

Taking the Pulse of Safety And Training

The experience, knowledge, dedication, and degree of involvement of the 60 ALPA line pilot safety reps who met in ALPA's Herndon, Va., Conference Center in late February are part of the solid foundation of this union's noble tradition as the world's largest nongovernmental aviation safety organization.

The chairs of ALPA's six technical, safety-focused groups—Accident Analysis and Prevention, Aircraft Design and Operations, Airport and Ground Environment, Air Traffic Services, Human Factors and Training, Aviation Sustainability and Environment, plus the Air Safety Coordinator—Canada—met with the ALPA Safety Council and the ALPA Training Council in joint sessions and in separate meetings. Safety representatives who weren't able to attend in person, including ALPA reps in local councils in Hong Kong and Cologne, joined remotely via video conferencing.

The Safety Council, made up of the central air safety chairs of each ALPA pilot group, received reports from the group chairs. They discussed a variety of topics ranging from safety data programs to cockpit automation use. Much of the meeting was devoted to reports from individual safety reps about issues at their airline, with particular focus on the status of their FOQA and ASAP programs.

For example:

- ▶ One pilot described using FOQA data to prove to management that the ASAP reporting culture needs to be improved: FOQA analysis revealed cases of taxiing for takeoff without flaps extended; for the same time period, however, the ASAP fielded reports on only 4 percent of the events.
- ▶ At one airline, the FOQA program is fairly new, but only four hours per month are allotted for the ALPA FOQA gatekeeper in the pilots' current contract, which is inadequate to fully analyze the data.

ALPA Safety Council, Technical Group Chairs, and Training Council Meetings

WHO: 60 line pilot safety representatives and invited guests

WHERE: ALPA's Herndon, Va., Conference Center

WHEN: February 26–28

- ▶ “We have a problem with our training department wanting to be the sole party to deal with training issues that result from ASAP reports.”
- ▶ Another pilot described his pilot group's experiences—good and bad—with one manufacturer's electronic flight bags, soon to be replaced by iPads.
- ▶ A pilot from a regional airline reported that RNAV arrivals create very high cockpit workload in “marginally automated” regional jets.
- ▶ More than one pilot reported, “We're having a problem with similar call signs when a bank of flights arrives at the hub. We're working with the company to resolve that.”
- ▶ “In our ASAP program, we're on our seventh FAA Event



Sixty ALPA line pilot safety representatives and guests meet in ALPA's Herndon, Va., Conference Center.

PHOTOS: CHRIS WEAVER

Review Committee rep in 2–3 years. But the current guy is a retired airline pilot—a good guy, very knowledgeable and reasonable.”

Dr. Doug Farrow with the FAA Flight Standards Service described recent changes to management personnel assignments at FAA headquarters that directly affect the work that the ALPA reps do. He also discussed AQP training programs and FOQA and ASAP safety data gathering programs.

“AQP is the ‘new normal’—90 percent of pilots and 70 percent of flight attendants are in, or transitioning to, AQP,” Farrow reported. “The primary driver for AQP often is last year's ASAP reports.”

Regarding FOQA, Farrow said the FAA is “trying to get some money to incentivize smaller airlines and smaller airplanes to start FOQA programs.”

Talkin' Technically



From left: Capt. Sean Cassidy, Capt. Charles Hogeman, Capt. Jeff Perin, Capt. Bill de Groh, F/O Steve Jangelis, and F/O Marc Henegar.

The technical group chairs discussed the challenges of keeping a full complement of ALPA line pilot representatives on board, proposed topics for panels at this year's Air Safety Forum (to be held July 15 – 18 in Washington, D.C.), and stressed that their ALPA-wide technical groups are a resource for master executive councils. Highlights of their individual reports follow:

AAP

Capt. Jeff Perin (Spirit), ALPA Accident Analysis and Prevention (AAP) Group chair, provided an update on activities in the group's three areas:

F/O Mark Rogers (United), director of ALPA's Dangerous Goods programs, continues to be actively involved in national and international efforts to improve the safety of transporting dangerous goods, especially lithium batteries.

ALPA's Accident Investigation Board (AIB), chaired by Capt. Mike Bender (FedEx Express), has been monitoring several accident and incident investigations, principal among them the Transportation Safety Board investigation of the First Air Flight 6560 fatal accident near Resolute in 2011 and the Japanese Transport Safety Board investigation of the FedEx Express Flight 80 fatal accident in Narita in 2009.

Capt. Mike Schilz (Delta), who leads ALPA's Safety Information and Analysis Program, and his subject-matter experts have been active in several arenas regarding FOQA, ASAP, ASIAs, and other voluntary safety data collection and sharing programs.

