

THE PILOTS OF ALPA

Drawn from a diverse mix of aviation professionals, ALPA is stronger for the distinct challenges and varying perspectives that distinguish each of its pilot groups. Turn the page to learn more about the foundation of the Association—its members. 



The AirTran pilots' 2010 New Year's resolution, after 6 years of negotiations, came to fruition with the signing of a new contract on November 19. Of the pilots casting ballots, 86 percent voted in favor of the new agreement.

Throughout 2010, the pilots' Master Executive Council

(MEC) and its volunteers continued the difficult task of bargaining with management. The MEC and the Negotiating Committee ensured that management understood the lengths to which the AirTran pilots were willing to go to

Railway Labor Act (RLA). On May 18, while the AirTran shareholders gathered for their annual meeting, F/O Linden Hillman, the pilots' MEC chairman, announced the results of the strike authorization vote—98 percent of the pilots voted to authorize a strike—and then led nearly 100 pilots in picketing outside the event.

Meanwhile, the SPSC mobilized volunteers and prepared to open a strike center in Atlanta, Ga. With the help of ALPA staff and the national SPSC, the AirTran pilots had a fully operational strike center as negotiations continued into the fall and the MEC prepared for the possibility of seeking a release into self-help from the National Mediation Board (NMB).

On the morning of September 27, however, the MEC awoke to the unexpected news that Southwest Airlines had announced a merger with AirTran. A new willingness to finish the contract soon brought management back to the bargaining table, and a tentative agreement was reached in short order. The agreement included pay raises as large as 35 percent on date of signing, significant work rule improvements, an increased company retirement contribution, and perhaps most importantly, enhanced scope and job security provisions.

The new contract became effective on December 1, and the MEC has established an Implementation Committee to resolve disagreements with management that might occur over the interpretation of the new agreement. Hillman says, "We are committed to abiding by the terms of our new agreement according to the agreed-upon time line

for its implementation. We expect management to do the same, and we pledge to do our level best to see that an agreement ratified by 86 percent of our pilots is enforced 100 percent of the time."

The MEC also established another committee, the Merger Committee, at the end of 2010. Four pilot members, selected to work on behalf of the AirTran pilots with the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA), are in the midst of talks regarding establishing a process agreement before beginning negotiations on seniority list integration. Seniority list negotiations will likely begin in the first quarter of 2011.

As AirTran pilots await the decision from the Department of Justice and the subsequent decision from the two airlines' shareholders, they know that they are not alone—they have the dedication and support of ALPA leaders, fellow pilots, and staff members, which they have had throughout their negotiations and will continue to have throughout the merger transition. 

AirTran

What's Next for AirTran Pilots?

By **Toni C. Vacinek**
ALPA Communications
Specialist



AirTran pilots picket in May 2010 at the company's shareholders' meeting in Milwaukee, Wisc.

garner a long overdue contract.

The efforts in 2010 to unify the pilot group and send a message to management included launching a vigorous communications campaign that incorporated billboards, radio advertisements, banner tows, informational pickets, rallies and family awareness events, Strategic Preparedness and Strike Committee (SPSC) newsletters, video messages from the MEC, webisodes, and a website dedicated solely to the negotiations.

The MEC also sought strike authorization from the pilot group, giving the MEC authorization to call a strike if and when deemed necessary within the guidelines of the

ATN at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2009
Number of Pilots: 1,700+
Pilot Domiciles: Atlanta, Ga., Milwaukee, Wisc., Orlando, Fla.
Headquarters: Orlando, Fla.
Operations/Services: Founded in 1992, AirTran Airways is one of America's largest low-cost airlines and offers quality jet service with more than 700 daily flights to 69 destinations. It is the second-largest airline at the world's busiest airport, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and has major operations in Baltimore, Md., Milwaukee, Wisc., and Orlando, Fla.
Fleet: 86 B-717s and 52 B-737s

For the pilots of Air Transat, 2010 brought challenges as the group's future hinged on the outcome of collective bargaining efforts that produced a 13-month roller-coaster ride and kept negotia-

tors for both the pilots and management hanging in the balance.

After some unexpected curves along the way, the pilots ratified a collective agreement in October 2010. The Air Transat Master Executive Council (MEC) credits the pilots' commitment to solidarity and their resolve to hold firm on an unbreakable strike mandate.

"Together we worked to develop the strongest possible position to achieve the best outcome for our pilots and for management: a viable, profitable, and sustainable airline," says Capt. Sylvain Aubin, the pilots' MEC chairman. "We will remain a unified group as we now work to implement the details of the ratified contract in 2011."

The new collective agreement brought wage increases and significant improvements to job safety and security. The pilots successfully negotiated for improved working conditions that include a new bidding and fatigue risk management system, and they anticipate that more pilots will be hired in the spring. In a letter of understanding, Air Transat pilots also negotiated for the possible integration of narrowbody aircraft into their current fleet. "We have a respectable contract that reflects the priorities of our pilots," says Capt. Brad Small, the pilot group's Communications Committee chairman and a member of ALPA's Canada Board. "The pilots of Air Transat stood

solidly behind our highly experienced Negotiating Committee, and the unity we showed and our resolve to stick together paid off for all of us," Small says.

"Our experience within the ALPA family leaves us optimistic that contract implementation will move along smoothly because of the resources and support available to our MEC," says Aubin. Throughout the negotiations process, Air Transat pilots were backed by a \$1 million grant from ALPA's



F/O Pierre-Alexandre Senechal.

Major Contingency Fund (MCF), which provides pilots with the necessary resources for responding to threats to their jobs and to the airline piloting profession.

In addition to contract implementation, the issue of pilot fatigue and the need for revised flight- and duty-time legislation are top priorities for the pilots. Using the Association's experience as a participant in last year's FAA Aviation Rulemaking Committee, the group is working with other Canadian pilots to bring about much-needed change to current flight- and duty-time rules that push the limits of pilot exhaustion. Capt. Martin Gauthier, chair-

man of the ALPA Flight Time/Duty Time Committee for Canada, believes the time is right for Canada to amend its flight- and duty-time regulations. "We need a level playing field for everybody, and the Canadian aviation regulations need to fix that." The MEC remains committed to working with management to establish a fatigue risk management system on the property in 2011.

The pilot group anticipates many more challenges in the coming year—Open Skies agreements, carbon taxes, and fleet renewals are among the most pressing. "Since we are in the middle of an international market, we must always look forward and be ready to work with our management as partners," says Aubin.

Air Transat is largely an international charter operator with approximately 14,000 flights per year from gateways across Canada. The airline specializes in both scheduled and chartered flights from several Canadian cities to global vacation destinations including the Caribbean, the company's main business during the winter months. The pilots transport 3 million passengers annually to nearly 60 destinations in 25 countries including Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK. 

TSC at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1999
Number of Pilots: 360
Headquarters: Pierre E. Trudeau International Airport, Montreal, PQ.
Pilot Bases: Montreal, PQ.; Toronto, Ont.; and Vancouver, B.C.
Fleet: 18 A310s and A330s

Air Transat

Air Transat Pilots Steer Roller-Coaster Bargaining to Safe Ground and A Solid Contract

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

The year 2010 concluded on a high note for the crewmembers of Air Transport International when their Master Executive Council (MEC) Negotiating Committee secured a tentative

Air Transport International

Air Transport International Crewmembers Look Forward to Reaping Benefits In 2011

By Tawnya Burket
ALPA Communications Specialist

agreement in December.

The tentative agree-

ment, if ratified, will be the first contract for the crewmembers since they joined ALPA in 2009. Although the agreement came to fruition after only nine face-to-face negotiating sessions with management, the crewmembers' journey to get to this point has spanned more than 6 years.

While negotiating for their second-ever contract, the crewmembers continued to work under a contract that became amendable in May 2004. On two separate occasions, management presented the crewmembers with subpar tentative agreements, and the crewmembers voted down both of them. The pilots and flight engineers subsequently took a strike vote, and 100 percent of those who participated voted to endorse a strike, if necessary. The crewmembers were preparing to do whatever it took to get the fair and equitable contract they deserved. Led by Capt. Tom Rogers, the group's current MEC chairman, the crewmembers unified and backed a new flight plan, which included joining ALPA.

"Looking back over the past year, I think coming to ALPA was the right decision for our crewmembers. The Association's resources and expertise have proven to be

quite beneficial to us, and I couldn't be happier that we obtained a tentative agreement within the short time we've been part of this union," says Rogers.

Almost a year ago, the pilots' Negotiating Committee, along with Capt. John Prater, then ALPA's president, attended a dinner with management in Little Rock, Ark., and the team shook hands on a deal to present to the members. The proposed 48-month agreement includes pay increases as well as improved

the details of the tentative agreement. The MEC also activated its Pilot-to-Pilot® (P2P) program on the property. These P2P volunteers are ambassadors of the MEC and will be armed with the most up-to-date information relating to the tentative agreement to relay to their fellow crewmembers on the line. Road shows will take place in Ohio at the hub city of Toledo and at the training center in Cincinnati, and the MEC will hold a telephone/web conference for those who



F/O David Ryan in front of his B-767 just after arriving in Sydney, Australia.

work rules and quality-of-life enhancements for the cockpit crewmembers.

"The tentative agreement that we reached on Dec. 3, 2010, has many improvements for the crewmembers including securing home-basing, which has been a provision that topped the crewmembers' list of desires in every survey since 2004," Rogers says.

The Negotiating Committee is undertaking an extensive educational campaign in February to inform the crewmembers about

are unable to attend a live event. The crewmembers will vote on the tentative agreement after the road shows conclude in February, with plans to have results available in March.

With the tentative agreement under their belts, the MEC, pilot negotiators, and crewmembers can chalk up 2010 as a productive year, and they are looking forward to 2011, when they will reap the benefits of their hard work and dedication and the sacrifices that they've made over the years. 

ATI at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA:
November 2009
Number of Crewmembers:
180
Operations: DC-8 and B-767
passenger, military, and cargo
operations around the world
Base: Home-based
Hub Cities: Toledo, Ohio and
Miami, Fla.
Corporate Headquarters:
Little Rock, Ark.

Air Wisconsin pilots have 397 reasons why they deserve a new and improved contract, and at their October negotiations opener they presented them to Air Wisconsin

Air Wisconsin

Pilots Open Negotiations With A Roadmap To Success

By Kimberly Seitz, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



F/O Stephan Wessel, the pilots' Communications Committee chairman, during news media training in December 2010.

Airlines Corporation (AWAC) management. The 397-point opener was designed to serve as a roadmap to a deal that would give contract gains to the pilots while allowing for the continued success of AWAC.

"We are looking for gains during this round of negotiations," says Capt. Mark Lockwood, the pilots' Negotiating Committee chairman. "Our detailed opener focuses primarily on much-needed quality-of-life improvements and eliminating 'gray areas' from the current contract. Considering that management has been in contract negotiations with the Association of Flight Attendants – Communication Workers of America since 2009 and the International Association of Machinists since 2008, the pilot group is well aware that negotiations may not be quick. However, based on several pilot surveys that the Negotiating Committee conducted, the pilot group demands significant improvements and is ready to fight for them."

The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) and Negotiating Committee spent a significant amount of time preparing for these negotiations, which they hope will lead to an agreement.

Much of the language in the pilots' existing contract, which becomes amendable

in October 2011, stems from negotiations conducted in 1999–2000 and designed to be renegotiated in 2005. However, in 2003 management and pilots, in an effort to retain the United Airlines codeshare agreement, negotiated and ratified a concessionary restructuring letter of agreement that resulted in a contract extension. The company lost the United flying and subsequently invested in US Airways during its bankruptcy and began operating as US Airways Express in 2005.

The pilots are looking for four types of change to the contract: small adjustments, new concepts, deletions, and additions. All changes in the opener are designed to

- adapt the current agreement to Air Wisconsin in 2010 recognizing the new codeshare partner, new domiciles, new leaders, and changed schedules,
- recover the losses from the pilots' concessionary agreement in 2003,
- recognize airline industry issues, such as fatigue and the impending pilot shortage,
- streamline the agreement and certain processes, and
- clarify various specific provisions of the current contract.

The MEC has also been in close contact with the other US Airways Express ALPA pilot groups, which have formed the US Airways Express Pilots Alliance. "The Alliance was created to prevent whipsawing one ALPA pilot group against another," says Capt. Joe Ellis, the pilots' MEC chairman. "This cooperative effort prompted our negotiators to attend ongoing negotiating sessions at Piedmont and PSA, as all three pilot groups work together to negotiate collective

bargaining agreements that complement, rather than compete with, each other." Rounding out the Alliance are Colgan (which is now a part of Pinnacle Airlines Corporation), Mesa, and Trans States pilots.

During the 2008 economic downturn, management furloughed approximately 60 pilots (about 10 percent of the pilot group). During the furlough period, the pilot group created the Pilot Furlough Assistance Committee to keep in contact with furlougees, provide leads to other pilot jobs, and negotiate preferential hiring at other airlines. Fortunately, all furlougees have been able to return to active employment, and management started hiring new pilots in 2010.

AWAC is the largest privately held regional airline in the United States. With its 70 CRJs, it exclusively provides feeder services for US Airways under a fee-for-departure agreement. AWAC averages approximately 500 daily departures, mostly out of US Airways' hubs and from LGA and DCA. 

ARW at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1982 as a result of the Union of Professional Airmen merger with ALPA

Number of pilots: 665

Operations: Nearly 500 departures per day to 26 states and 3 Canadian provinces; with service to 70 cities throughout North America, the airline carries nearly 6 million passengers per year
Headquarters: Appleton, Wisc.

Domiciles: New York (LGA); Norfolk, Va. (ORF); Philadelphia, Pa. (PHL); Raleigh-Durham, N.C. (RDU); and Washington, D.C. (DCA)
Fleet: 70 Canadair 50-seat regional jets (CRJ200s)

Alaska

Working Together, Pilots Move Forward

By Jenn Farrell
ALPA Communications Specialist

With tailwinds of change propelling them forward, the 1,455 pilots of Alaska Airlines are soaring toward a horizon of new technologies at their company, the possibility of new industry regulations, and a new leadership structure for their Master Executive Council (MEC).

Last fall, Alaska Airlines announced that it was embarking on two new programs, which began rolling out in December. In the coming months, all Alaska pilots will be carrying iPads as part of a trial program in conjunction with Jeppesen's Airside Services. If the trial period goes well and the initiative gains final FAA approval, these iPads will replace the pilots' traditional flight bags. The MEC is in the process of reviewing the iPad program and will be communicating to the pilot group about any concerns or items to be aware of as the iPads are distributed.

Additionally, CrewPASS could soon become a reality. And looming ahead are potential changes to the FAA's flight-time/duty-time regulations, which, like the rest of the industry, Alaska pilots are watching closely. While the eventual language and effect won't be fully known until a final rule is handed down, what happens, when it happens, and how any new regulations are to be implemented undoubtedly will affect the way business is done.

On March 1, the MEC will transition its representation structure from the status representative model to block representation, in which each local council still will elect three local executive council (LEC) officers, but the number

of voting MEC reps in each base will depend upon the number of pilots in that base. Last fall and winter, the pilots elected new LEC officers and block reps who will take office on March 1. Among them are new volunteers and returning reps. The MEC leaders also saw a change when Capt. Sean Cassidy, then-MEC chairman, was elected ALPA's first vice president at the union's recent Board of Directors meeting.

The MEC also is looking forward to welcoming more furloughed pilots back to the

With all of the changes expected in 2011, the MEC is maintaining its focus on the four key objectives it established in 2010 to ensure that the pilot group stays on a path to success.

"Last March, we introduced four key goals for the MEC: improving communications, committee development, contract compliance, and contract preparation," says F/O Paul Stuart, the pilot group's MEC chairman. "As we look ahead, we're going to continue on the course



F/O Mike Reinmuth, Council 67 secretary-treasurer, takes minutes at a local council meeting.

cockpit. Alaska began 2010 with 106 pilots on involuntary furlough. By the end of 2010, 68 pilots remained involuntarily furloughed, and 18 of them have received recall letters for class dates in January and March 2011.

"Obviously, we were pleased to see that Alaska Airlines shared our belief that recent vacancies should be filled by recalling pilots from furlough," says F/O Will McQuillen, the pilots' Membership Committee chairman and furlough coordinator. "We are continuing to work with management to advocate for the return of as many pilots as possible and will not be satisfied until every furloughed pilot has been offered the opportunity to get back into the cockpit."

we plotted, because with all the change around us, a clear and consistent focus becomes even more crucial to protecting and defending our contract and the quality of our careers."

And as in years past, the key to success—whether it is in the realm of negotiations, defending the contract, safety, or security—lies in the unity of the pilot group.

"Without the participation of our 1,455 pilots, there is only so much we can do at an MEC level," Stuart says. "What we've accomplished, and how far we've come, is a real testament to the fortitude and commitment of the Alaska pilot group, and we're confident that by working together, we can continue moving forward in a positive direction." 

ALA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1947
Number of Pilots: 1,455, including 62 on involuntary furlough as of Jan. 4, 2011; 12 additional furloughed pilots have received recall letters and are expected to return by the end of March
Operations: 413 daily departures to 61 destinations in the United States, Mexico, and Canada
Domiciles: Anchorage, Alaska; Los Angeles, Calif.; Portland, Ore., and Seattle, Wash.
Fleet: 116 B-737-400/-700/-800/-900s

American Eagle pilots are entering the final 2 years of a 16-year contract signed in 1997. They expect 2011 to be a year of great change. The long-term agreement was designed to

American Eagle

American Eagle Pilots Poised for Great Change

By Capt. Richard Krutenat, American Eagle Communications Committee Chairman

bring about stability and put an end to the whipsawing of American Eagle pilots by joining four separate carriers serving American Airlines (AA): Executive, Flagship, Simmons, and Wings West. Included in the 16-year contract were three contract amendment rounds. The agreement was signed just months after ratifying a four-party agreement with ALPA, the Allied Pilots Association (APA), AA, and American Eagle that provided furlough protection for AA pilots in the form of RJ captain positions. This same agreement gave Eagle pilots a way to obtain AA seniority numbers, allowing them to “flow through” to the mainline when AA was hiring.

