, the United States, the Caribbean, Mexico, and South America. Under its contract with Thomas Cook, Jazz flies weekly flights from eastern Canada to destinations in the Caribbean and Mexico
- **Pilot bases:** Vancouver, B.C.; Calgary, Alb.; Toronto, Ont.; Montreal, P.Q.; Halifax, N.S.
- **Headquarters:** Halifax, N.S.
- **Fleet:** 135 airplanes, including Dash 8-100/300/400s, Bombardier CRJ100/200/705s, and B-757s