ADO

ALPA's Aircraft Design and Operations (ADO) Group, chaired by Capt. Bill de Groh (American Eagle), reported on numerous activities and issues:

▶ Capt. Boomer Bombardi (Delta) spearheads a project on smoke, fire, and fumes that has resulted in an agreement from the FAA that the certification requirements for transport-category airplanes should ensure that the cockpit fire

extinguisher is within reach of the flight crew with oxygen masks on by relocating the extinguisher or lengthening the length of oxygen hoses if necessary. ALPA also believes that the FAA should make evacuation of continuously generated smoke a certification requirement. de Groh, who also serves as the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) ADO Committee chair, has proposed new IFALPA policy to be considered at this year's IFALPA conference to require evacuation of continuous smoke from the cockpit.

▶ Capt. R.J. Eisemann (Atlantic Southeast) represents ALPA in industry wake turbulence discussions. Group participants discuss the continued development of means to measure, predict, and report wake turbulence efforts to increase airspace and airport capacity.

▶ Capts. Dennis Landry (Delta), Bryan Lesko (Atlantic Southeast), and Aaron Bolduc (Compass) presented a compelling safety case to the MMEL Industry Group to have the current nosewheel steering tiller relief removed from the CJR MMEL. However, to date this relief remains in the CRJ MMEL. ALPA's MMEL team continues to work to get this relief removed. The MMEL Industry Group is also developing MEL relief for flight crew rest facilities. Capt. Mike Hynes (United) has been working to ensure that the highest-quality flight crew rest facilities are retained during times when MEL relief is used.

▶ Congress has told the FAA to explore the possibility of expanding passenger use of personal electronic devices; de Groh participates on an FAA ARC created to field industry recommendations.

▶ Unmanned aerial systems (UAS) work continues on three fronts—RTCA SC-203, a government-industry effort to develop

Training Council Members—

line pilots who serve on the Training Committee for their master executive council—had a full plate, too. They discussed recent developments in upset training, including stall recognition and recovery; problems related to distance learning; issues having to do with electronic flight bags; and more. Look for in-depth coverage of the Training Council meeting in a future issue of *Air Line Pilot*.



performance standards for UAS subsystems; the UAS Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC); and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) UAS Study Group. ALPA's goal in all these efforts is to ensure the safe integration of these aircraft into the U.S. national airspace system for the safety of crews and the traveling public.

AGE

F/O Steve Jangelis (Delta), chair of ALPA's Airport and Ground Environment (AGE) Group, described his group's involvement in the recovery of New York City airports from the destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy in November 2012. While working closely with the FAA and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the AGE Group kept ALPA's central air safety chairmen and national officers apprised of the evolving situation. Of particular concern have been numerous lighting problems at JFK caused by Sandy's large storm surge.

Airport construction raises safety concerns. ALPA influenced the FAA to have air traffic controllers add the word "shortened" to runway descriptions in takeoff and landing clearances when the runway is shortened for repair and/or construction.

Bird strikes, Jangelis said, have been reduced by providing bird sanctuaries near, but off, airports—a lesson learned from U.S. military bird hazard mitigation efforts.

As AGE Group chair, Jangelis also oversees ALPA's Airport Safety Liaison (ASL) program. Eight new ASLs recently completed ALPA training, for a net gain of five for the past year. Jangelis is still trying to find ASLs for Boston and some airports in the Plains states.

ATS

F/O Marc Henegar (Alaska), chair of ALPA's Air Traffic Services (ATS) Group, covered ATS issues national and local, including these:

- ▶ The expected effects of federal government sequestration include ATC staffing shortages, closing more than 100 U.S. ATC towers and eliminating midnight shifts at 60 more.

- ▶ The FAA will again try to implement "climb via," the companion to "descend via," in August 2013. ALPA is working with the FAA and other stakeholders to develop phraseology and pilot requirements.
- ▶ Optimization of airspace and procedures, a

primary component of NextGen, is under way at many U.S. locations, with ALPA involvement. The biggest challenges are that (1) clean-sheet airspace redesign is needed to solve most metroplex concerns, but study and design teams are limited in the changes they can make, and (2) RNAV departures and arrivals are becoming very complex.

- ▶ Because airspace redesign is not keeping pace with increased aircraft operations, air traffic controllers have trouble keeping aircraft within Class B airspace. When aircraft leave Class B, ATC is required to advise the pilots—something ATC does only 8 percent of the time. General aviation traffic in close proximity and the FAR 91.117c requirement that aircraft are at 200 knots or less below Class B airspace result in a safety and violation hazard for pilots. The long-term solution is to expand Class B airspace to contain all operations, which ALPA and the FAA are working on.