“No one could have known that the most traumatic decade in U.S. airline history was right around the corner,” says Capt. Tony Gutierrez, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “9/11 and substantial furloughs at AA brought a host of grievances and arbitrations. No one imagined a scenario and the resulting ramifications of a flow-back/flow-through arrangement during simultaneous AA pilot furloughs and a growth cycle at American Eagle.”

The Eagle MEC has spent the better part of a decade fighting to protect the Eagle pilot group while preserving the flow-through rights

of Eagle pilots holding AA seniority numbers. At times, it has been an uphill battle.

Now, the Eagle pilots are at a crossroads. On one hand, AA may be on the verge of a prolonged period of pilot recalls. There remain approximately 450 Eagle pilots with AA seniority numbers who may find themselves in AA training classes in 2011. Additionally, due to a recent arbitration, another 824 Eagle pilots will have preferential hiring status when AA is unable to fill its classes with AA furlough recalls.

On the other hand, it appears that AMR Corporation, the parent company of AA, is still intent on divesting Eagle. Many Eagle pilots are concerned a divestiture could signal a future of AMR reverting back to whipsawing its regional feeders, just as it did in the mid-1990s. This will be a major factor for many Eagle pilots in their decision to stay with Eagle or go to AA.

Other Eagle pilots wonder if AMR is looking for ways to “creatively” address AA’s scope clause, which is the most restrictive among legacy airlines, by divesting Eagle and increasing its use of codesharing. If successful, evading AA’s scope clause in that manner would hurt Eagle pilots, AA pilots, and the airlines they work for.

“The Eagle MEC strongly believes that this is a perfect time for AA mainline and Eagle regional pilots to come together and make a stand for the future of the flying profession at American Airlines,” Gutierrez says. “Any AA pilot can look across the ramp at Chicago O’Hare and see the proliferation of regional airliners that are flying routes formerly flown by AA pilots. This MEC understands

the emotion that runs deep for AA pilots who have seen their careers stalled. However, this may be the time to take the lead in the industry and craft a new solution to the problem of pitting mainline pilots against regional pilots.”

The Eagle MEC believes that together with AA pilots it can present a competitive business plan that will address scope issues, career expectations, and job security for both pilot groups, and will also give AMR a competitive edge in the industry.



Capt. Rich Krutenat, Communications Committee chairman, gives his son, Nathan, a tour of the cockpit of an Embraer 145.

Whatever happens at American Eagle this year will largely depend on the decisions of the AA pilot group and the AMR Board of Directors. Regardless, Eagle pilots are preparing for some significant movement in their seniority list. The American Eagle Training Center is gearing up to hire 300 to 400 pilots in 2011 to accommodate movement and upgrades in every fleet and every domicile. 

EGL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1995 (although Simmons had been an ALPA member since 1986, after the NMB’s 1995 ruling that the four predecessor airlines constituted a single carrier, the Eagle pilots established a single MEC)

Number of Pilots: 2,857

Pilot Domiciles: Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Los Angeles, Miami, New York JFK and LGA, and San Juan, PR.

Operations: More than 1,700 daily flights to more than 150 cities throughout the United States, Canada, the Bahamas, the Caribbean, and Mexico

Headquarters: Ft. Worth, Tex.

Fleet: 39 CRJ700s, 118 EMB-145s, 59 EMB-140s, 18 EMB-135s, 39 ATR 72s

Just one year ago, ASTAR employed 517 pilots and had a fleet of 44 airplanes. Today, the number of pilots remaining on the property is fewer than 100, and just 8 DC-8s remain active. However,

ASTAR

A Time to Rebuild

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications Specialist

the pilots are looking to the future, not to the past, to save not only their careers, but also their company.

In late 2010, ASTAR bought back from DHL the remaining shares of the company, making ASTAR fully independent from the shipping company. Before this, DHL was—in



S/O Art Penot, the new ASTAR S/O rep, in the cockpit of a DC-8 freighter.

addition to being the airline's biggest client—a 49 percent owner. This move will allow ASTAR to reorganize its billing structure, moving away from the contractual model to one that is more similar to a fee-for-departure operation.

"We're hoping that this new structure will allow our company to pursue other revenue options," says Capt. George Chetcuti, the pilots' Master Executive Council chairman. "We're in a competitive and constrictive marketplace, and anything that may open up new roads for this company is good for the pilots."

But much work needs to be done. The pilot group has been savaged by not only the economy, but also the

lingering effects of 2008. That year began with the pilots optimistic about their new and enhanced contract, but the year ended with everyone affiliated with DHL doubtful about the future.

In 2008, just 3 months after signing a contract with the pilots, DHL announced plans to hand over to UPS, one of its chief competitors, all of DHL's cargo operations in North America. The move would have effectively shut down ASTAR, as well as the remnants of Airborne Express and a recently built sorting facility in Wilmington, Ohio. The outcry was immediate, and ASTAR pilots led the charge.

After months of negative advertising; picketing in Ohio, Florida, and New York; and congressional hearings that openly questioned not only the legality of the agreement between DHL and UPS, but also the ethics behind it, DHL's market share plummeted. The value of the deal between UPS and DHL was now worth just 10 percent of the original estimates. Without much fanfare, DHL and UPS slunk away from the agreement.

At the end of 2008, DHL announced it was leaving the U.S. shipping market completely. It proceeded with plans to shut down its facility in Wilmington, Ohio, and moved all of its remaining operations (mainly packages shipped from overseas to the U.S.) to its Cincinnati facility. Ironically, this site was abandoned in 2005 when the company moved to the then new Wilmington location. DHL was the largest employer in the Wilmington area. The aftershocks of the company's exit reverberated throughout the city, forcing additional

layoffs and business closures. By late 2009, more than two-thirds of the city's working population was unemployed.

In spite of these economic setbacks, ASTAR abided by the contract signed in 2008, including the contract's no-furlough clause. This kept all pilots hired before March 2008 at their pay status though March 2010. After that date, the company furloughed more than 80 percent of the pilots, many of whom had been with ASTAR for more than a decade.

Those pilots who remain on the property are the most senior. All of the current active pilots were captains at the once-thriving ASTAR, but now two-thirds of them have been downgraded to first officers and second officers and have seen their pay rates go down respectively. The most junior active pilot on ASTAR's seniority list has been flying with the company for more than 20 years.

"As MEC chairman, my main focus has been to protect as many jobs as possible at ASTAR, and to bring our pilots home," says Chetcuti. "However, we've also been working with other ALPA pilot groups to get interviews for our furloughed pilots. Even though these pilots are no longer actively flying for ASTAR, they are still ASTAR pilots to us. We will do everything we can to get them back in the air—whether here or at some other company."

Left with only eight airplanes, ASTAR's future may hinge on eventually changing its fleet and bringing in additional clients. Should this play out, ASTAR will be able to rely on the expertise and experience of its pilot group to help rebuild the once-thriving company. 

DHL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1991
Number of Pilots: 84
Headquarters: Miami, Fla.
Pilot Base: Cincinnati, Ohio
Fleet: 8 DC-8-73Fs

When the pilots of Atlantic Southeast Airlines started 2010, they couldn't have predicted it would end with a merger, joint contract negotiations, and the potential to be

Immediately upon learning of the merger, the Atlantic Southeast and ExpressJet MECs began collaborating and formed a Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) to work toward a single contract. The

However, the merger shelved these plans and negotiations efforts have focused on a combined contract.

Going into the merger, the pilots should be proud of what they have accomplished. In early 2010 after 2 years of work, the group crafted a next-generation preferential bidding system (PBS) that's designed to be an enhanced scheduling tool. By creating their own system, the pilots removed any chance that a company-mandated PBS could be used as a weapon against the pilot group—as PBSs have been used at other airlines. The group also obtained pay raises and improved working conditions in exchange for extending their 2007 contract for one year and putting the PBS in place. The MEC has been overseeing the PBS, making sure it meets all of the detailed and strict requirements set forth in the agreements that implemented the system.

As work continues toward a single operating certificate and a single seniority list and contract, Atlantic Southeast pilots have every reason to be optimistic about 2011. "We're not only committed to our airline, we are also committed to our union," Nieuwenhuis points out. "We have the strength and the unity to meet any challenge thrown at us and to proactively seek and cultivate future opportunities."

Atlantic Southeast

Focusing on a Merged Future

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications Specialist

the largest regional airline in the world.

On Aug. 4, 2010, SkyWest Holdings Inc., the parent company of Atlantic Southeast, announced that it intended to purchase ExpressJet and combine it with Atlantic Southeast. The resultant airline, to be called Atlantic Southeast Airlines, will be the largest regional airline in the world—with approximately 4,300 pilots and an extensive list of destinations, expanding the airline's routes to most of the United States.

On November 12, all of the legal requirements to proceed were met when the ExpressJet and SkyWest Holdings, Inc., shareholders approved the merger. The merged company is now working toward combining the operations and—most significantly for the pilots—the employee groups with a single operating certificate by the summer of 2011.

"If crafted, developed, and administered well, the merger of Atlantic Southeast and ExpressJet can lead to a corporate platform that serves as a model for the rest of the industry—a safe, high-quality, and profitable powerhouse that respects and shares success with its hardworking employees. We look forward to accomplishing this goal," says Capt. David Nieuwenhuis, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman.

JNC has been reviewing the individual Atlantic Southeast and ExpressJet contracts to find common ground and areas where enhancements can be made. In November, the JNC sent a negotiations survey to all pilots to gauge priorities for the joint contract. The group has been working closely to prepare for negotiating sessions slated to begin early this year.

Pilot leaders from both groups have met often to discuss immediate issues as well as to plan for the future. In December, the groups held their first formal meeting of the two full MECs in one room, providing an excellent opportunity for in-person discussions. For 3 days, the groups discussed the status of the merger and the pilots' expectations for the upcoming negotiations.

"By meeting jointly, we are preparing for the day when we are one airline and one pilot group," says Nieuwenhuis. "This meeting built upon prior work and discussions between the officers and provided an excellent opportunity for the pilots to sit down and forge common goals that will benefit our airline, our careers, and our profession."

The merger announcement drastically changed the pilot group's plans for 2010 and 2011. On May 20, less than 3 months before the merger announcement, the pilots began Section 6 negotiations by preparing an early contract opener. This would have set in motion negotiations for a new contract during 2011.



F/O Jonathan Coker in the cockpit of his Canadair jet.

ASA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1987
First ALPA Contract: Nov. 28, 1989
Number of Pilots: 1,700
Headquarters: Atlanta, Ga.
Pilot Bases: Dulles, Va., and Atlanta, Ga.
Fleet: 112 CRJ200s, 38 CRJ700s, 10 CRJ900s

Since the sale of its Northern Division to Wasaya in 2003, the pilots of Bearskin Airlines have carved out a solid niche, offering daily scheduled passenger service throughout Ontario and Manitoba.

Bearskin

With Change On the Horizon, Pilots Remain Optimistic

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

Bearskin Airlines currently operates a fleet of 14 Metroliners, with more than 100 departures daily to 17 destinations in Ontario and Manitoba. No other airline offers more service between northern Ontario's key cities. Thunder Bay, Ont., and Sudbury, Ont., combined feature more than 25 departures daily and act as Bearskin's major hubs, linking northern Ontario's five largest cities and a number of smaller communities to Winnipeg, Man., and Ottawa, Ont.

"Bearskin has found its place in the commuter world and appears to be doing well," says Capt. Danny Parnham, the Bearskin pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. The pilots, who are mainly based in Thunder Bay, with two smaller pilot bases in Sioux Lookout, Ont., and Winnipeg, Man., fly routes as far south as Kitchener/Waterloo, Ont., and as far north as Flin Flon, Man. East/west operations extend from Ottawa to Winnipeg. Additionally, Bearskin has increased its service between Ottawa and Kitchener/Waterloo from three to four flights daily.

Change is in the wind once again for the pilots as they prepare for another sale of their airline to the Exchange Income Corporation (EIC). The investment group, which purchased Calm Air in 2009, made a public offering to buy Bearskin for \$32.5 million. "I believe the sale of Bearskin to

EIC is a positive move," says Parnham. "EIC is a progressive corporation that capitalizes on the potential for growth in its select purchases."

EIC has publicly expressed its intention to expand Bearskin as the corporation has done with the other three airlines it has purchased. The company currently operates in two niche business segments: special manufacturing and aviation, consisting of Perimeter Aviation LP, Keewatin Air LP, and Calm Air International LP. "Every airline EIC has invested in has seen substantial growth," Parnham explains.

Bearskin has also confirmed its intention to take over the southbound routes from Thunder Bay formerly served by Delta Air Lines. The airline hopes to develop a partnership with Delta, thereby adding Bearskin flights to and from Minneapolis, Minn., with passengers having the option to connect to Delta flights as needed. Due to the increase in flights, the airline will be hiring additional pilots. As a result of all this expansion, Parnham is optimistic about the future of Bearskin Airlines and its employees.

The pilots' fourth contract was ratified in 2006, and to date no grievances have been filed. "Our contract is starting to reap the rewards of maturity and a positive labour-management relationship," says Parnham. Advancements in the current contract focused on quality-of-life issues. "Contract No. 4 provided pilots with improved work rules beyond the basic parameters found in Transport Canada's current flight-time/duty-time regulations," says Parnham. "When the time comes to negotiate our fifth contract, we will strive to reach a settle-

ment that will benefit not only the pilot group, but also our airline's business plan."

For the Bearskin pilot group, as with many other Canadian and U.S. pilot groups, fatigue is a critical factor in daily operations. Bearskin pilots fly as many as 12 legs per day in 704 aircraft without the assistance of an autopilot. "As exhausting as this is, many more carriers have no limit to cycles and routinely fly more than 12 legs per duty day. Fatigue is an issue that doesn't affect



Capt. Sean Faid preflights his Metroliner.

just our personal lives but also those of our families and the flying public. An accident should not be the catalyst for changing our country's flight-time/duty-time regulations," Parnham says.

In 2011, the Bearskin MEC plans to continue working with other ALPA pilot groups to establish improved flight-time/duty-time regulations for Canadian pilots. As an appointed member of the ALPA Flight Time/Duty Time Committee for Canada, Parnham says he is 110 percent committed to bringing science-based improvements to the current Canadian flight-time/duty-time regulations. "I will advocate to the best of my ability the concerns of 703 and 704 pilots in Canada," says Parnham. Under Canadian aviation regulations, the 703/704 weight classification refers to airplanes with 19 or fewer seats. 

BRS at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1997 (became an ALPA-represented pilot group when CALPA merged with ALPA)

Number of Pilots: 65

Pilot Bases: Thunder Bay, Ont.; Winnipeg, Man.; Sioux Lookout, Ont.

Headquarters: Sioux Lookout, Ont.

Operations: Daily scheduled passenger service between Flin Flon, Man.; Kitchener/Waterloo, Ont.; Ottawa, Ont.; Winnipeg, Man.; and communities in between

Fleet: 14 Metroliners

The past 2 years have produced dramatic changes for the pilots of Calm Air as they faced a major transition in ownership that shifted the airline from a family-owned business to a large company, the Exchange Income Corporation (EIC). Despite the changes, adjusting to the new corporate environment was second nature to Calm Air pilots, who serve the remote regions of northern Manitoba and Nunavut.

“The biggest challenge now, for both our members and the Master Executive Council (MEC), is to embrace the changes and grow with the company,” says Capt. Dan Cowan, the pilots’ newly elected MEC chairman. The pilots seem to be doing exactly that, with a steadily growing fleet and an increase in pilot hiring. “We’ve sur-

passed 100 pilots for the first time in Calm Air history,” adds Capt. Rich Cenerini, the pilots’ MEC secretary-treasurer.

The pilot group has also earned another noteworthy “first”: Calm Air recently became the first airline to operate the ATR 72 in Canada. The pilot group completed its certification process in September 2010 with the first of two ATR 72 freighters making its initial revenue flight on September 17. The ATR 72 freighters will make northern routes more efficient, according to Cenerini. “The ATR 72s have a bigger payload and lower operating costs than

the more traditional freighters such as the HS 748,” he points out.

The experience of other pilot groups around North America, especially ALPA-represented pilots, has provided a wealth of support and knowledge for the Calm Air MEC on how best to navigate the new environment of a corporate-owned company. “In the past, negotiations and pilot issues had been dealt with quickly, as Calm Air was a family business,” says Cenerini. “The new reality for both our pilots and management is that we are now part of a large corporation that has multiple regional airlines in its holdings.”

For 2011, the MEC members believe they will continue to see expansion as new opportunities evolve for Calm Air and its pilots. They are more than prepared for the growing pains. “We are taking an active role to ensure that Calm Air is still an airline where our pilots can establish solid careers,” says Cowan, who acknowledges that many of the pilots have worked hard to build lifelong careers at Calm Air and sees the trend continuing. “Calm Air pilots are truly committed to seeing the company succeed,” he explains. “We have a strong work ethic, and we have been very fortunate that the company recognizes this and continues to work with our union to make Calm Air a desirable and productive place to work.”

“Certain areas of the contract will require small adjustments to facilitate certain flight operations,” says Cenerini. “These adjustments go with the territory and make things more efficient for the pilots and the company.”

Calm Air pilots also believe their collaboration with other ALPA pilot groups in Canada is crucial to improving standards across the airline industry. The MEC is committed to helping provide input on flight-time/duty-time legislation by giving its unique perspective on operating around the clock in one of the most extreme, remote regions in the world—the Canadian Arctic. “Even though we operate in a harsh and unforgiving environment, our great safety record is second to none,” Cenerini says.

