

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The Next Phase of Interisland Travel

By Lydia Jakub
Senior Communications Specialist

Island Air

To further position itself as the leader in interisland travel by taking advantage of the rebounding travel industry in Hawaii and new business opportunities, Island Air spent much of 2012 making changes from the inside out. The company developed a new business plan and appointed a new executive team to implement the plan, which includes a new brand image and a new airplane fleet type.

In February 2012, the company announced its intent to introduce three ATR 72-212s into the fleet by the end of the year and three additional ATRs in 2013. However, this was amended in September 2012, and the company now plans to add a total of five

only Dash 8-100s, so management's plan to introduce new aircraft triggered a provision in the pilot contract to begin negotiations for appropriate pay rates. The contract also states that if an agreement is not reached by the in-service date, the issue will be presented to a neutral arbitrator on an expedited basis, and the rates, once established, will be retroactive to the in-service date.

Since the company announced its plans to refleet earlier this year, MEC officers and ALPA negotiators have been meeting regularly with management to address issues arising from the new equipment and to provide pilot input on business opportunities that management

to provide more flexibility to the company (while improving pilots' quality of life), and several changes intended to provide management with some scheduling efficiencies and cost savings.

Meanwhile, the company proposed current Dash 8 (37-seat) pay rates for the ATR 42, which has 47 seats; a 10 percent increase over current pay rates for the ATR 72, which has 66 seats; and other changes to pilot pay calculations and work rules.

"The company cannot expect our pilots to be paid less for flying larger aircraft and working longer hours," Vories says. "We are committed to the success of Island Air and want it to prosper. Our proposals have been reasonable, recognizing the challenges within the industry while allowing pilots, management, and other stakeholders to benefit from the refueling. We stand by our goals and will continue working to achieve fair compensation and work rules for our pilots either through a consensual agreement with the company or arbitration."

It has become clear in recent months that securing a mutually acceptable agreement with management will be challenging. Though not their preference, the pilots are fully prepared to move the issue to expedited arbitration if an agreement is not reached in the near term. 



F/O Jonathan Bernath and Capt. Will Hall with their Dash 8.

ATR 42s. The airline took delivery of the first in October 2012, and expects several more through 2013 to replace the current fleet.

"We welcome the opportunities that these new aircraft will bring and are excited to take advantage of the burgeoning interisland traffic," says Capt. Monte Vories, chairman of the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC). "During the economic downturn, the company went into survival mode and focused on its core business. Island Air is now hiring and acquiring new aircraft. We are encouraged by these actions and hope they are an indication of the company's intent to expand upon our quality operations." Island Air currently flies

is considering. They are also working to secure an agreement with fair compensation and a reasonable quality of life that covers all aspects of flying the new airplanes. This includes pay rates for the new airplanes, how sick time and vacation time will be paid and administered with the new rates, training, and other related items. Unfortunately, these discussions have not yet yielded a satisfactory agreement.

The pilots' goal is industry-standard wage rates for similarly sized airplanes. In addition, they provided management with a comprehensive proposal that included the resolution of several pending grievances, a duty rig, several changes intended

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1989
- **Number of pilots:** 50
- **Operations:** Approximately 36 daily flights plus charter service to seven airports throughout Hawaii
- **Service:** Island Air is Hawaii's leading regional airline, serving airports on all major Hawaiian islands with 331 weekly flights between the islands of Oahu, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Kauai, and the island of Hawaii
- **Fleet:** 4 Dash 8-100s