

The American Eagle Master Executive Council has ambitious goals for 2010. Since 1997, Eagle pilots have worked under a long-term collective bargaining agreement that had three abbreviated contract amendment rounds built into the agreement. In 2009 and pursuant to the last of the amendment

rounds, Eagle and the pilots negotiated improvements to pay and work rules. In 2010, the Eagle MEC is beginning to prepare for full Section 6 negotiations, which will begin sometime before

Jan. 1, 2013, and has already begun the process of providing information to pilots, only a third of whom were employed during the last Section 6 negotiations.

Despite having successfully completed the last of its three contractual amendment periods in 2009, many challenges remain. Among those is AMR management's recent decision to outsource some of Eagle's Chicago operations to another carrier. Processing this grievance will be a significant priority for the Eagle MEC in

parties to the case (ALPA, the Allied Pilots Association, American Eagle, and American) are unable to do so. This should be the final chapter in "Letter 3," which established an Eagle pilot's right to future employment at American in exchange for furlough protection for American pilots.

By mid-2010, some much-awaited movement in Eagle pilot ranks will be initiated by delivery of the first of an additional 22 CRJ700s. This has played a critical role in recalling the remaining furloughed American Eagle pilots. Additional aircraft and the movement of Eagle pilots to American will likely require Eagle to hire new pilots in 2010.

Also this year, the Eagle Training Department will begin developing its Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) and change from a traditional training philosophy to a more dynamic training approach, which is expected to enhance and improve the training experience for Eagle pilots. "Pilot volunteers will be very involved in this process, and we look forward to rolling up our sleeves to make it a success," says Capt Dave Ryter, the MEC vice-chairman.

Eagle pilots are also involved in their union and are taking on challenging issues. "Eagle pilots play an important role in the forefront of our profession," says Capt. Tony Gutierrez, the pilots' newly appointed MEC chairman. "We have pilots serving our union by holding national offices and key committee chair positions." Eagle pilots are contributing to and making a difference on issues such as the FAA Reauthorization Act and the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act. "Our pilots will also be leading the way in working with educational institutions to develop pilot training programs that meet new FAA requirements," Gutierrez says, "and they continue to serve notably in air safety, critical incident response, and HIMS capacities."

Indeed, this pilot group has some of the U.S. airline industry's most senior and experienced pilots. "We are pleased that management has finally acknowledged that pilot experience is the single most valuable asset of its pilot workforce, and not a cost item on a balance sheet that should be targeted for cuts," Ryter says. 🌐

American Eagle

Eagle Pilots Use Experience to Secure a Fair Contract and Improvements For the Piloting Profession

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



PHOTO BY WILLIAM A. FORD

An American Eagle CRJ at DCA.

2010 and will certainly affect the Eagle pilots' preparation for Section 6 negotiations in 2013.

One of the MEC's goals in 2010 is to complete the process of securing a fair transition for Eagle pilots who hold American Airlines seniority numbers. EGL pilots originally negotiated these rights in the 1997 flow-through agreement. When AMR improperly filled vacancies that belonged to EGL pilots, the pilots grieved management's actions and, in arbitration, won an award ordering retroactive application of the flow-through provisions to 244 EGL pilots who should have been sent to training at American Airlines as early as June 2007. Arbitrator George Nicolau retained jurisdiction to administer the remedy portion of the case if the four

EGL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1996 (after the National Mediation Board election, the American Eagle—Executive, Flagship, Simmons, and Wings West—pilots voted to establish a single MEC)

Number of Pilots: 2,700+

Pilot Domiciles: Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Los Angeles, Miami, JFK, La Guardia, and San Juan

Operations: 1,700+ daily flights to 150+ destinations in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Bahamas; point-to-point service; sister company with American Airlines under the AMR Corporation

Headquarters: Ft. Worth, Tex.

Fleet: 210 airplanes, including Super ATRs, EMB-135/140/145s, and CRJ700s