The pilots’ contract expires in 2013; however, the MEC will not wait until then to start addressing the pilot group’s priorities. “Calm Air is a profitable airline, and the pilots take a lot of credit for making and keeping it that way,” says Cowan. The MEC would also like to see Calm Air progress as an industry leader in the regional/commuter/freight industry regarding pay and working conditions. “Management is aware of the important role that ALPA plays in helping to grow the company,” notes Cowan. 

CMA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1997
Number of Pilots: 103
Operations: Scheduled passenger and cargo service in northern Manitoba and Nunavut, the newest and largest territory in northern Canada, including destinations along the western shores of Hudson Bay and into the high Arctic
Pilot Bases: Thompson and Winnipeg, Man.
Headquarters: Thompson, Man.
Fleet: 6 Saab 340s, 2 Hawker Siddeley HS 748s, 7 ATRs (2 ATR 72s and 5 ATR 42s), 2 Cessna Caravans

Calm Air

Change Is A Welcome Challenge for Calm Air Pilots

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



A Calm Air ATR 72 lands at Thompson Airport, Manitoba, Canada.

CanJet

Pilots Looking Forward to 2011 And Beyond

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



F/O Adrian Griffiths, CanJet MEC secretary-treasurer, in the cockpit of his B-737.

CJA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2006
Number of Pilots: 123
Operations: Provides subcontracting services to vacation charter airlines
Pilot Base: Halifax, N.S.
Headquarters: Halifax, N.S.
Domiciles: Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal
Fleet: 11 B-737-800s

Transitions are nothing new to the pilots of CanJet. In 2010, the Halifax-based pilots elected a new Master Executive Council (MEC) amidst one of their busiest hiring periods in recent history, more than doubling the number of CanJet pilots since their first contract under ALPA representation was signed in 2008.

The changes came on the heels of a challenging phase that began 2 years ago. In 2009, the pilot group made international headlines after the flight crew of Flight 918, piloted by Capt. James Murphy and F/O Glenn

Johnson, successfully thwarted an attempted hijacking. With the tumultuous repercussions of that event behind them, the newly elected CanJet MEC leaders—Capt. Alex Sirros, the pilots' MEC chairman; Capt. Jon Mason, the vice chairman; and F/O Adrian Griffiths, the secretary-treasurer—are looking forward to 2011 and beyond.

For 2011, the CanJet MEC has already begun taking steps to improve pilot communications, the first

of which is integrating a communications process that engages the pilots. "We're eager to get started on this and a number of goals," says Sirros, who has already begun working on several initiatives to improve pilot unity. "Implementing more effective communications tools is a key priority for us."

The MEC is wasting no time leading efforts to jumpstart an ambitious plan to connect the ever-expanding pilot group, which flies out of locations from Vancouver to Halifax. The MEC began with a quarterly newsletter, *The CanJet Compass*, and then added monthly gatherings for pilots and their families at locations near pilot domiciles. A biweekly "Payday Hotline" message also goes out to the pilots to serve as a safety net for last-minute information that needs to go out on a time-driven basis. "We want to build our present committees and work with them to establish their roles within the MEC structure and ensure that every one of our members has the opportunity to be heard," Sirros says.

In addition to the communications efforts, the CanJet MEC is actively supporting the mission of the ALPA Flight Time/Duty Time (FT/DT) Committee for Canada, chaired by Capt. Martin Gauthier (Air Transat). Griffiths serves as a representative on this Committee. "Flight-time/duty-time issues are not simply pilot concerns," says Griffiths. "They affect every single person who steps aboard an airplane. We at CanJet, along with other ALPA members, are proud to be making positive changes for all airline pilots in Canada and to further enhance pas-

senger safety."

Looking ahead, the CanJet MEC is preparing for collective bargaining, which is set to begin in March 2012. "We are focused on making sure our pilots familiarize themselves with the existing contract," Sirros says. "We want our pilots to know that they can reach out to the MEC for help if they need it. If the MEC is not aware of what is going on, then we cannot help. I cannot stress how important it is for our pilots to keep the MEC informed of situations encountered on the line." Mason agrees that "it's important we recognize the value of learning from our past experiences."

CanJet pilots became ALPA members in July 2006 and ratified their first collective agreement in May 2008. The 4-year agreement provides CanJet with job stability, enabling management to focus full time on building CanJet as Canada's premier charter airline. The airline operates an all-next-generation fleet of B-737-800s that increase fuel efficiency and range while reducing noise and carbon emissions.

With progress also comes challenge. The CanJet MEC is currently working to resolve a scheduling grievance. Establishing timely resolutions to issues such as crew scheduling, base grievances, and master seniority list bidding will continue to be priorities for the MEC as it continues to chart a course for 2011. "CanJet pilots are consistently hard workers, often putting in long hours to provide the top-notch service the passengers have come to expect," says Sirros. "At the end of the day, our pilots have gone the extra mile to do the best job possible." 

Last July, the Capital Cargo International Airlines flightcrew members ratified their first-ever ALPA contract, which included pay increases, a signing bonus, and quality-of-life and work rule

Capital Cargo

Flightcrew Members Gear Up for Future Prospects

By Tawnya Burket
ALPA Communications Specialist

improvements. Over the life of the contract, flightcrew members will see an overall pay increase of 18½ percent. The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) has the option of opening the contract as early as 2012 to begin bargaining for further enhancements.

"The MEC is pleased with the results of the new agreement, which has more than 130 improvements for our flightcrew members," says F/O Chuck Hill, the MEC chairman. "We look forward to the opportunity in 2012 to gear up for negotiations again with the knowledge and experience we gained from negotiating our first ALPA contract."

Since the new contract was implemented on Aug. 1, 2010, management has complied with the terms of the agreement, and the crewmembers have developed a working relationship with their senior management. This relationship is due largely to the decision of Capital Cargo's parent company, Air Transport Services Group, to replace all of the primary management personnel with the current management team. As a result, the new team began working respectfully with pilot leaders to improve pilot-management labor relations instead of adhering to the old regime of managing the airline by intimidation.

Two groups of new hires



The ALPA team makes the new contract official by signing it with management on July 31, 2010, in Orlando, Fla. Clockwise, Capt. Steve Mathis, MEC vice chairman; F/O Chuck Hill, MEC chairman; Capt. Brian Frassetto, Negotiating Committee chairman; Capts. Andrew Forsythe and Doug Brewer, Negotiating Committee members; and John Vestal, vice president of Flight Ops.



The Capital Cargo Master Executive Council and Negotiating Committee pose after the signing of the new flightcrew member agreement. From left, S/O Tim Swigert, former MEC secretary-treasurer; Capt. Steve Mathis, MEC vice chairman; F/O Chuck Hill, MEC chairman; Capts. Doug Brewer and Andrew Forsythe, Negotiating Committee members; Capt. Brian Frassetto, Negotiating Committee chairman; and Terry Saturday, ALPA senior contract administrator.

were also added to the flightcrew team in 2010 with a class in August and in November. Sixteen first officers and nine professional flight engineers joined the ranks and are now flying B-727-200s out of Toledo, Ohio.

The company added and changed routes for both B-727s and B-757s in 2010 and continues to look for opportunities to boost the airline, which makes the flightcrew members hopeful for growth possibilities.

"The year 2010 brought a lot of changes to Capital Cargo and to its flightcrew

members. Many of those changes were positive," says Hill. "We hope to work toward even bigger and more positive changes in 2011."

Capital Cargo is an aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance (ACMI) carrier that provides both domestic and international airport-to-airport transportation services. The Toledo hub operates 11 B-727s for BAX Global freight as a domestic and international operation, while the Miami hub operates two B-757s for DHL as a domestic and international operation. 

CCI at a Glance

Joined ALPA: 2007
Number of Flightcrew members: 137
Headquarters: Orlando, Fla.
Operations: Capital Cargo is an aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance (ACMI) carrier that provides airport-to-airport transportation services both domestically and internationally.
Crewmember Bases: Home-based
Hub Cities: Toledo, Ohio, and Miami, Fla.
Fleet: Currently operates 11 B-727-200s and two B-757-200 PCFs—all aircraft are freighter conversions

Colgan

Pilots Adapt to Change, Stay Focused on Achieving Their Goals

By Barbara Gottshalk
Lead Communications Specialist

December 17 is a date of great significance for Colgan pilots. On that day in 2008, ALPA was certified as the pilots' bargaining agent, and they gained union representation for the first time. Two years later, the Pinnacle-Mesaba-Colgan Joint Negotiating Committee reached a tentative agreement with Pinnacle management, paving the way for Colgan pilots to secure their first contract.

During those 2 years, Colgan pilots have had to face some serious challenges—most notably the Flight 3407 accident and its aftermath—but they have maintained their focus and their unity in meeting those challenges head on. Capt. Mark Segaloff, the Colgan pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, credits the pilot group's determined and dedicated committee volunteers, combined with ALPA National's professional staff and pilot leaders and the unwavering support of the Colgan pilots. "Our pilot group is proof that ALPA membership has its benefits, no matter what the size of the pilot group," Segaloff asserts.

Negotiating their first contract has been the pilots' top priority since joining ALPA. After opening contract talks in fall 2009, the Negotiating Committee and management met regularly, opening on 25 sections and reaching tentative agreements on 16 of them by June 2010. They also finalized a letter of agreement with management that enabled Colgan pilots to deduct ALPA dues automatically from their paychecks.

As the Negotiating Committee made significant progress in contract talks, the

hard work of a number of other committees paid off as well. As management announced the addition of new Q400s to the Colgan fleet, the Scheduling Committee worked diligently to ensure the pilots' concerns were addressed. In addition, changes to the training program were implemented to enhance the training experience for flight crews. The Professional Standards Committee met with pilots throughout the system to promote professionalism. And enhancements to communications included a Colgan MEC Facebook page and an active Pilot-to-Pilot® program.

In 2010, several positive initiatives also came out of the Flight 3407 accident. The Central Air Safety Committee succeeded in implementing a Line Operations Safety Audit (LOSA) program and a Flight Operations Quality Assurance (FOQA) program at the airline. Colgan pilots are heavily involved in both these programs, working closely with management representatives to produce measureable safety improvements.

Building a mutual working relationship with management has been another priority for the pilots, and as a result, management has sought the pilots' input in several areas. For example, Colgan pilots and management worked together to develop a new fatigue policy that represents a significant, positive change in the way fatigue calls are handled. "Despite our differences at times, we were able to work collectively in this process," Segaloff says.

In July, when Pinnacle Airlines Corporation announced that it was acquiring Mesaba Airlines and would combine the Colgan and

Mesaba operations, the Colgan pilot leaders began collaborating with their colleagues at Mesaba and Pinnacle. They immediately recognized the value in negotiating one contract for all



F/O Kyra Ko (who is now a captain), left, and Capt. Barry Nomann, who is the pilots' Negotiating Committee chair.

three pilot groups, and the Colgan MEC and Negotiating Committee quickly shifted to joint contract talks. In November, as part of the joint negotiations process agreement, they reached a key benchmark in securing their rights: the implementation of a disciplinary process and the ability to challenge disciplinary decisions to a System Board of Adjustment—something they did not have before.

Colgan pilots will soon be able to exercise one of the most important benefits of ALPA membership—voting on a collectively bargained tentative agreement. To ensure that all Colgan pilots have a voice in this process, the Membership Committee has launched a campaign to educate pilots about ALPA membership.

As the Colgan pilots continue the merger process with their fellow Mesaba and Pinnacle pilots, they remain focused on the goal of "One Contract, One List, One Voice" and securing their professional futures as a unified pilot group. 

CJC at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2008
Number of Pilots: 540
Largest Pilot Bases: Houston, Tex.; Newark, N.J.; Washington, D.C. (Dulles)
Headquarters: Memphis, Tenn.
Operations: A wholly owned subsidiary of Pinnacle Airlines Corporation, Colgan Air operates as Continental Connection, United Express, and US Airways Express, offering daily scheduled service to 53 cities in the United States and Canada
Fleet: 34 Saab 340s, 14 Bombardier Dash 8-Q400s

Comair

Restructuring Expectations for The Future

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications Specialist

In January 2010, Comair canceled planned furloughs when Delta allocated additional flying to the airline. Many Comair pilots saw this as an indication of a brighter future. But a short 9 months later, on Sept. 1, 2010, Comair management informed the pilots that the company had plans to park 49 of the 93 aircraft on the property by 2012. Comair, which is wholly owned by Delta, will be effectively cut in half and the pilot group reduced from more than 1,100 to approximately 500.

“Obviously, we are deeply disappointed by the company’s plans to restructure the airline,” says Capt. Matt Lamparter, the pilots’ Master

also availed themselves of experts at ALPA. Working closely with the union’s Economic and Financial Analysis Department, the pilots gathered data to help them present options to the company that could mitigate the severe cuts planned for the pilots.

As a result of pilot efforts, Comair management agreed to offer early out/early retirement plans to those wishing to leave the company voluntarily. Approximately 70 pilots took early retirement, which may help some younger pilots stay on the property as the furloughs start in 2011.

The pilots have also struggled with a frustrating game of “musical domiciles.” In 2009, Comair responded to decreased flying out of Cincinnati by changing many pilots’ bases to New York. For many pilots, this meant long commutes just to get to work. In September 2010, the company reversed position and closed the New York base at JFK Airport, with some pilots staying in Cincinnati and others being relocated to Detroit as Comair tries to find a consistent staffing solution.

But these challenges pale when compared to the proposed restructuring set to begin shortly. Comair seems intent on moving away from the 50-seat regional jets that make up most of its fleet. During the next 12 months, management plans to retire 19 CRJ200s. An additional 30 CRJ200s will be retired in 2012. This will reduce the current fleet of 50-seat jets from 65 aircraft to just 16. Comair will continue to maintain its 15 CRJ700s and 13 CRJ900s.

Adding to the pilots’ stress is that in October they opened negotiations for their next contract. Also influenc-

ing the negotiations is the fact that significant contract improvements have been made at comparable airlines. Although the pilots are anticipating a tough round of negotiations, they are resolved to get the fairest contract possible, one that recognizes and rewards their high level of professionalism.

After Comair’s bankruptcy in 2005, to save the company and help it rebuild, the pilots gave almost \$50 million in contract concessions in 2007. Sacrificing quality of life and pay to help their company, the pilots expected management to follow the employees’ lead. Unfortunately, they were disappointed, as management continued to hold to the status quo. As 2010 opened with the announcement of recalls, canceled furloughs, and a better relationship with a new management, it seemed that the company’s outlook was brighter—until the September announcement that the airline would shrink to half its current size by 2112.

As the pilots continue to wrestle with this most recent turn of events, they are looking toward the future with wary, but optimistic, eyes. In November, the group elected a new MEC chair, Capt. Erik Jensen, to help lead them through this restructuring. The MEC also appointed a Negotiating Committee to work for the interests of the pilot group and to protect as many pilot jobs as possible. The pilots plan to move ahead with the same unity and strength of purpose they demonstrated on the picket lines in 2001 during their 89-day strike. Given this pilot group’s history, there is little doubt the pilots will maintain their resolve and solidarity. 



WILLIAM A. FORD

During the next 12 months, management plans to retire 19 CRJ200s. An additional 30 CRJ200s will be retired in 2012. This will reduce the current fleet of 50-seat jets from 65 aircraft to just 16.

Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “However, our commitment has been—and remains—to our pilots and to protecting our contract, our jobs, and our futures. We intend to use the full array of ALPA resources to ensure that any downsizing of the company will have the input of our pilot group and will respect our contract.”

Upon learning of the planned restructuring, the Comair pilot leaders communicated immediately with their fellow pilots and have kept them informed every step of the way. They have

CMR at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1983
Number of Pilots: 1,100 active, 150 furloughed
Headquarters: Erlanger, Ky.
Pilot Domiciles: Cincinnati, Ohio, and Detroit, Mich.
Fleet: 69 CRJ200s, 15 CRJ700s, 13 CRJ900s

At a time when the regional airline industry is engaged in the merger equivalent of an arms race, CommutAir defiantly remains small, although it remains to be seen whether

that decision will be a positive one for its 135 pilots.

CommutAir

Pilots Prepared To Do 'Whatever It Takes' to Achieve Fair Contract

By Rusty Ayers, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

The airline is among the smallest fee-for-departure carriers with ALPA pilots, flying 16 37-seat Bombardier Q200s for Continental Airlines. As many other regional carriers spent 2010 merging and expanding their operations, Cleveland-based CommutAir faces the same industry challenges with much less room for error.

Understaffing and difficult, often fatiguing flying schedules are the major challenges facing the CommutAir pilots as they approach the second anniversary of opening negotiations on their first union contract. The pilots joined ALPA in 2008 and began contract talks under Section 2 of the Railway Labor Act on Feb. 24, 2009.

"Our bargaining goal has always been to raise our pilots to the level of our peers at other carriers, and management's response has been to ask for a 9 percent pay cut that would make us the lowest-paid small turboprop pilots in the country and lower the bar for everyone. That's unacceptable, and we're not going to let it happen," says Capt. Jay Dougherty, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman.

The pilots asked the National Mediation Board (NMB) to intervene in contract talks in December 2010, with the first mediation session likely to take place in January. Virtually all the

open items in the airline's new pilot contract have been settled except for the economic sections. A wide gulf remains between the pilots' and management's expectation on pay rates, despite the fact that CommutAir has remained profitable for the past few years.

"The advantage of mediation is that it starts the clock toward a release and puts the bargaining timetable under federal oversight. Our airline's agreement with Continental doesn't expire for a few more years. Bringing in the NMB can expedite the bargaining process so that our pilots do not have to wait for management to renegotiate that agreement. We're prepared to do whatever it takes to win a fair deal," Dougherty says.

The CommutAir MEC has established its Strategic Planning Committee, ramped up its Pilot-to-Pilot® Committee, and plans to create a Family Awareness Committee in 2011. Complicating matters for the group has been the constant turnover of pilots, both in the leadership ranks and among the pilots flying the line.