Canada

Capt. Bob Perkins, ALPA's Air Safety Coordinator—Canada, discussed several aspects of runway safety (see "Toward Safer Runways," page 20). He also reported on ongoing discussions with NAV CANADA regarding changes to procedures for low-visibility and reduced-visibility operations at Canadian airports.

Perkins cautioned that, in late 2012, STARs and SIDs for several Canadian airports "changed radically from previous formats" to become more like "descend via" STARs in the United States—with an important difference: If the Canadian air traffic controller clears a flight to a lower altitude on a STAR, the pilots are still required to meet the crossing altitudes at published waypoints unless specifically told otherwise. This is opposite to the U.S. procedure, in which ATC clearance to a lower altitude cancels any intermediate altitude restrictions.

Moreover, the STARs were designed to be flown with minimum or idle power in most cases, but without ac-

Talkin' Technically *(continued)*



From left, Capt. Kathi Hurst and Capt. Frank Cheeseman.

counting for wind. Because pilots often had to deploy drag devices or level off during descent, several restrictions have been removed from the STARs via NOTAM—but FMS databases have not been updated accordingly, and charts still show the original restrictions.

ASE

Capt. Kathi Hurst (United), ALPA's Aviation Sustainability and Environment (ASE) Group chair, reported, "My first goal during the last year and a half has been to establish ALPA as a stakeholder and a resource in the environmental community. We are now members of several task groups and attended numerous meetings throughout the country and internationally involving the operation of aircraft and reduction of CO₂ emissions. My second goal has been to offer our expertise on the operation of aircraft within the changes that are being suggested in order to reduce both fuel use and carbon emissions. While we appreciate all efforts in this area, the goal has been to stop the implementation of ideas and suggestions that are not feasible for us as operators before they have the opportunity to be suggested as policy. For example, some suggestions we have encountered have been that all taxiing will be done as single-engine taxi for twin-engine jets, to include turboprops, or all descents and arrivals will be idle descent from cruise to touchdown. In these situations, we offer the restrictions and safety issues that are induced with these operational procedures. We are fortunate to have outstanding working relationships with many groups and task forces within the environmental industry and are proactive in working with these groups to develop the safest solutions for further fuel and carbon emission reductions. My third goal is to educate the public and those in the industry who may not be fully aware of what airlines have already done to greatly reduce fuel burn, CO₂ emissions, and other environmental effects."

A degree of success has been achieved on all three goals, but more work needs to be done.

HFT

Capt. Frank Cheeseman (United), ALPA's Human Factors and Training (HFT) Group chair, noted that F/O Helena Reidemar (Delta), ALPA's director of Human Factors (HF), attended the first Human Factors Industry Working Group meeting in Dallas last November and is now co-chairing its working group, whose first project is an effort to improve pilot monitoring. Reidemar also continues to work with NASA's Dr. Steve Casner to develop sim scenarios to study issues relating to cockpit automation, hand flying, and monitoring. Reidemar also recently spoke at a Royal Aeronautics Society Conference about the pilot monitoring work that ALPA is doing with the industry working group that she co-chairs. Capt. Ken Plunkett (Delta), an HF group member, has been attending electronic flight bag conferences and participating in industry work regarding this technology from the human factors perspective.

HFT's Pilot Training Directorate, led by Capt. Dave McKenney (United), has been busy on a host of projects, including these:

- ▶ Loss of control (LOC) is still a major safety issue; McKenney served on the FAA's Stick Pusher and Adverse Weather Events ARC, which gave its initial report to the FAA in June 2011 and was then reconstituted as the Loss of Control and Recovery Training (LOCART) ARC to address FAA and international harmonization of loss of control. The LOCART ARC report was issued in December 2012, and the agency is expected to issue an advisory circular on upset recovery training this year. Capt. Bryan Burks (Alaska) continues to work on training devices and flight simulation in LOC training.
- ▶ IFALPA issued its first International Pilot Training Standards (IPTs) manual in June 2012, which ALPA was instrumental in developing.
- ▶ ICAO formally adopted evidence-based training (EBT) in October 2012, which is to be used beginning in May 2013. ALPA is working with IFALPA to provide comments on the ICAO EBT Implementation Guide.
- ▶ McKenney is one of eight industry experts developing a universal set of pilot core competencies and behavioral indicators for ICAO, to be used as the international standard for pilot core competencies for developing and assessing pilot skills.—*Jan W. Steenblik, Technical Editor*