"That's an indication of the poor quality of life and compensation, and the situation has resulted in dire understaffing—some pilots have elected to fly in Afghanistan rather than to stay here," says Dougherty, who estimates 30 to 40 percent of the pilot group has left the airline in the past 18 months. "There has been high turnover in the leadership structure, but the big positive is that people continue to step up and do the work of the union. That's inspiring and encourages all of us to carry on," Dougherty says.

The group has responded

when called upon. At its first informational picket, held in Cleveland this past October, one-third of the entire pilot group walked the line, including virtually every pilot who was off work that day.



Capt. Jay Dougherty, the pilots' MEC chairman, right, and other CommutAir pilots show their resolve at the Oct. 26, 2010, informational picket at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

They were joined by ALPA members from 13 other airlines, speaking to the fact that nearly 54,000 ALPA pilots, not just those at CommutAir, are seeking to improve the airline industry. These strong showings of support will only increase when the pilot group expands its strategic preparedness campaign during 2011.

"CommutAir needs to move beyond its current reputation as a starter airline. Pilots who have invested tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars to pursue this career deserve an airline where they can make a career if they want to stay. At the same time, if pilots choose to pursue employment at a larger carrier, they should not have to sacrifice industry-standard wages and work rules to do so. That's why we joined ALPA," says Dougherty, "and that's what we will achieve in our negotiations." 

CMT at a Glance

Founded: 1989
Number of Pilots: 135
Pilots Joined ALPA: 2008
Headquarters: South Burlington, Vt.
Pilot Bases: Cleveland, Ohio, and Newark, N.J.
Operations: CommutAir flies to 23 cities in the U.S. Midwest and Northeast and to Canada under a capacity purchase agreement with Continental Airlines
Fleet: 16 Bombardier Dash 8-Q200s

The past year has certainly been an eventful one for the pilots of Compass Airlines, ALPA's newest pilot group. For more than 2 years, Compass, created in 2007 as a wholly owned

Compass

Meeting the Challenge

By Capt. Vince Barnhart, Compass MEC Chairman, and Rusty Ayers, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

subsidiary of Northwest Airlines, didn't exist as a stand-

alone ALPA pilot group but was instead represented first by the Northwest Master Executive Council (MEC), then by the Delta MEC.

That changed on March 1, 2010, when ALPA's Executive Council created Compass Local Council 19 and Compass became ALPA's 38th MEC, representing 360 pilots. Capt. Eric Cowan, F/O Rendell Schmidt, and F/O Ryan Breznau served as interim officers for the newly independent pilot group until permanent elections were held.

On May 10, Compass's first duly elected MEC took office under a single-council, seniority block representation system, with Capt. Vince Barnhart as chairman and seniority block representative 2, F/O Tony Androsky as vice chairman and seniority block representative 3, and Capt. Steve Peterka as secretary-treasurer and seniority block representative 1. Tragically, Peterka, who had received a 2008 ALPA Superior Airmanship Award for his leadership during an inflight cabin fire, was killed in July in an auto accident. He had served as an MEC officer for just more than 2 months, and his death was a loss for the entire union.

In mid-April, Delta Air Lines announced that it would resume hiring pilots for fall 2010. As a result, Compass pilots had employment rights as new-hire pilots at Delta in

accordance with the Compass flow-through agreement.

But just a few months later, the landscape before the Compass pilots changed dramatically. On July 1, Delta sold Compass to Trans States Holdings, calling into question the Delta flow-through agreement. To preserve the Compass pilots' career expectations, Compass, Delta, and the respective MECs entered into multiparty negotiations with the intention of concluding a negotiated settlement within 60 days.

On August 24, a tentative agreement was reached among Compass, Delta, the Compass MEC, and the Delta MEC regarding the continuance of the flow-through agreement. In simple terms, all the pilots on the seniority list as of Aug. 19, 2010, would be grandfathered with flow-through rights to Delta. The agreement was truly the result of relationship-based bargaining and on the principle of honoring the expectations of the Compass pilots.

October was yet another eventful month for the Compass representatives and pilots. At ALPA's 2010 Board of Directors meeting, the Compass pilots were represented by their own local executive council seniority block representatives for the first time. Capt. Kimberly Sobiech also made history by becoming the first Compass pilot to begin working at Delta Air Lines under the flow-through agreement. In all, some 61 Compass pilots were awarded new-hire class dates at Delta by year's end.

November saw the Compass MEC launch a new Pilot-to-Pilot® program, with ALPA staff training an initial class of nine volunteers in Minneapolis, Minn. The

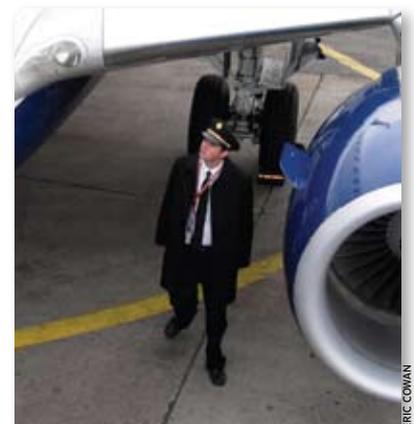
Compass MEC also concluded a new letter of agreement outlining the provisions for using seniority-list instructor pilots in the training center. The agreement is expected to enhance both career opportunities and security for Compass pilots while enhancing training quality and granting further flexibility to the training department.

On November 15, a Compass aircraft was in the news after a birdstrike accident when a flight departing from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport struck a flock of snow geese, damaging the radome and puncturing the forward pressure bulkhead. In spite of the damage, Capt. Michal Randt and F/O Randall Rosen landed their aircraft uneventfully at MSP without any injuries.

From the flight deck to the corporate boardroom, Compass pilots met every unexpected challenge thrown their way in 2010 and emerged successfully. Their next hurdle is building their relationship with their new owners and preparing to assist their fellow pilots at Trans States, who face difficult challenges of their own in 2011. 

CPZ at a Glance

Founded: Compass Airlines was created as a Northwest Airlines subsidiary and began flying on May 2, 2007
Pilots Joined ALPA: 2007
Sale and Acquisition: On July 1, 2010, Delta Air Lines sold Compass to Trans States Holdings, Inc., which announced it would operate Compass as a carrier separate from its other airlines
Number of Pilots: 390
Operations: Compass operates more than 160 flights daily throughout the United States and Canada as Delta Connection
Pilot Bases: Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., and Detroit, Mich.
Headquarters: Minneapolis, Minn.
Fleet: 36 Embraer E175ARs



Compass F/O Robert Berger preflights an Embraer E175 at La Guardia Airport.

ERIC COWAN

The Continental pilots are perhaps better known for change—and their tenacity to emerge strengthened by it—than any other pilot group. So in May 2010, when Continental Airlines announced its merger with United Airlines, it was no surprise

Continental

Pilots Change Focus to Merger

By Amy Flanagan, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



CAPT. KARL NOVAK (CONTINENTAL)

Continental pilots march through the terminal at Newark Liberty Airport in a show of unity and in defense of their contract.

that the Continental pilots were more than prepared to meet the challenges of this newest chapter in their long history marked by mergers and change. Master Executive Council (MEC) leaders, com-

mittee volunteers, and ALPA staff had been planning for the possibility of this megamerger for more than a year, ramping up their efforts after the Delta – Northwest merger in anticipation that more airline industry consolidation would occur.

“We had done so much work beforehand that when the dominoes finally fell, we already had our working relationships in place with our United counterparts and had much of the framework completed for our protocol and transition agreements,” explains Capt. Jay Pierce, the pilots’ MEC chairman. “We had our organizational structure prepared and were able to easily shift our focus from contract negotiations to the merger.”

Since the merger announcement, the MEC has negotiated a protocol with the United MEC, negotiated a transition and process agree-

ment with management, and achieved several milestones in negotiating the joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA). In December, the Joint Negotiating Committee presented its comprehensive counterproposal to management and, in conjunction with management, petitioned the National Mediation Board (NMB) for assistance. Mediator Gerry McGuckin was assigned shortly thereafter.

A merger that will create the world’s largest airline is already noteworthy, but other factors at play with the Continental – United merger could have the potential to affect the entire airline industry. Chief among these is the opportunity to reinforce the importance of pilot involvement to completing a truly successful merger. By repeating and building upon the successes from earlier airline mergers, notably Delta – Northwest, and applying them to a very different “merger of equals,” the Continental pilots can help smooth the way for other pilot groups. And since many airline industry insiders anticipate that consolidation will continue, the Continental – United merger is likely to affect the future of all airline pilots.

The Continental pilots can also help advance the airline piloting profession through successfully achieving their contract goals via the JCBA. The gains sought by Continental and United pilots in the JCBA will strengthen industry cornerstone contract patterns and enhance the ability of other pilot groups to make similar gains in their own negotiations. This important concept helps ensure that contract gains at all pilot groups continue and helps

defeat attempts at destructive pilot whipsawing.

Of course, the importance of job security and scope issues has to be recognized. Continental pilots have one of the more restrictive contractual scope clauses in the airline industry. United Chairman and CEO Jeff Smisek has made no secret of his desire to loosen these scope provisions in the JCBA now being negotiated. Just recently, Continental pilots won an expedited arbitration over management’s decision to test the limits of the contract and violate scope provisions by assigning the CO code to United feeder flights using jet aircraft with more than 50 seats.

“Outsourcing is an outdated practice,” Pierce points out. “It’s time for a business model that promotes expansion and growth at the legacy carriers and enhances career progression for both legacy carrier and regional pilots. I’m confident that intelligent people can come up with intelligent solutions to this problem, if given the chance.”

For 2011, the Continental pilots will continue to focus on gaining benefits from the merger: a JCBA that will provide both the Continental and United pilots with all that they demand and deserve, equity in the merged company, and a fair and equitable seniority list integration. They will also work to secure their role in advancing the piloting profession for all ALPA pilots.

Says Pierce, “When we are finished with the merger and have combined the two MECs and the two pilot groups, we will once again emerge stronger for our experiences. It’s been our history as Continental pilots, and it’s our destiny as new United pilots within the ALPA family.”

CAL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2001
Number of Pilots: 4,760
Number of Pilots on Furlough: 0—All 148 furlougees were sent recall notices in 2010. Furlougees will return by March 2011
Pilot Bases/Hubs: Newark, N.J.; Houston, Tex.; Cleveland, Ohio; Guam
Headquarters: Chicago, Ill.
Fleet: 25 (on order) B-787-8/-9, 22 B-777-200ER, 10/12 B-767-200ER/-400ER, 41/21 B-757-200/-300, 39/32/118/12/30 B-737-500/-700/-800/-900/-900ER
 As Continental Micronesia: 4 B-767-400ER; 4/8 B737-700/-800

Delta

Delta's MEC: Protecting Pilot Interests

By Kelly Regus, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

DAL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: Delta—1934, Northwest—1932
Number of Pilots: 12,313
Operations: Delta is a leader in worldwide alliances including a joint venture with Air France – KLM and Alitalia. Delta and its connection carriers fly domestically and internationally to more than 348 destinations in 64 countries on 6 continents
Pilot Bases: Atlanta, Cincinnati, Detroit, Los Angeles, Memphis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York City, Salt Lake City, Seattle
Hub Cities: Amsterdam, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Detroit, Memphis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York-JFK, Paris, Salt Lake City, and Tokyo-Narita
Headquarters: Atlanta, Ga.
Fleet: More than 700 mainline aircraft consisting of A319s, A320s, A330s, B-737s, B-747s, B-757s, B-767s, B-777s, DC-9s, MD-88s, and MD-90s

Last September marked 5 years since Delta (and Northwest) entered bankruptcy. It has been a challenging half-decade, to say the least, but contrast that with 2010, which has seen pilot hiring, block hours increasing, and a profitable airline.

Delta's turnaround has been dramatic. In addition to navigating bankruptcy, the pilot group was instrumental in defeating a hostile takeover attempt and faced industry challenges including oil market volatility and a severe recession. A positive turning point was the successful merger with Northwest Airlines in 2008. During the merger process, the pilots negotiated a significant equity stake in the company, pay increases, and contractual improvements.

This January, pay rates increased by 4 percent, and Delta's contribution to the retirement plans increased by an additional 1 percent for most Delta pilots. And for the first time since 2007, profit sharing will occur, providing Delta pilots the negotiated opportunity to share in the company's financial success. Today, it is difficult to imagine a viable, healthy Delta without the unprecedented contributions of the Delta pilots. The Delta Master Executive Council (MEC) has also worked tirelessly not only to protect Delta pilot interests, but also to attempt at every opportunity to raise the bar for the entire airline piloting profession. Unity among ALPA-represented pilot groups is essential, as a gain in bargaining for one pilot group can often help strengthen the bargaining power of other ALPA pilot groups.

But much work remains

to be done. With the end of 2010, the Delta MEC is turning its focus to the contract amendable date of Dec. 31, 2012, and full-scale Section 6 negotiations. The MEC will enter negotiations financially well prepared, as the Special MEC Reserve Account (SMRA) already totals \$7 million and continues to grow. Routine efforts will continue unabated on behalf of the pilots, but the MEC's vigorous and renewed attention will turn to upcoming negotiations.

While the Delta MEC



Capt. Tim O'Malley, the new Delta MEC chairman.

retains direction and oversight responsibility of MEC operations, the day-to-day support work is accomplished through the tireless efforts of the extended committee structure consisting of more than 30 committees, subcommittees, working groups, and hundreds of pilot volunteers. In addition, the Association provides support to the Delta pilots with national committees and assigned expert staff from the Representation, Economic and Financial Analysis, Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources, Government Affairs, Retirement and Insurance, Member-

ship Services, Engineering and Air Safety, and Communications Departments.

Of special note is the newly reinstated Delta Pilot-to-Pilot® (P2P) program, a subcommittee of the Communications Committee. As of press time, approximately 100 pilots have volunteered to serve as P2P volunteers. The program volunteers have already completed their first committee-wide conference call, and they will soon be joining Local Executive Council representatives in crew rooms across the Delta system in support of MEC objectives.

On January 1, Capt. Tim O'Malley took the reins as the newly elected MEC chairman. O'Malley has served as the Delta MEC Negotiating Committee chairman through bankruptcy and the merger and also served as chairman of ALPA's Collective Bargaining Committee. Capt. Jim Van Sickle and Capt. Kingsley Roberts were reelected vice chairman and treasurer, respectively. F/O Kevin Guilfoyle was elected secretary.

"Bankruptcy and the merger are behind us, and the Delta pilots played a significant and vital role in helping our company to rebuild and succeed during a very difficult period," remarks O'Malley. "It's now time for our own rebuilding and to focus our efforts on sharing in the success that we were instrumental in creating."

As the newly elected MEC officers settle into their roles, the Delta MEC remains committed to continuing an aggressive and proactive strategy of engagement, with every effort focused on enhancing and protecting the lives and careers of Delta pilots and their families. 

Another year has come to an end, and the Evergreen flightcrew members continue their fight with management to secure a new, fair contract. With a rejected tentative agreement,

a no-confidence vote in their management, a strike authorization ballot sent

to the members, and dates set to meet with management and a mediator at the table, the flightcrew members are preparing for endgame and all the possibilities that lie ahead.

The flightcrew members and management reached a tentative agreement in

meet debt obligations, ALPA verified that the airline has been profitable on an operating basis in recent years, so we remain convinced that the airline can afford reasonable improvements in wages and working conditions for its employees," says Professional Flight Engineer William Fink, the flightcrew members' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "More than a decade has passed since we have enjoyed the perks of a new contract, and we feel that we deserve a pay increase and a fair deal to bring us at least to 21st-century industry standards."

In October, the MEC passed a resolution stating that the flightcrew members lack confidence in the airline's upper management and flight operations management. The crewmembers remained discouraged, as management continued to avoid their concerns and made empty promises. Management's behavior of constantly violating the contract, not addressing the pilot shortage that affects the flightcrew members' quality of life, and an attitude that the flightcrew has had it too good for too long has made the pilots extremely frustrated.

Yet management has hired new flightcrew members and has made an attempt to acquire new aircraft. However, after months of waiting to come back to the negotiating table since the flightcrew members voted down a tentative agreement in August, the MEC took necessary measures to secure a fair contract, including sending out a strike authorization ballot. The strike ballot opened on December 1 and closed January 7. Of the pilots who voted, 97 percent voted to authorize the MEC to declare

a strike once the pilot group is given permission to do so by the National Mediation Board (NMB).

"We certainly want a contract, not a strike," says Fink. "That has been our goal since day one more than 6 years ago. But this strike authorization vote gives us the means to take all legal actions to attain the goal of a fair contract."

The pilots can request a proffer of arbitration from the NMB at any time. If the NMB issues a proffer, either party can reject arbitration. In that event, a 30-day cooling-off period would begin, after which the flightcrew members could legally engage in the first-ever pilot strike at Evergreen.

Fink says, "By taking this step, we are prompting management to stop stalling and to finalize a contract that satisfies the basic needs of its flightcrew members. If management needs to see more visible proof of our resolve—in addition to the overwhelming rejection of the subpar tentative agreement—this vote will no doubt prove that."

The MEC also made the decision to activate its Strategic Planning and Strike Committee (SPSC) to begin preparing for endgame scenarios and educate the members on all strike-related issues with an SPSC newsletter.

The NMB has set mediated negotiations to resume February 22–25 in Dallas, Tex. The MEC's Negotiating Committee is prepared to present management with a proposal that meets the needs of the pilot group and, if it's rejected, will be prepared to move forward using all the resources ALPA has available, including a war chest and the backing of the union's 53,000 members. 

Evergreen

Flightcrew Members Gear Up for Endgame

By Tawnya Burket
ALPA Communications Specialist



Evergreen operates a fleet of 10 Boeing 747s, specializing in charter and contract freighter operations around the globe.

April 2010 after management claimed the holding company, Evergreen Aviation International, was in financial distress. The tentative agreement was essentially a renewal of the current contract that became amendable in December 2004, under which the crewmembers continue to work for 1999 wages and work rules. The duration of this agreement was only 2 years to allow management time to secure long-term financing of its debt. However, the members overwhelmingly voted down the tentative agreement in August 2010 by 96 percent.

"Although the flightcrew members were aware of the holding company's struggle to

EIA at a Glance

Joined ALPA: 2007
Number of Flightcrew members: 228
Headquarters: McMinnville, Ore.
Pilot Bases: New York (JFK), Travis AFB, Calif.
Operations: With a fleet of 10 B-747s, Evergreen specializes in charter and contract freighter operations around the globe

Over the past year, the ExpressJet pilots have dealt with changes in every aspect of their operation, including the departure of respected managers, the appointment of a new CEO,

understaffing, and—most notably—a merger with another airline. In the face

of these challenges, the pilots remain focused on achieving an enhanced contract that will provide them with job security and career growth, even if they will soon be wearing different uniforms.

In early 2010, ExpressJet

became clear that Hanley was more focused on cutting costs and restructuring the airline to prepare the company for a possible sale or merger than on growing the airline internally.

“Somewhere along the way, ExpressJet lost its viable business plan and forgot the vital role that pilots play in the overall success of an airline,” says Capt. Chris Cashmareck, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “Despite these challenges, our pilots continue to deliver outstanding results for our partners and provide our passengers with the exceptional service they have come to expect on our flights.”

Pilot staffing levels soon became a major issue. Instead of working with the pilots on a staffing solution as had successfully been done in the past, management ignored the MEC’s repeated attempts to help solve the problem. As the airline struggled to have enough pilots to fly the routes, contract violations began to mount. In 2010, the number of grievances hit an all-time high of more than 100 open issues.

Management dragged its feet on setting arbitration dates to resolve the grievances—until the MEC threatened management with legal action.

On Aug. 4, 2010, the landscape changed again. SkyWest Holdings, Inc., announced its intention to buy ExpressJet Airlines and merge it with Atlantic Southeast Airlines, making it the largest regional airline in the world with approximately 4,300 pilots.

The ExpressJet MEC spent several weeks reviewing and evaluating the proposed transaction with legal counsel, subject-matter experts, and professional staff. The pilots

informed management what was needed to ensure pilot support: a profitable airline that provides long-term stability and progressive career potential for the pilots, fully complying with the pilots’ scope and successorship provisions, a joint collective bargaining agreement that benefits all pilots, and a fair and equitable seniority list integration.

The corporate close of the merger was completed in November. Now officially under the Atlantic Southeast umbrella, the ExpressJet pilots have begun to collect on the promises that Atlantic Southeast management made to them. The majority of grievances have been closed, and the staffing situation has been resolved. However, MEC leaders continue to closely monitor staffing to ensure that it meets the pilots’ needs and those of the operation. On another positive note, all of ExpressJet’s furloughed pilots were recalled in 2010, and management anticipates hiring 96 pilots during the first quarter of 2011.

As the merger continues to progress, the ExpressJet pilots find themselves in familiar territory. They are ready to move forward into Section 6 negotiations and to improve their contract—but this time, they are joined by their fellow Atlantic Southeast pilots.

“We may be two pilot groups, but we are one union with one vision and one goal,” says Cashmareck. “It will take the strength, courage, and determination of all 4,300 pilots of the new Atlantic Southeast working in unison to make the necessary improvements to our contract and fully realize the benefits of this merger.”

ExpressJet

Pilots Turning Challenges into Opportunities

By Lydia Jakub
ALPA Communications Specialist



Capt. Chris Belcastro, left, Capt. Mark Wapenaar, and other ExpressJet pilots (not pictured) participate in a Labor Day parade in Cleveland, Ohio.

pilots were ready for Section 6 negotiations to improve their contract. Building on their past contract gains, the pilots had every reason to believe that negotiations would go as planned. Instead, they found themselves in a fierce battle with management. In just one year, the cooperative labor-management relationship built with the company’s former president and CEO, Jim Ream, who retired in 2009, had disappeared.

In April, Tom Hanley was named ExpressJet’s new CEO and immediately gave the pilots a sense that stable leadership had returned to the company. This sense of stability died quickly when it

XJT at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2004
Number of Pilots: Nearly 2,600
Operations: Flies more than 40,000 passengers per day to 130 destinations in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean with approximately 1,100 departures daily
Pilot Bases: Chicago, Ill.; Cleveland, Ohio; Houston, Tex.; Newark, N.J.
Headquarters: Atlanta, Ga.
Fleet: 244 EMB-145 LRs and XRs

FedEx

Pilots Look to Build on Past Successes

By Capt. Chuck Dyer, FedEx Express Communications Committee Chairman, and Courtney Bland, ALPA Communications Specialist

The FedEx Express Master Executive Council (MEC) began its second ALPA-negotiated contract talks in 2010. Building on contract gains from Contract 2004, the MEC's focus is on a timely, narrowly focused Section 6 negotiations process, respectful of the contributions the pilots bring to the corporation. The amendable date for the pilots' contract was Oct. 31, 2010. To date, the pilots have been able to reach tentative agreement on 12 of 31 sections. "We are encouraged by the current pace of our contract negotiations. We remain hopeful that this negotiation will reach a favorable conclusion in a timely fashion," says

Action Program (ASAP) and a Flight Operations Quality Assurance (FOQA) program at the airline. Both will help move the corporation forward in the area of flight safety as they are part of an overall safety management system (SMS). "While we are closer than we have ever been in reaching an agreement on these two programs, much more work is still needed to finalize discussions and then successfully implement the programs," Stratton says.

The ongoing work to adequately address cargo screening in a realistic and prudent manner was brought home by the tragic UPS B-747 accident in Dubai early in 2010. Added to that were the attempted bombings of a FedEx flight in Dubai and a UPS flight in the United Kingdom, which once again highlighted the need for enhanced cargo screening. The MEC has been working with the appropriate agencies and FedEx Corporation to see that positive, prudent changes are implemented. "These efforts are ongoing, and the MEC leaders will not rest until we can ensure that the safety and security of our fellow pilots and their aircraft are attained," says Capt.

system is unique in that it can easily shift the focus of its lift requirements on fairly short notice so that when immediate need is warranted, aircraft and crews can be assigned with minimal system interruptions to our core customers," says F/O Rich Hughey, the pilot group's MEC Scheduling Improvement Group chairman.

The 4,494 FedEx Express pilots are spread across the globe, represented by six councils located in three domiciles, which includes the Hong Kong foreign duty assignment base. Distance always poses a challenge when it comes to communicating with the pilots, but the MEC officers and Unity Team members continue to travel wherever FedEx pilots are located for face-to-face meetings. Additionally, the MEC is using updated quarterly newsletters, e-mails, videos, its website, and its text notification service to provide the most current information to its pilots. In 2010, the MEC also formed an extensive Pilot-to-Pilot® Committee with more than 10 percent of the pilots involved, and this number continues to grow.

With more than 375 airports served worldwide, the airline has an extensive and varied fleet. The pilots deliver approximately 3.5 million packages and 11 million pounds of freight daily to 220 countries and territories, including every address in the United States. With 223 million peak holiday season shipments, FedEx Express expects worldwide volumes to increase 11 percent from a year ago.

This improvement is welcomed by the pilots of FedEx, and they look forward to a profitable 2011. 



CAPT. DENNIS BEAULIEU (FEDEX)

F/O Pete Harmon (now a captain) during a flight from Delhi to Shanghai while dodging thunderstorms over Bangladesh.

Capt. Scott Stratton, the pilots' MEC chairman.

This past year, the pilots reached an agreement with management to conduct a Line Oriented Safety Audit (LOSA). The observation flights were completed a few months ago, and the results are currently being tabulated. The LOSA is the first step for the pilots in increasing the airline's safety awareness.

Over the last several years, the MEC has continually attempted to gain an agreement with the corporation for instituting an Aviation Safety

Bill McReynolds, the pilots' MEC Security Committee chairman.

The year also brought the pilots the opportunity to fly relief missions to Chile in the wake of the country's devastating earthquake and tsunami and to Haiti after the country's massive earthquake. The pilots also provided lift to support the rescue of trapped miners in Chile. These flights continue a long-standing history at FedEx Express of providing logistical support to people in dire situations around the world. "The FedEx

FDX at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: June 1993 – 1996; rejoined ALPA in June 2002
First ALPA Contract: October 2006
Number of Flightcrew Members: 4,494
Headquarters: Memphis, Tenn.
Fleet: 77 B-727s, 48 B-757s, 11 B-777s, 71 A300s, 53 A310s, 75 MD-10s, 60 MD-11s

Two years after joining ALPA, the pilots and flight engineers of First Air are working with management to improve working conditions at the airline while adding new service in response to increasing pressure from competitors in the Canadian Arctic.

The flightcrew members' contract expired Dec. 31, 2010, and they have been in negotiations since early December after assembling a Negotiating Committee and developing a bargaining strategy. Using an interest-based bargaining process, negotiators have passed dozens of proposals across the table and have tentatively agreed to several contract sections within just a few weeks of talks.

Capt. Jamie Biggs, the cockpit crewmembers' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, says a major goal for the pilots' first ALPA contract is to standardize contract language so that the collective bargaining agreement more closely resembles the contracts of other ALPA pilot groups.

"Our contract is structured differently from those of other ALPA pilot groups. We want to restructure our contract language so that it's easier to compare our compensation, benefits, and work rules with those of our peers, and management has been helpful so far in agreeing to those structural changes," Biggs explains.

First Air flight crews fly to some of the most isolated places in the world, providing a vital lifeline of food, fuel, mail, and other necessities to Arctic communities. In addition to its fleet of combi-configured B-737 classics and turboprops, the airline operates a B-767 freighter

and the only civilian-operated Lockheed Hercules transports in Canada. These civilian C-130s are in great demand for charter flying, usually providing heavy lift for mining and petroleum companies but also for unusual operations, including disaster relief. After a January 2010 earthquake devastated Haiti, both the Hercs and the B-767 were kept busy transporting an entire portable water treatment plant and other relief supplies to rescue workers.

The Canadian government



CAPT. JIM MERRITT

Capt. Jim Merritt stands in front of a Lockheed L-382 on Doris Lake, Nunavut, Canada.

pays airlines to fly needed commodities such as food and mail into isolated areas on regular schedules. These food-mail contracts, an essential component of First Air's revenue, are now being administered by three northern retailers instead of Canada Post, a change that could lead to more competition and lower revenues for northern airlines that fly food-mail routes.

At the same time, First Air, which once had a near-monopoly in serving much of the north, is facing new competition from other airlines serving its routes, including Air Canada, WestJet, and CargoJet. The airline's response is to partner with a tribal corporation to begin

new service to seven communities in the Kivalliq region of Canada's Nunavut Territory. An Inuit-owned corporation itself, First Air's new Kivalliq service will extend the airline's reach from the central and eastern parts of Nunavut into the northwest.

Unlike many negotiations in which compensation is the major issue, quality of life—especially while on trips—is equally important for the flightcrew members. Because food, housing, and the basic necessities of life are extraordinarily expensive in the Arctic even with government subsidies, pilots working at the Iqaluit base and elsewhere live in "crew houses" under rudimentary conditions.

"Think of a dormitory or a crash pad, only not nearly as luxurious," says Biggs. "Our younger pilots especially spend many of their off-duty hours sitting in cramped crew houses with very little to occupy their time. Improving their comfort is a priority in these contract talks, especially since we will likely be creating new crew accommodations in the northwest as our flying expands into Kivalliq."

First Air flightcrew members have long been represented by an in-house union, the First Air Pilots Association. FAPA leaders agreed to join ALPA in 2008, recognizing that membership in a large, powerful international union would give them a much greater voice and bargaining power.

"It was a good decision for us," Biggs points out. "We now have substantially deeper financial resources and staff support than we ever had when we were a stand-alone union, but we still have the sovereignty to make our own decisions." 

First Air

Flightcrew Members Spread Their Wings

By Rusty Ayers, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

FAB at a Glance

Founded: 1946, as Bradley Air Service, First Air is now owned by Makivik Corporation.

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2008

Number of Flightcrew Members: 130

Pilot Bases: Ottawa, Ont.; Yellowknife, NT; Iqaluit, NU; and Edmonton, Alb.

Headquarters: Kanata, Ont.
Operations: First Air provides scheduled passenger and cargo service between 30 northern communities as well as charter service worldwide

Fleet: 6 B-737-200s, 1 B-767F, 9 ATR 42-300s, 2 Lockheed L-382 Hercules, 1 Hawker-Siddeley 748

After years of living under a concessionary bankruptcy-era contract, the pilots of Hawaiian Airlines entered 2010 by ratifying a lucrative new work agreement. Their challenge

Hawaiian

Gearing Up for Growth

By Rusty Ayers, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

for the coming year is to help their airline successfully manage its aggressive

growth and stay prepared for the unexpected, especially a potential buyout or merger. In a sense, the pilots are victims of their own success, but few are complaining.

After several years of contract negotiations led to an impasse and 99 percent of the pilots approved a strike vote, in January 2010 the pilots ratified a new 5-year contract with industry-leading pay rates for the Boeing 717 and 767 and the second-highest rates in the industry (behind Delta) for the new A330s coming on the property. The new collective bargaining agreement also raised company contributions to the pilots' retirement accounts, reestablished profit-sharing, and improved most work rules.

The new agreement came none too soon, as Hawaiian began replacing its B-767 widebody fleet with A330s this year. The first 3 A330s are now on the line, with 13 more firm orders for delivery over the next 5 years, and the airline plans to acquire even larger A350s in the future. The A330s offer Hawaiian increased seating and payload capacity, longer range, and better fuel economy, which will allow the airline to pursue long-term plans of expanding service both east and west.

Management has publicly stated that Hawaiian would like to expand its U.S. main-

land presence beyond the West Coast. It recognizes that the West Coast – Hawaii travel market is highly competitive and offers limited growth opportunity, so Hawaiian is actively seeking East Coast destinations that are currently underserved for future growth.

Looking to Asia, Hawaiian sees even greater growth opportunity. In November, Hawaiian began daily service to Haneda Airport, located in downtown Tokyo, and in January 2011, Hawaiian will inaugurate service to Incheon-

line's unique route structure and sound finances make it an excellent investment, so our MEC has made it a top priority to be prepared for any potential merger or acquisition activity."

One of the pilot group's greatest successes in 2010 was the creation of its new Community Service Committee. In just more than a month of work, the Committee raised more than \$3,000 to buy Christmas gifts for sick children, held a holiday party at a children's hospital in



JAN W. STEENLIK

Thanks to their ALPA contract, the pilots of this Hawaiian Airlines B-717, on short final for Lihue Airport, earn industry-leading pay rates.

Seoul, Korea. On the horizon, the company would like to add more destinations in Japan, with China also on the airline's radar.

"We're very excited about the airline's growth plans, but the biggest uncertainty we're facing in this era of airline consolidations is whether we can survive as a stand-alone company," says Capt. Chris Elley, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "The Hawaiian pilots have seen a lot of equity funds and management teams come and go over the years, but the common denominator is that none of them were interested in owning an airline long term. We recognize that our air-

Honolulu, and began a flight pass donation program to reunite families from neighbor islands with their hospitalized children on Oahu. In 2011 the pilot group plans to continue its charitable work with such organizations as Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, the Hawaii Food Pantry, and the River of Life Homeless Shelter.

"We feel very blessed by all the good things that have come to us this year, and we want to share those blessings with others," Elley says. "With a proud 80-year history of serving the islands, we're looking forward to hiring more pilots, flying to more places, and bringing the aloha spirit to more of the world in 2011." 

HAL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1948
Number of Pilots: Approximately 450
Headquarters: Honolulu, Hawaii
Bases: Honolulu, Hawaii, and Seattle, Wash.
Operations: As the only transpacific airline based in the Hawaiian Islands, Hawaiian's widebody fleet flies to all major markets on the U.S. West Coast. International operations are conducted to American Samoa, Tahiti, Sydney, Manila, and Tokyo, with service to Seoul, Korea, set to begin in January 2011. Interisland, Hawaiian operates approximately 120 daily flights connecting the islands of Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii
Fleet: 15 B-717-200s, 4 B-767-300s, 14 B-767-300ERs, and 3 A330-200s. Firm orders for 13 more A330s and 6 A350XWBs, with additional Airbus options

Aug. 18, 2010, marked the 30-year anniversary of Island Air, making it the second-oldest airline in Hawaii. The grand celebration paid tribute to the airline's passengers with festivities

in the airport, special services aboard aircraft, and commemorative souvenirs.

Island Air also named its fleet to symbolize its past, present, and future.

"For 30 years, we have provided our passengers with exceptional service and promoted the highest level of professionalism both in and out of the cockpit," says F/O Diana Feddersohn, the pilot group's Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman.

"The demand for interisland and leisure travel fluctuates with the economy, and despite significant challenges over the past several years, Island Air has survived. This viability is a direct result of the contributions and sacrifices we have made over the years, and we will continue to work to ensure that both the company and its employees are successful."

The pilots, who provide interisland service to airports on all the major islands in Hawaii, ratified a new 4-year collective bargaining agreement with economic and work rule improvements in June 2009. But what should have been a fairly quick implementation period turned into a battle with several of the new provisions, as well as existing ones, coming under fire. One such provision concerns segment pay. Pilots are to be paid the greater of actual flight time, scheduled block time, or contractual segment time (i.e., scheduled average time). Every 2 years,

scheduled average times are reviewed and adjusted as necessary based upon historical average times. Flight times are recorded in minutes but converted to tenths of an hour and averaged based upon rounding upward to the nearest tenth of an hour.

Grievances, which were once nonexistent at Island Air, were filed on segment pay and other issues. In 2010, a number of grievances were resolved through settlement discussions. The segment pay issue, however, is scheduled for arbitration; a two-member System Board will also convene this year to hear pending grievance cases. Meanwhile, the MEC continues to actively monitor and aggressively enforce the pilots' contract.

In recent years, the significant changes in corporate leadership have had a negative effect on labor-management relations; however, the pilots are optimistic that this relationship is on the mend. There were several management changes last year, including the appointment of Lesley Kaneshiro as the new chief executive officer. Kaneshiro previously served as the company's chief financial officer; through this experience, she became familiar with the various internal and external issues and recognizes the value of having a productive relationship with labor. In reviving the ohana culture, one that is based on a collaborative approach, the pilots are confident that the company will be able to capitalize on opportunities to further improve the airline.

Interisland flights increased steadily in 2010, and the forecast is for even greater interisland and leisure travel in 2011. The pilots hope that

management will take advantage of these higher interisland load factors and expand service and/or build strategies to become more competitive and grow market share.

"The past several years were about survival, and our company pulled back service to focus on its core business," says Feddersohn. "With the



F/O Diana Feddersohn, Island Air's MEC chairman.

economy stabilizing and our profit margins widening, it's time for management to once again evaluate its business plan and seek opportunities in which to grow. Management must also continue to communicate with the pilot group and recognize that together we will make the airline succeed." 

Island Air

Pilots Are Key To Success

By Lydia Jakub
ALPA Communications Specialist

AIS at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1989
Number of Pilots: 45, including 10 on furlough
Operations: Approximately 36 daily flights plus charter service to all eight major airports in Hawaii
Service: Island Air is Hawaii's leading regional carrier, serving airports on all major Hawaiian islands with approximately 338 weekly flights between the islands of Oahu, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Kauai, and the island of Hawaii
Fleet: 4 Dash 8-100s

Jazz

Jazz Pilots Flying High With Career Contract, Promising Growth on the Horizon

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

JAZ at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1997
Number of Pilots: 1,487
Operations: Jazz carries approximately 27 million passengers per year on 800+ flights daily to 85 destinations across Canada and the United States. Under its contract with Thomas Cook, the airlines flies weekly flights from eastern Canada to destinations in the Caribbean and Mexico (using 6 B-757s)
Pilot Bases: Halifax, N.S.; Vancouver, B.C.; Calgary, Alta.; Toronto, Ont.; Montreal, P.Q.
Headquarters: Halifax, N.S.
Fleet: 137 airplanes, including Dash 8-100/300s and Bombardier CRJ100/200/705s

The Jazz pilots racked up some impressive accomplishments in 2010, most notably an industry-leading contract that produced payroll gains totaling upward of \$130 million over the remaining 5-year life of the agreement. On July 9, after an intense collective bargaining round that spanned 14 months, catching the attention of airline industry analysts and even members of Parliament, the pilots ratified a new collective agreement that secures their future through June 30, 2015.

Capt. Brian Shury, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, credits the leaders and support of ALPA and, most notably, the dedication of the Jazz Negotiating and Strategic Planning and Strike Preparedness Committees. "We could not have done any of this without the solid backing of our union and pilot representatives, including the remarkable commitment of Jazz Pilot-to-Pilot® volunteers who executed an outstanding communications network for our pilots across Canada, from Vancouver to Halifax."

The contract is a culmination of more than 2 years of strategic planning among members of the Jazz MEC and Negotiating Committee. It was a hard-fought victory that proved to be worth the long hours they invested at the bargaining table to ensure a successful outcome. The pilots obtained a significant increase to their defined-benefit pension plan, a 37 percent increase in per diem, a reduction of pilot benefit costs, and an increase in pay rates.

The pilot group and the airline also claimed two more achievements in 2010: an

official name change from Air Canada Jazz to Jazz, affirming the airline's status as an independent carrier positioned to diversify both the revenue and customer base, and a 5-year charter contract with Thomas Cook PLC, the world's second-largest tour operator, flying 6 B-757s to winter getaway destinations. The Jazz route structure covers continental North America and has the unique advantage of serving major hubs as well as remote airports. "We are the second-

in joining our union, and it's incumbent upon Jazz and our other ALPA Canada pilot groups to build a plan that ensures a cohesive future for Canadian pilots," says Adamus.

The Jazz MEC will continue advancing ALPA's overall strategic plan that began in 2008 and was reaffirmed at the October 2010 Board of Directors meeting, according to Shury. "A major goal is to bring maximum visibility to ALPA, International, while providing maximum representational benefit to our mem-



A Jazz Bombardier Dash 8 is deiced at Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport in preparation for takeoff.

largest airline in Canada with the greatest number of departures per day and the only airline serving all 10 provinces and 3 territories," says Shury. The pilots have earned a reputation for maintaining an impeccable safety record, flying 800-plus daily flights to destinations in Canada and the United States. The company also has an operation dedicated to charters using both Dash 8s and CRJs.

Looking ahead, Jazz pilots, along with their colleagues from ALPA Canada, will collaborate on initiatives to effectively develop a growth strategy in Canada, according to Capt. Dan Adamus (Jazz), ALPA's Canada Board president. "There are many pilot groups outside of ALPA that have shown a great interest

bers. Being part of the largest international pilots union has brought many benefits to Jazz pilots and ALPA Canada pilots," Shury says.

The Jazz MEC is also looking at new ways to engage the junior pilots in the group. "Our pilots continue to get younger," says Capt. Terry McTeer, the pilots' secretary. "Our older pilots are often surprised to find that they are flying with someone who was born after they themselves started with one of the founding Jazz airlines, or perhaps they are paired with the son or daughter of another Jazz pilot," McTeer says. "The Jazz MEC recognizes that we must effectively integrate our younger pilots, as these are the people who will become the leaders of tomorrow." 

With a new contract firmly in place, the pilots of Kelowna Flightcraft are not about to lose momentum. After working diligently with management for nearly 2 years to secure a 6-year agreement with Kelowna Flightcraft Air Charter, Ltd., Capt. Ian Gold, the pilots' Master Executive

Kelowna Flightcraft

New Contract For Kelowna Pilots Sparks Enthusiasm for The Future

By Lynn Konwin, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

Council (MEC) chairman, is convinced that the hard work is paying off. "The improvements we secured in our last contract have resulted in significantly reduced turnover," says Gold. For many of the Kelowna pilots, "Flightcraft," as they refer to it, is fast becoming a career opportunity and not just a stepping stone, he says.

Gold and the pilot group are proud of their collective bargaining efforts. The new agreement, drafted from scratch, contains industry-leading provisions for Flightcraft pilots, despite negotiating during one of the biggest economic downturns in Canada's history. "Now more than ever, our pilots know that we are an integral part of Flightcraft's continued success," Gold says.

The pilots worked tirelessly to nail down a contract that reflects their priorities. The result is a progressive contract that includes wage increases in the range of 10–12 percent with an additional 9 percent in longevity increases over 5 years. In addition, the new contract improves the pilots' quality of life by allowing them to have a greater degree of control over their schedules while reducing involuntary overtime.

Even with a new contract in hand, the pilots' MEC has no

intention of taking it easy. "It's time to keep an eye on the details, monitor enforcement, and ensure that our pilots are receiving the benefits we worked so hard to achieve," notes Gold. With the support of committee volunteers, the motivated pilots plan to ensure that management adheres to the provisions in their agreement. "We now have stricter contract language, but we also hope to continue what has been a cooperative relationship with our employer, whenever possible, to successfully resolve any grievance issues that might arise."

With members spread across six time zones and some 5,700 miles from coast to coast, it's been challenging to keep the group connected and well informed about the many benefits ALPA membership provides. "We want to keep the pilots as aware as we can about the broader ALPA and industry activities that affect not only Flightcraft pilots but all Canadian pilots," says Gold. "We must always be prepared for change, either with new business or for changes to our current operations."

Kelowna Flightcraft is one of only two freight airlines in Canada providing widebody, heavy-lift dedicated airplanes. It is keen on capitalizing on the expanding demand of this niche market and is poised for substantial growth. With the new pilot contract in place, management can now turn its focus to expanding the widebody fleet.

Kelowna Flightcraft moves approximately 600,000 pounds of freight every night and about 300,000 additional pounds for Canada Post. Add it up and it is evident that Canadian commerce depends heavily on the Flightcraft pilots pushing nearly a million

pounds of freight across the country each night.

Besides moving freight with B-727s and Convair 580s on behalf of Purolator Courier, Flightcraft provides dedicated DC-10 cargo service for Canada Post. The pilots of Kelowna Flightcraft are spread across domiciles that range from Halifax, N.S., to Vancouver, B.C.

For 2011, Kelowna pilots and management are focusing on economic recovery, the growth of the company, and expanding the fleet and



In addition to DC-10s (above), KFC's fleet consists of B-727s and Convair 580s.

route structure. "While the new contract contains significant improvements, it was constrained by the economic climate," says Gold. "We will continue to seek improvements in the next contract and to stay abreast of our peers in the industry." The next round of bargaining is set for 2014. 

KFC at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1997 (became an ALPA-represented pilot group when CALPA merged with ALPA)

First ALPA Contract: Nov. 1, 1997

Number of Pilots: 125

Headquarters: Kelowna, B.C.

Pilot Bases: Hamilton, Ont.; Vancouver, B.C.; Halifax, N.S.; Thunder Bay, Ont.; Regina, Sask.; Calgary, Alb.; Kelowna, B.C.

Fleet: B-727s, Convair 580s, DC-10s

On Jan. 5, 2010, Mesa Air Group filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of New York. This bankruptcy, however, was not about

reducing labor costs but about eliminating excess aircraft. Now, one year later, the company has submitted its plan of reorganization (POR) to the court and is poised to emerge from bankruptcy as a stand-alone regional airline in early 2011. The pilot group is cautiously optimistic about these developments and the outlook for 2011.

“We faced a number of challenges over the past year, and they have taken quite a toll on this pilot group,” says F/O Marcin Kolodziejczyk, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “But

the MEC will continue working to vigorously protect, defend, and enhance the career of every Mesa pilot.”

ALPA took an active role in the bankruptcy process as

a vigilant member of the Creditors Committee. The pilots made no concessions during bankruptcy, and the POR provides that their contract will be assumed in its entirety and that the company will be responsible for paying all amounts that are due under the contract (and the processing of all grievances or claims) in the ordinary course of business. The POR includes a new nine-member Board of Directors, six of whom will be appointed by the Creditors Committee; wiping out existing sharehold-

ers; and providing creditors with a pro-rata share in a note payable in 5 years and stock in the restructured company.

As the company moves toward exiting bankruptcy, the pilots are preparing for direct negotiations, which will begin in early February. To protect their bargaining rights, the pilots sent management a letter of intent to open Section 6 negotiations in September 2010, before the pilots’ contract became amendable on December 10.

The pilots made tremendous strides at the table during their last round of negotiations, achieving a 2-year agreement that brought them in line with the industry standard and above it in several key areas. Additionally, the MEC proactively sought opportunities and initiated discussions with management over the past 2 years to enhance safety, address contract deficiencies, and further improve the pilots’ quality of life. While discussions pertaining to the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) resulted in a letter of agreement, other discussions pertaining to the preferential bidding system (PBS) and to mitigating the massive furloughs resulting from losing the codeshare agreement with Delta stalled, as management was not contractually obligated to address the pilots’ issues.

Section 6 negotiations present a new flight plan, one that the pilots have long awaited. In evaluating the company’s POR and disclosure statement, it’s apparent that management is forecasting financial improvements and believes the company will achieve and maintain significant operational profitability and flexibility now and

into the future. The airline currently has codeshare agreements with United through 2013 and US Airways through 2017, as it was able to extend its 70- and 90-seat US Airways service during the restructuring process.

“We are very pleased with the company’s positive financial outlook, as it will only help us in getting the contractual improvements that our pilots deserve,” says Kolodziejczyk. “We are on the front lines working every day; and despite these challenging times, this pilot group has remained focused and professional. Our operational performance during the past 6 months has earned repeated accolades from our codeshare partners, a fact that we will make sure the company recognizes at the bargaining table. We are looking to address wages, work rules, retirement and insurance benefits, and other areas to substantially improve our pilots’ quality of life and continue to raise the bar for all ALPA pilots.”

Mesa

Emerging from Bankruptcy, Entering Section 6

By Lydia Jakub
ALPA Communications Specialist



From left, flight attendant Amy Larsen, Capt. James Varney, flight attendant Cindy Turner, F/O Marcin Kolodziejczyk, and F/O Jack Ensor at San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport.

MAG at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1987
Number of Pilots: Nearly 1,300, including 496 on furlough (before recall)
Operations: Mesa Air Group includes Freedom Airlines, go!, and Mesa Airlines, and operates as United Express and US Airways Express under contractual agreements and independently as go! in Hawaii. Serves 126 cities, 40 states, Canada, and Mexico with approximately 800 daily departures
Bases: Charlotte, N.C.; Chicago, Ill.; Honolulu, Hawaii; Kahului, Hawaii; Lihue, Hawaii; Phoenix, Ariz.; Washington, D.C.
Headquarters: Phoenix, Ariz.
Fleet: 75 aircraft, including CRJ100s/200s, CRJ700s, CRJ900s, ERJ145s, and Dash 8-200s

America's oldest regional airline, Mesaba Airlines, began transporting passengers within northern Minnesota in 1944. Originally founded as a private company with only a few small prop aircraft, the airline expanded steadily throughout its 67-year history to become Delta Air Lines' largest operator of 76-seat CRJ aircraft.

Mesaba's history includes flying as an independent carrier with no major airline affiliation, starting and then spinning off AirTran Airlines, and operating flights for Delta Air Lines, Northwest Airlines, and Republic Airlines. Mesaba pilots have had many successes throughout their history but have also had to overcome many challenges along the way.

Among those challenges: Mesaba pilots narrowly averted a strike during their 2004 contract negotiations, faced management threats of downsizing or elimination as a consequence of the holding company's acquisition of "alter-ego" Big Sky, and endured a 2006 "sham" bankruptcy.

Currently, the Mesaba pilots are in the process of merging with Pinnacle Airlines and Colgan Airlines. Throughout Mesaba's rich but turbulent history, its pilots have successfully turned challenges into opportunities to strengthen the pilot group, with the result being one of the best pilot contracts in the regional airline industry.

The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) and their counterparts at Pinnacle and Colgan took a similar strategic approach after Pinnacle Airlines Corporation announced the merger. They analyzed the company's busi-

ness plan, identified potential leverage points, and extracted as much value as possible for the pilot group while helping to build a strong, profitable airline and achieve an industry-leading collective bargaining agreement.

Working as one unified pilot group, the collective MECs were able to achieve key job security provisions to prevent management from whipsawing one group against another by requiring that all flying performed for the holding company is done under the new tentative agreement. By pooling their resources quickly after the merger was announced, the Pinnacle, Mesaba, and Colgan MECs established a Joint Negotiating Committee that was able to reach a tentative agreement on a joint contract in record time. "One Contract, One List, One Voice" was and remains the goal of pilots at the combined airline.

The tentative agreement on a joint contract was a huge accomplishment and a major milestone in the merger process. The three MECs met in mid-January to discuss the merits of the tentative agreement as a group. Shortly thereafter, each MEC met separately and each unanimously approved sending the TA to the combined pilot group for membership ratification.

If the pilots ratify the agreement, the seniority list integration process calls for a final list by early May 2011. Once a new integrated seniority list is final, the three MECs will become one. This will mark the end of the Mesaba pilots' MEC.

Current plans are to transfer all existing Mesaba turbojet aircraft (60 CRJs in total) to the Pinnacle Airlines, Inc., certificate and move all

Colgan aircraft to the current Mesaba certificate. The three MECs intend to make the transition as seamless and simple as possible for the entire pilot group.

Although Mesaba and the pilots' MEC will cease to exist as a stand-alone entity later this year, there is no doubt that the Mesaba legacy will



Cpts. Aaron Busch and Greg Wertz in Minneapolis – St. Paul.

continue to thrive within the pilot group.

"We are confident that we can turn the new challenges that lie ahead into opportunities, not on our own as Mesaba pilots but as Pinnacle Corporation pilots working cooperatively with our ALPA brothers and sisters at Pinnacle and Colgan," says Capt. Mark Nagel, the Mesaba pilot group's MEC chairman. 

MSA at a Glance

Founded: 1944
Pilots Joined ALPA: 1987
Number of Pilots: 1,092
Headquarters: Eagan, Minn.
Pilot Bases: Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., Memphis, Tenn., and Detroit, Mich.; a La Guardia, N.Y., base is also being created
Operations: Named after an Ojibwa word that means "soaring eagle," Mesaba flies to 64 cities in the U.S. Midwest, East, and Southeast as a subsidiary of Delta Air Lines. In 2011, the airline will also begin operating service out of LGA for US Airways
Fleet: 19 CRJ200s, 41 CRJ900s, 29 Saab SF340s

Mesaba

Mesaba Pilots: Turning Challenges And Threats into Strengths and Opportunities

By F/O Zohrab Grigorian
 Mesaba Communications
 Committee Chairman

One year after choosing ALPA as their representative, the pilots of North American Airlines are proof that ALPA's approach to representing pilots—local autonomy supported by their

North American

North American Pilots: Fully Participating In Their Union

By Barbara Gottshalk
Lead Communications Specialist



PHOTO COURTESY OF PETE ZEPP

**North American Airlines
F/O Pete Zepp.**

NAA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 2009
Number of Pilots: 190
Pilot Base: New York (JFK)
Headquarters: Jamaica, N.Y.
Operations: North American Airlines provides air transportation services throughout the world, operating both charter and scheduled service for the U.S. military, tour operators, government agencies, and sports teams, among others, and as an ACMI carrier for other scheduled airlines
Fleet: 5 B-757-200s, 5 B-767-300ERs

union—works. Soon after becoming one of the Association's newest pilot groups, they began building a strong infrastructure that uses ALPA resources and staff experience and expertise to the fullest.

First, the Membership Committee, chaired by Capt. Al Campos, launched an aggressive membership drive that resulted in 99 percent of the pilots joining ALPA. The MEC also established a robust committee structure that focused on grievance, scheduling, communications, safety, and professional standards.

Capt. Al Gallo, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, says, "Our MEC and all of our committees are unanimous in our commitment to defend our pilots with absolute loyalty to them. We have no other agenda." With Capt. Andy Danziger, the pilots' secretary-treasurer, overseeing a real operating budget to fund pilot activities (something they didn't have previously), committee members received the necessary training that ALPA provides to pilot volunteers.

The committees also made full use of ALPA's programs and services. For example, the pilots' top priorities are enforcing their contract, educating the pilots about their rights under the contract, and streamlining the grievance process. To that end, the Grievance Committee, chaired

by Capt. Bill Bushy, implemented online grievance filing via the MEC website to make it easier for pilots to report contract violations.

Scheduling Committee members also accomplished several important improvements. They enhanced transparency and succeeded in gaining access to the company tracking system for Capt. Pete Risko, the Committee chairman, and Gallo, allowing pilot representatives to work with management to ensure compliance with the scheduling section of the contract.

Capt. Bob Cooley, the Communications Committee chairman, and Committee members attended an ALPA orientation in which they developed and immediately implemented a plan to regularly communicate with members about union activities. The Jumpseat Committee, chaired by Capt. Nick Cercone, succeeded in opening up the airline's Air Mobility Command flights involving airline airports to pilots from other airlines. The Professional Standards Committee, led by Capt. Pete Pugsley, saw favorable outcomes to the cases it handled throughout the year.

Through the union, the Central Air Safety Committee (CASC) was able to strengthen line pilot involvement with various company departments. Capt. Dan Smith, the CASC chairman, takes the pilots' views and concerns to bimonthly companywide safety meetings. As worldwide events occurring in many places where the pilots fly caused security concerns, the Security Committee was activated with Capt. Dave Mares as chairman, leading to enhanced communications and coordination between

the pilots and the Flight Operations Department.

The Accident Investigation Committee was also established with Capt. Frank Rojas as chairman, enabling pilots to be included in any potential incident/accident investigations and providing a Go Team to assist. The ASAP Committee, chaired by Capt. Bill Emmanuel, worked with management and FAA representatives to determine common safety issues, offer strong recommendations to improve trouble areas, and uphold the airline's high level of safety. In fact, the FAA recognized the effectiveness of the airline's program by ranking it among the best in the airline industry.

Recognizing the value of peer interaction, the North American pilot leaders have also taken advantage of the many opportunities to work with other ALPA pilot groups. They started an open dialogue with their ALPA colleagues at Air Transport International, Evergreen, and Ryan who share similar issues and have the same types of customers.

While the pilots have benefited from these accomplishments, they have also given back to the Association. They have supported other ALPA pilot groups in their strategic planning committee activities, participated in numerous union activities such as the Air Safety Forum, and worked to advance the Association's strategic plan and to promote national committee initiatives, such as the Education Committee's ALPA ACE Club, in which F/O Stan Adams, the pilots' MEC vice chairman, is involved. As the pilots enter their second year of ALPA membership, they continue to demonstrate the adage, "You get out of your union what you put into it." 

At the end of this year, there will only be 377 Piedmont pilots, and that number looks as if it will continue to decline. Just 6 months ago, there were 100 more pilots on the property; but unlike many airlines, the main cause isn't furloughs. In fact, the 24 pilots who

are currently on furlough are expected to be called back by this April.

"It's simply attrition," says Capt. Chuck Martinak, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "Our younger pilots are leaving for other airlines, or leaving the aviation industry entirely. Many are taking a pay cut to start their careers over again. When we ask them why they are leaving, it's not for pay—it's for quality of life, time with their families, and better schedules."

Adding to the frustration of the younger pilots is the lack of opportunity at the airline, which, as a regional carrier, has some of the most senior pilots in the industry. So senior is the list that management seems ready to offer early retirement incentives to those on the upper end of the list.

"I've been with the company for more than 20 years," says Martinak, "and I'm still a reserve captain. For me, this company is my career; but for younger captains and first officers, the wait to move up is too long, especially with no flow-through options with the mainline carrier." And with an aging fleet of Dash 8 turboprops and no word of any plans to replace them, Piedmont, a wholly owned subsidiary of US Airways, has a staffing problem in the making.

What may help is an

improved contract that would provide substantial reasons for new pilots to join the airline. The pilots are looking for improvements not only in pay, but also changes in quality-of-life issues. Scheduling and time off also remain top concerns for these pilots.

When negotiations started in May 2009, the pilot group assumed that management would be receptive to improvements; but as negotiations drag on into their second year, it's no surprise that some pilots are losing hope. The negotiations started with Piedmont pilots working closely with pilots from other US Airways regional carriers. As the process moved forward, the other groups saw significant progress in their own negotiations, while Piedmont's stagnated. For months, management simply

with terse "current book or less" responses—indicating that management would only agree to the current language in the contract or concessions. In addition to not responding to pilot proposals, management also resisted setting up dates for negotiating sessions. After almost a year of contract talks, only two sections were agreed upon by both sides.

"When we entered into negotiations in May 2009, we didn't expect it to be an easy process," Martinak says. "However, we did expect management to fully engage in the process—which, simply put, it hasn't."

In August, management and pilots met under the watchful eye of an NMB negotiator. While some progress has been made, few economic sections have been touched. Negotiating sessions



F/O Katelyn Potts flies a Dash 8.

didn't move and balked at the presence of other ALPA pilot groups in their negotiations—sometimes to the extent that management representatives would not even speak to the Piedmont negotiators.

On April 22, 2010, ALPA, on behalf of the Piedmont pilots, formally applied for mediation from the National Mediation Board (NMB). The pilots cited management's practice of routinely countering proposals from the union

are only planned for January and February, and an end to negotiations doesn't appear to be in sight.

"We need management to recognize the problems, but either it can't or, even worse, it won't," says Martinak. "We've got an aging fleet, a shrinking pilot group, and stalled negotiations. The pilots are committed to this company, but we need reassurance that management is committed to the pilots." 

Piedmont

Pilot Attrition Threatens One Of the Oldest Airlines

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications Specialist

PDT at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1952
Number of Pilots: 377
Headquarters: Salisbury, Md.
Pilot Domiciles: New Bern, N.C.; Charlottesville, Va.; Roanoke, Va.; New York, N.Y. (LGA); Harrisburg, Pa.; Salisbury, Md.
Fleet: 44 DHC-8s

Pinnacle

Tentative Agreement Reached at Pinnacle Airlines

By Kimberly Seitz, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

Pinnacle Airlines pilots celebrated Christmas early this year when the Pinnacle-Mesaba-Colgan Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) reached a tentative agreement (TA) on a joint collective bargaining agreement. Pinnacle pilots look to 2011 as the year they start receiving the increased wages and benefits of a new contract that has eluded them for nearly 6 years.

"This TA marks the end of nearly 6 long years of contract negotiations for Pinnacle pilots," says Capt. Scott Erickson, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "The terms of the new joint TA reward the tireless dedication of the Pinnacle pilot group with a contract that lifts the profession, and it will clear the way for us to join our brothers and sisters at both Mesaba and Colgan to form one of the world's largest contract carriers." The TA includes significant improvements in all cornerstone areas of the contract, including job security, compensation, benefits, and quality-of-life provisions.

This past year started off with Pinnacle pilots entering their fifth year of contract negotiations hopeful and optimistic that an industry-standard contract was within reach. In 2009, after a majority of the pilots voted down a TA that included many contractual improvements, the pilots were eager to address the problem areas in key sections of the failed TA. After consulting with the National Mediation Board (NMB) in February, the two sides reentered unmediated talks to work through as many unresolved issues as possible before reengaging the NMB. The parties made solid progress on a successor

TA, but a full contract was still just out of reach. In June, the talks moved to Washington, D.C.; and after 3 long days of intense negotiations, no agreement was reached. The NMB representatives indicated that additional negotiating sessions would not be reconvened until 2011.

"Pinnacle pilots saw our share of ups and downs this year," says Erickson. "Yet through it all, we have remained professional, consistently providing top-notch service and maintaining a safe,

Pinnacle pilots. At the same time, Pinnacle announced the opening of a new domicile at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Shortly thereafter, the Pinnacle, Mesaba, and Colgan MECs submitted a proposal to Pinnacle Corporation for a three-party integration, and Pinnacle, Mesaba, and Colgan pilots stood united in their goal of "One Contract, One List, One Voice." The JNC began intense, expedited contract talks with management in early September.



Capt. Kory Kilbourne, a Detroit-based pilot, by a CRJ200.

secure flying environment for our passengers."

On July 1, Pinnacle Airlines Corporation, which owns Pinnacle Airlines, Inc., and Colgan Air, announced the purchase of Mesaba Airlines. While the news came as a surprise to the Pinnacle pilots, they remained steadfast in their desire to continue their quest for a successor TA.

The Mesaba purchase brought a renewed energy to Pinnacle Airlines, which started hiring pilots in August—the first new hires since 2008. Once released to flying, the new hires (comprised initially of Mesaba furloughed pilots per a memorandum of understanding signed after the Mesaba purchase) brought much-needed relief to the understaffed and overstressed

After two continued deadlines and many hours of talks, a TA was reached in the early afternoon of December 17.

The three MECs met on January 17 and 18 and unanimously approved sending the TA out to the pilots of Pinnacle, Mesaba, and Colgan for a vote in February.

"This is an exciting time to be an airline pilot," Erickson says. "The industry is poised for growth, and we finally have a contract that recognizes our contributions to the continued success of Pinnacle Airlines. Working alongside the Colgan and Mesaba pilots to raise the bar for ongoing negotiations at other ALPA pilot groups has been beneficial and rewarding. We look forward to the future with optimism and hope." 

PCL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1988 (as Express Airlines before changing its name to Pinnacle in 2002)

Number of Pilots: 1,260

Operations: More than 740 Delta Connection flights daily to 120 airports across the United States and Canada

Pilot Domiciles: Atlanta, Ga.; Detroit, Mich.; Memphis, Tenn.; Minneapolis, Minn.; New York's JFK

Headquarters: Memphis, Tenn.

Fleet: 126 Canadair CRJ200s and 16 CRJ900s

Thinking outside the box of traditional Section 6 negotiations has paid off for the pilots of PSA. In negotiations since June 2009, the pilots were making little progress at the bargaining

table, and the Master Executive Council (MEC) leaders knew it was time to do things differently.

“Last year was about revitalizing our union from the inside out,” says Capt. Tom Arline, the pilots’ MEC chairman. “We focused on engaging our pilot group, building our committee structure, and working with management on mutually beneficial solutions to the issues we faced.”

Last year, management agreed to accelerate the pace of negotiations by doubling the number of bargaining sessions from October through December. This strategy paid off, and substantial progress was made at the bargaining table. The pilots introduced proposals on all sections of their collective bargaining agreement, and tentative agreements were reached on nearly half of the contract sections, including:

- Section 6 (Moving Expenses),
- Section 9 (Instructors),
- Section 10 (Transfer to Non-Flying and Managerial Duty),
- Section 11 (Training),
- Section 17 (Uniforms),
- Section 18 (Discipline),
- Section 19 (Grievances),
- Section 20 (Grievance Review Committee),
- Section 22 (Seniority),
- Section 23 (Furlough),
- Section 24 (Vacancies),
- Section 29 (Agency Shop), and
- Section 30 (Professional Standards).

Significant progress was also made on Sections 5

(Expenses), 21 (System Board), 25 (Scheduling), and 26 (General). The parties also reached a letter of agreement (LOA) establishing pay rates for additional regional jet types.

This revitalization process has extended beyond negotiations and has had a positive effect on MEC committees and volunteers. As a result, many of the committees that were once dormant are now active and producing tangible results that pilots can see on a daily basis.

Hotel Committee representatives were successful in becoming part of management’s hotel-selection process to review and select hotels. Committee volunteers also worked successfully to change the locations of multiple hotels and improve the overall quality of pilots’ accommodations.

The Central Air Safety Committee, Security Committee, and Human Intervention and Motivational Studies Committee participated at the ALPA National level, attending training seminars and other conferences.

The Grievance Committee filed more than 80 grievances in 2010. Many of the issues were resolved through the grievance resolution process, particularly by the pilots’ review committee, which first investigates the issue. Other cases were resolved through settlement discussions and arbitrations. The pilots continue to work to resolve the remaining grievance issues.

On the safety front, the pilots are working with management to maintain and improve the overall safety of their airline. PSA, a wholly owned subsidiary of US Airways, implemented a Flight Operational Quality

Assurance (FOQA) program in 2010, and the pilots extended their agreement with management to continue the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP). Captains also have the option of participating in a company-sponsored leadership training program.

The training program has been redesigned so that first officers will now receive simulator training every 6 months—just as captains do—as opposed to every 12 months. Another change in training is the introduction of



A PSA CRJ200-ER in the blocks awaiting its next flight.

Line Oriented Flight Training (LOFT) in simulators to train pilots in more realistic and less repetitive scenarios. The LOFT and leadership programs are especially important because in 2010 pilots were recalled from furlough and captain upgrades occurred for the first time since 2007. The pilots are optimistic that this trend will continue through 2011, and they look forward to welcoming all furloughed pilots back to the line.

“We have accomplished a lot in a short amount of time,” says Arline. “Over the next year, we will continue to focus on engaging our pilots, building our committees, and negotiating an agreement that recognizes the value that our pilots bring to the operation, our passengers, and US Airways.” 

PSA

A Union Revitalized

By Lydia Jakub
ALPA Communications Specialist

PSA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1988
Number of Pilots: Approximately 455, including 30 on furlough
Operations: PSA is a wholly owned subsidiary of US Airways Group, Inc. It operates as US Airways Express and serves 65 airports in the United States with more than 125 departures daily
Bases: Charlotte, N.C.; Dayton, Ohio; Knoxville, Tenn.
Headquarters: Dayton, Ohio
Fleet: 35 CRJ200s, 14 CRJ700s

Ryan

Pilots Gear Up For Negotiations

By John Perkinson
Staff Writer

RYN at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1998
Number of Pilots: 138 pilots
Pilot Domicile: Rockford, Ill.
Services: Ryan International Airlines (not to be confused with Ireland-based RyanAir) provides scheduled and chartered services for customers around the globe, including substantial flying for the U.S. Department of Defense
Fleet: 1 B-757, 6 B-767s, 2 MD-80s

As crewmembers of a charter-based operation, Ryan pilots occupy a special niche within the Association. The fluid nature of their flying and their fluctuating customer base set them apart from their counterparts at scheduled passenger and cargo airlines. With contract negotiations to begin later this year, the demands of their unique operation combined with the projected growth of the airline will be important considerations for the Ryan pilots as they plot a course for their future.

Operating a fleet of one B-757, six B-767s, and two MD-80s, Ryan flies contract work for the U.S. Departments of Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, and Justice, as well as sports and tour charters. However, to broaden its operation and the scope of its opportunities, the airline will be adding the B-777 to its fleet during 2011.

“The airline recently closed a vacancy bid for this new aircraft that awarded positions for 12 crews,” says Capt. James “Mike” Egan, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) vice chairman. However, the pilots initially responded to this good news with some trepidation as management expressed an interest in pursuing a pilot tri-type qualification for the B-757, B-767, and B-777. Fortunately, better judgment prevailed. “Management realized that this move would pose too many problems, so the Triple Seven will be treated as a separate fleet,” Egan says.

Currently, all furloughed Ryan pilots have been recalled to work. The acquisition of a second B-777 later in the year, as well as possible

growth of the MD-80 fleet, will likely require additional pilot hiring. Management recently hired several pilots on both the MD-80 and the B-757/767.

Egan describes his pilot group’s relationship with management as cordial but not as productive as he would like. “We’ve had several recent meetings with management personnel regarding grievances. They’ve been willing to listen to us and appear interested in moving forward constructively, but much of the time there is little or no follow-up,” Egan says. In fact, the pilot group has a large backlog of grievances, addressing infractions from as far back as 3 years ago, and the pilots plan to step up their arbitration efforts this year.

The pilots’ contract becomes amendable in March 2012. However, the pilots intend to use the duration clause, which allows either party to open negotiations as early as 6 months before that date. Preparing for a contract opener will require pilot leaders to solicit feedback from the pilots and conduct strategic planning to determine the pilot group’s priorities and the best approach to take to maximize collective bargaining efforts.

Because of the transitional nature of the airline’s business, Ryan pilots typically bid for 56-day reserve periods vs. the monthly schedules that most airline pilots fly. On occasion, the airline will ink a long-term aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance (ACMI) contract, or a wet-leasing arrangement. This variance from typical pilot scheduling requires a different approach when considering collective bargaining goals and strategies.

Egan notes that the vast majority of the Ryan pilots are commuters, another important consideration when constructing schedules and thinking about negotiating priorities. Flight-time and duty-time rules will also be of interest to the pilot group with the acquisition of B-777s and regulations for long-range operations, which are projected to change.

Throughout its existence, Ryan has reinvented itself to meet the needs of its transitioning customer base. The



F/O Jesse May, the Ryan MEC secretary-treasurer, prepares for departure.

Ryan Aviation Corporation began operations in 1976 as a fixed-base operator providing fueling and maintenance services in Wichita, Kan. Five years later, the airline began hiring pilots and hauling cargo and changed its name to Ryan International Airlines. Ryan also shifted from a Part 135 certificate holder to a Part 121 operator. In 1984, Ryan began transporting passengers on a charter basis and in 2004 parked the last of its freighters. The airline moved its operations to its current location in Rockford, Ill., in 2006. 

Spirit

Spirit Airlines: New Contract, Same Management

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications
Specialist

In the summer of 2010, Spirit pilots celebrated achieving a new contract, but that celebration was short-lived. In September, just a month after signing the agreement, management refused to abide by the terms of Section 25: Scheduling. The violation forced the pilots to file a grievance—even before the agreed-upon language in the new contract was set to be implemented.

However, the pilots were helped by a valuable clause in the new contract—an expedited grievance process. Before the new contract was signed, management's stalling tactics forced the pilots to wait months before an arbitrator would hear a grievance. The new process allowed the pilots to file the grievance and stand before an arbitrator by late October, with testimony continuing in November. Both sides have submitted their final arguments to the arbitrator and are now awaiting a decision.

Despite the grievance, the pilots are proud of the contract they achieved in June, after shutting down the airline for 5 days. At 5:01 a.m. on June 12, Capt. Sean Creed, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, called for and instituted a lawful strike on Spirit Airlines. For nearly a week, Spirit gates were abandoned, and airplanes sat empty on the ramp. Meanwhile, hundreds of Spirit pilots, joined by fellow ALPA pilots and other union members, marched in picket lines that grew in size each day. By Tuesday, June 14, management was back at the table; and after 24 hours of intense negotiations, the two sides reached a tentative agreement. On Friday, June 17,

Spirit Airlines resumed flying. "Our leaders strongly believe that this is the fair and affordable agreement that our pilots asked for back in 2007 when we started negotiations," says Creed. "Thanks to the efforts of our negotiators and the support of our international union, we were able to reach a fair and equitable agreement. I am proud not only of our Negotiating Committee, but of every single Spirit pilot who walked the line and refused to accept any agreement that did not treat us as valuable partners in Spirit's continued success."

The 5-year contract immediately increased hourly wages by an average of 10 percent for captains and 18 percent for first officers. It also included important clarification on existing work rules and gave all Spirit pilots a substantial signing bonus.

Despite the shortness of the strike, the contract was a long time coming. Spirit pilots had been in negotiations since October 2006. Nine months later, the pilots applied to the National Mediation Board (NMB) for mediation. In spite of the company's multimillion-dollar profits, management continued to ask for unprecedented concessions that would strip pilots of work rules and keep their wages at the bottom of the industry. On May 12, the NMB declared an impasse and offered binding arbitration, which the pilots promptly rejected. This started the 30-day countdown to the June strike.

During the 4 years of negotiations, management repeatedly violated the current contract. The pilots and ALPA attorneys were constantly filing grievances in an



ALPA COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT STAFF

Spirit pilots on the picket line at Atlantic City International Airport on the first day of the strike.

effort to force management to abide by the agreement. Management used stall tactics at every turn, determined to postpone what turned out to be a series of ALPA arbitration victories so that management could reap as much benefit from its contract violations as possible.

As a new year begins, the pilots find themselves in a very familiar place—battling a management that seems uninterested in following any agreement that doesn't put more cash in the coffers. This time, however, the pilots have a firm process in place to achieve the quickest resolution possible, and they have the knowledge that the group has gone to battle before and has come back victorious.

"Although we hoped that a new contract would bring about a new cooperation with our management," says Creed, "we weren't surprised that the new contract was just another agreement to violate, disregard, and ignore. This pilot group will continue to fight for every word in this agreement. And, just like our strike in June, we will emerge victorious." 

SPA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1996
Number of Pilots: 460
Headquarter: Miramar, Fla.
Pilot Domiciles: Atlantic City, N.J.; Detroit, Mich.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
Fleet: 27 A319s, 3 A320s, 2 A321s

The picture couldn't have been much bleaker for Minneapolis-based Sun Country Airlines as it entered 2010: its CEO was in jail, its ownership was in question, the airline was in

Sun Country

Brighter Skies for Sun Country

By Rusty Ayers, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist

bankruptcy, and the employees had endured temporary 50 percent pay cuts the previous year.

But just a year later, the airline, which is still known primarily for flying snow-weary Midwesterners to tropical vacations, is profitable, coming out of bankruptcy, and adding new pilots to its ranks as it expands operations worldwide.

"We are very pleased to finally be getting some good news," says Capt. Dennis Vanatta, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "Thanks in part to the combined efforts of CEO Stan Gadek, a dedicated and experienced pilot group, their ALPA representatives, and all the hard-working employees of Sun Country Airlines, things are starting to improve around here under Mr. Gadek's direction and leadership after the neglect of earlier years."

The pilots' contract became amendable last March, and they have been in Section 6 negotiations for almost a year. Negotiations have gone slowly in large part because of the company's slow emergence from bankruptcy, made more complex because former CEO Tom Petters, now in federal prison, still owes billions of dollars to creditors he defrauded in a massive Ponzi scheme.

The last hurdle to leaving

Chapter 11 is Department of Transportation approval of the airline's new certificate holders; but once that's accomplished, the pilots will celebrate the significant feat of emerging from bankruptcy with their contract unscathed.

Sun Country experienced a number of historic firsts in 2010 that bode well for the airline's future. After winning ETOPS certification in the spring, the airline flew its first transatlantic trip in seasonal scheduled service from Minneapolis-St. Paul



F/O Chuck Doyle is a second-generation ALPA member.

to London's Stansted Airport on June 11. That service was so popular that management has announced that it's expanding the route for 2011, moving it to London's Gatwick Airport and offering twice-weekly service from MSP from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Also in June, Sun Country operated its first transpacific flight in charter service from Phoenix to Honolulu, opening up a potentially lucrative destination for its vacation charter business. And in November, the airline beat out AirTran, Republic, Southwest, and US Airways to win a coveted landing slot at Washington's Reagan

National Airport. It plans to revive a route between DCA and Lansing, Mich., that Northwest Airlines had operated until 2006.

Another potential revenue stream is military charter flying, but that goal raises some difficult negotiations issues since management would be asking pilots to be out of the country for extended periods of time and to fly into some possibly dangerous places. This is being addressed in Section 6 negotiations, along with efforts to clear up a backlog of grievances.

"This MEC seeks to work collaboratively with management to realize opportunities that will secure our futures, while steadfastly striving to obtain a new labor agreement that appropriately recognizes and rewards the valuable contributions our pilots have always made each and every day," says Vanatta.

Sun Country's strategy under Gadek is to diversify the carrier and strengthen its revenue base, with a major goal of making the airline profitable year round, not just during the busy winter vacation season. The plan has worked so far, with the airline posting enough revenue to send out profit-sharing checks to employees in 2010. The airline has also recalled all its furloughed pilots, added aircraft to both its seasonal and permanent fleet, and trained two new-hire classes this winter.

"It's a great pleasure to have our furloughed pilots back and to welcome new pilots to our airline as well. The additional aircraft and crews should allow Sun Country to take advantage of further business opportunities, so we are cautiously optimistic about the future," Vanatta says. 

SCA at a Glance

Founded: 1982, by pilots and flight attendants from the former Braniff International Airlines

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1996
Number of pilots: 163; all furloughed pilots have been recalled and the airline trained 10 new-hire pilots in November 2010

Pilot Base: Minneapolis-St. Paul

Operations: Based in Mendota Heights, Minn., Sun Country flies scheduled service to 32 destinations plus charter flights to numerous locations in the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom. The airline is also actively seeking military charter flying
Fleet: 12 B-737NGs

Trans States pilots endured another tough year in their quest for an industry-average contract, but the pilots, their elected leaders, and ALPA staff continued to work diligently to resolve their ongoing contract disputes with management.

Trans States

Trans States Pilots Continue To Fight for a Contract

By Kimberly Seitz, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



Capt. Jason Ruszin, left, MEC chairman, and Capt. Jeff Shatley, SPSC chairman, at the annual MEC holiday dinner in St. Louis.

The end of 2010 closed out the pilots' fifth year of bargaining under Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (RLA), four of which have been assisted by the National Mediation Board (NMB). In June, the pilots' Negotiating Committee (NC), ready to conclude the often contentious negotiations,

was once again dismayed by management's unwillingness to close the deal. Eight sections of the contract remain open, and most of those have only a handful of issues remaining to be resolved.

No negotiating sessions have been conducted since June, but the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) and NC continue to aggressively pursue every option to produce an agreement. While the ultimate goal is an industry-average contract, the MEC continues to support and pursue a proffer if management is unwilling to change course.

"The MEC and NC hold the long-standing position that the pilots deserve a contract that is on par with their peers in the industry. They are unified in achieving that goal," says Capt. Jason Ruszin, the pilot group's MEC chairman.

Just 2 weeks after management refused to bridge the

small economic gap between the parties and walked away from the table, Trans States Holdings (TSH), the airline's parent company, purchased Compass Airlines for \$21 million. TSH indicated that Compass would operate separately from Trans States and GoJet (another sister company owned by TSH)—a major disappointment for the pilots who have worked hard to build TSH into a profitable holding company. TSH management has been reluctant to see the economic benefits for the company and the job security benefits for the pilots that would result from a fair and equitable consolidation of the three companies.

In July, management issued a letter to all pilots highlighting its positions and concluding with a threat to begin an orderly dissolution of the company if the NMB proffered the case. "This was seen not only as a threat to the pilots," Ruszin explains, "but an attempt to undermine the NMB's ability to use its statutory authority under the RLA.

"As a result, the MEC launched a communications campaign detailing the differences in the company's offer and the pilots' proposal," Ruszin continues. "The pilot group responded overwhelmingly to a subsequent web survey and indicated strong disapproval of management's bargaining positions. Additionally, a strong majority of pilots stood behind the NC's and MEC's positions."

Despite the negotiating struggles, the pilots' leaders continued to work hard on multiple fronts. The Central Air Safety Committee made improvements in ASAP and continues to track the development of a FOQA program.

"While these programs can enhance safety, they need pilot buy-in," says Ruszin. "Trans States' desire to utilize a TSH employee as a FOQA gatekeeper, instead of an ALPA representative, has raised serious concerns about the program's effectiveness. Pilots won't participate unless they feel the program's key elements of anonymity and confidentiality are maintained. We hope this will be rectified before the program is implemented."

The pilots have also settled numerous grievances this year, most notably a case in which management violated the contract by ceasing training while at the same time continuing the use of captain-qualified first officers. In the settlement, management paid a total of \$76,000 to affected pilots. Another case, the termination of a pilot who was an MEC officer and vocal opponent of management's maintenance practices, has been heard by the System Board and is pending with the arbitrator.

During the last half of 2010, the pilots' Strategic Preparedness and Strike Committee (SPSC) worked diligently with the national SPSC to bolster communications and strike readiness. Activities included opening a new strike office at ALPA's offices in Herndon, Va., and soliciting volunteers to achieve the pilots' objectives if legal self-help becomes unavoidable.

"While we remain committed to achieving our goals," Ruszin says, "I am confident that a favorable agreement can be reached without the need for self-help. But should it be necessary for us to employ a legal work stoppage, we are ready to carry out that mission." 

TSA at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1993
Signed First ALPA Contract: 1994

Number of Pilots: 290 active, 130 furloughed

Operations: More than 180 daily flights to 39 cities, serving more than 2.4 million passengers annually while flying as United Express and US Airways

Pilot Domiciles: St. Louis, Mo.; Washington Dulles
Headquarters: St. Louis, Mo.
Fleet: 28 EMB-145s

For the pilots of United, the merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines represents more than just the creation of the world's largest airline. It presents the opportunity to

have a positive, lasting effect on their careers and future.

United's new management team also has been given the chance to start anew for the betterment of the company, the pilots and other employees, and for the passengers who trust United Airlines to deliver them to their destinations.

"The May 3, 2010, announcement of the merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines represented, in so many ways, a renaissance for a pilot group that has come through so many challenges," says Capt. Wendy Morse, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "It represented a pivotal point where we could continue our leadership role as we consistently have in the past, the role of building a new United Airlines into the preeminent powerhouse that we all know it should be. The unity, professionalism, and determination of United pilots, both old and new, will be key in the success of this new enterprise."

Morse says the new airline's culture will require adaptation and dynamic evolution, not simply adopting policies effective on a smaller scale. It's vital for the airline's newly minted management team to reinvest in its pilots and employees and to take full advantage of the resources the pilots bring. United's pilots, along with Continental's, are involved in negotiations with management to attain a joint collective bargaining

agreement (JCBA). The Joint Negotiating Committee, comprised of members from each pilot group's Negotiating Committee, recently enlisted the help of the National Mediation Board (NMB).

"Success at this airline will not be achieved from the top down," Morse says. "The success of this merger will be accomplished through management working *with* its pilots and other employees toward shared goals. This will only be accomplished through interaction and partnering with ALPA. The achievements and contributions that United pilots have made to the success of United Airlines over the past 84 years are well chronicled. And we look forward to continuing our leadership role in the new United Airlines in ushering in the new era."

The pilots believe it is in the best interest of United management and the pilot group to secure an industry-leading contract sooner rather than later. For the company to enjoy the advertised synergies from the merger, it's imperative that management and the pilots find common ground.

"We've clearly demonstrated that we stand ready to be equal partners in the new United and continue as leaders of this new airline," says Morse. "Having the pilots fully on board has a powerful outcome. It must be pointed out, however, that the value we bring must be recognized in the new agreement."

The United pilots petitioned the NMB on Dec. 17, 2010, for assistance in the ongoing JCBA negotiations. The NMB has named Gerry McGuckin as the mediator, and the pilots hope that the NMB's involvement will help the two sides reach an agreement in a timely manner.

Securing scope and job protections in the JCBA are a top priority for United pilots along with increasing pay, improving pilot quality of life in the work rule area, and enhancing benefits. But without scope and job security, industry-leading wages and work rules are meaningless. United pilots know that providing secure jobs and having management more closely control the daily flying and ensure consistency of the product is good for the pilots, good for the flying public, and good for United. It's also essential to return the 1,437 furloughed pilots to the cockpit. "It is our hope that United's new management chooses the option of working with us as an invaluable partner in the airline," says Morse. "We're ready to help with the task of completing the merger, participating fully in successful flight operations, ensuring safety, and promoting our company within the industry and with the public."

"United Airlines has too much riding on this merger," Morse declares. "It is imperative that management fully engages United's pilots as full partners. Together, we must work on the same issues important to us and to our airline. The airline industry is watching. The financial community is watching. And our passengers are watching." 

United

Management Must Work with Pilots for Merger To Succeed

By C. David Kelly, ALPA Senior Communications Specialist



WILLIAM A. FORD

For the pilots of United, the merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines represents more than just the creation of the world's largest airline. It presents the opportunity to have a positive, lasting effect on their careers and future.

UAL at a Glance

Pilots Joined ALPA: 1932
Number of Pilots: Approximately 8,500 (1,437 on furlough)
Headquarters: Chicago, Ill.
Pilot Domiciles: Washington Dulles, Chicago, Seattle, Denver, San Francisco, New York (JFK), Los Angeles
Fleet: A319s, A320s, B-757s, B-767s, B-777s, B-747s

Wasaya

Forging a New Future

By Jen Lofquist
ALPA Communications Specialist

Pilots at Wasaya Airways have had a novel experience since October—working under a negotiated collective bargaining agreement. This new 2-year contract had been in the works

since the group formally joined ALPA on Jan. 16, 2008. It implements many systems that are standard at other airlines, including a seniority system and the first “sick bank” on the property. Before this agreement, pilots often went without pay if they were ill.

“I’m pleased to see our pilots finally working under a negotiated contract,” says Capt. Jeff Braun, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “Although I know many of our pilots are disappointed that we were not able to see improvement in some areas, I believe this first contract will set the stage for future negotiations and encourage a more productive relationship with management.”

The contract vote, taken in mid-September, put before the pilot group a tentative agreement proposal that was reached in August. Getting to the agreement was not easy, and the struggle seemed to last longer than the 20 months of negotiations. Less than a month after joining ALPA in 2008, the Wasaya pilots served management with a notice to bargain for a collective agreement.

One year later, the situation changed dramatically, and both sides agreed that Wasaya Airways’ services should be considered essential. Under the Canadian Labour Code, if a disruption of services could pose a significant threat to public

safety and security, then the services are considered essential, and work stoppages (either by strike or lockout) are prohibited.

Wasaya provides the majority of lift to 25 First Nation communities in northwestern Ontario. These communities are often inaccessible by road and depend solely on air cargo flights to deliver food, fuel, and medical supplies. Any halt to operations could greatly affect the residents of these communities. Simply put, the region of northwest Ontario was too dependent on the services of Wasaya to allow any interruption. After months of talks, the pilots and management signed a Maintenance of Activities and Dispute Resolution Agreement.

Braun says, “Although we’re disappointed we are not allowed to use this important tool for negotiations, Wasaya pilots understand that our most important commitment is to the populations we serve.”

Under the auspices of the agreement, negotiations went on for the next 10 months with little advancement in the collective bargaining process. The pilots continued to ask for

improvements to their work rules, pay, and quality of life.

In December 2009, the pilots and management, both concerned about the lack of movement, sought help from the Canadian government and applied for conciliation from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS). The request for FMCS assistance was part of the Maintenance of Activities and Dispute Resolution Agreement between the parties. The FMCS appointed Federal Conciliation Officer Jennifer Webster, regional director—Ontario region, to help the two parties come to an understanding that would benefit them both.

These mediated talks were only planned to last until February 2010; but the parties began to move toward a tentative agreement, and it was agreed to extend the negotiations under the assistance of Webster. Without this extension, the pilots and management would have been required to submit all remaining issues in dispute to an arbitrator, and this neutral party would make a final resolution without judicial review. With the conciliator’s assistance, Wasaya pilots and management were able to avoid this outcome and reach a tentative agreement.

With their first contract in place, the pilots are looking ahead to their next. This agreement lasts 2 years, and much remains to be improved. However, by demonstrating that management and pilots can work together for the good of the company and with the foundation laid in the new contract, the pilots hope that the next contract will result from even more cooperation, less disruption, and quicker negotiations. 



F/O Ray Keatley with a Pilatus PC-12. He is now a Cessna C-208B captain.

WSG at a Glance

Joined ALPA: 2008
Number of Pilots: 83
Hub: Thunder Bay, Ont.
Domiciles: Thunder Bay, Ont.; Pickle Lake, Ont.; Sioux Lookout, Ont.; Timmons, Ont.; Red Lake, Ont.
Fleet: 27 aircraft, including Beech 1900Ds, Cessna C-208Bs, Hawker Siddeley HS748s, and Pilatus PC-12s