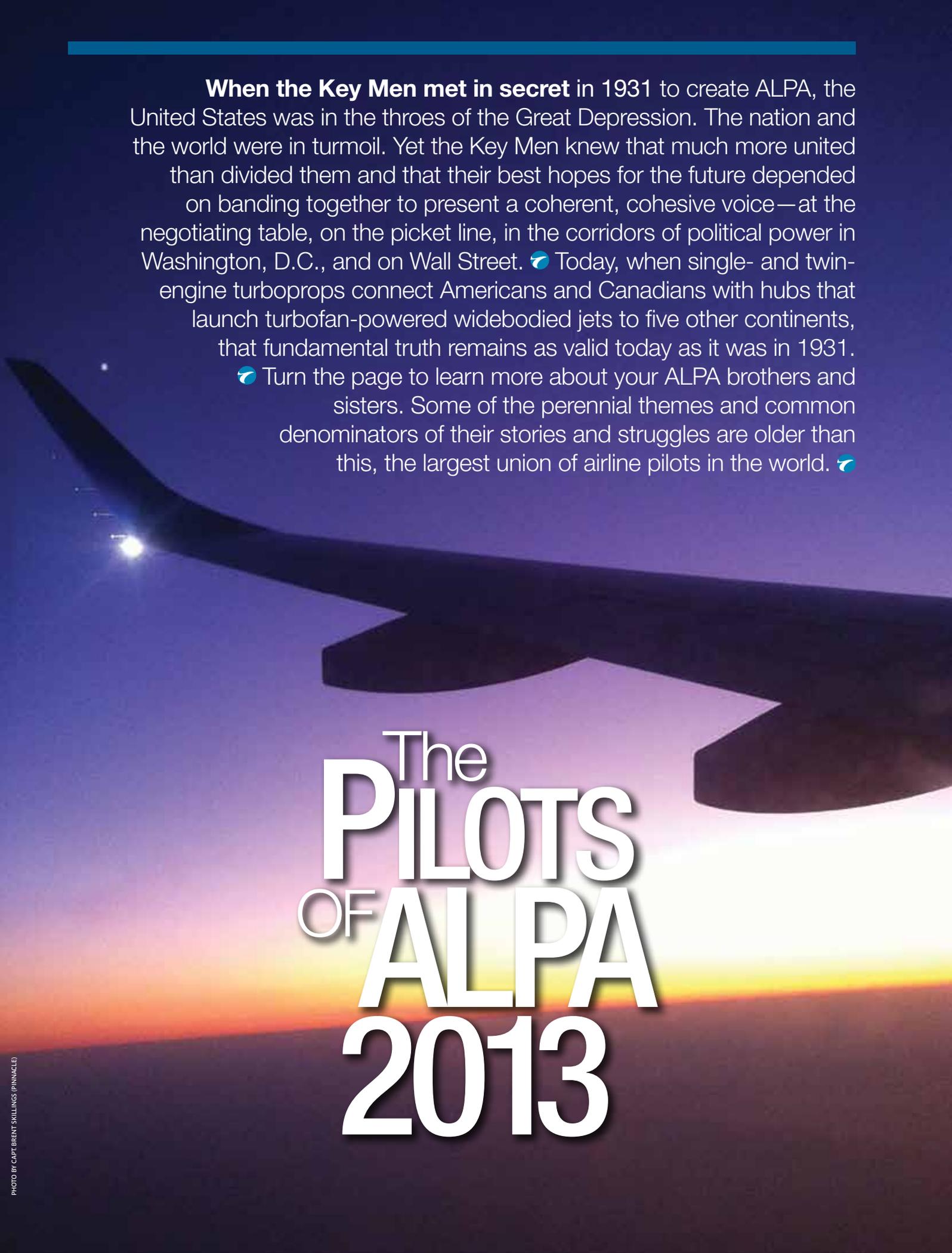


When the Key Men met in secret in 1931 to create ALPA, the United States was in the throes of the Great Depression. The nation and the world were in turmoil. Yet the Key Men knew that much more united than divided them and that their best hopes for the future depended on banding together to present a coherent, cohesive voice—at the negotiating table, on the picket line, in the corridors of political power in Washington, D.C., and on Wall Street. 🌐 Today, when single- and twin-engine turboprops connect Americans and Canadians with hubs that launch turbofan-powered widebodied jets to five other continents, that fundamental truth remains as valid today as it was in 1931.

🌐 Turn the page to learn more about your ALPA brothers and sisters. Some of the perennial themes and common denominators of their stories and struggles are older than this, the largest union of airline pilots in the world. 🌐



The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Setting a New Course

By Toni C. Vacinek
Senior Communications Specialist

AirTran

On March 1, 2012, the FAA approved Southwest Airlines' application for a single operating certificate (SOC) with wholly owned AirTran Airways. With the SOC in hand, Southwest moved forward and began transitioning AirTran's operations, including moving some AirTran pilots "across the partition," the invisible wall that now separates the two companies and pilot groups.

The inaugural conversion class of pilots took place on March 28, 2012, and just fewer than 200 of the 1,750

While setting a new course and settling into their new roles, the MEC was confronted with Southwest's announcement on May 22, 2012, that it had reached a tentative agreement with Delta to sublease AirTran's B-717s—an agreement that changed the tone and tenor of the transition among AirTran pilots, Southwest management, and the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association. The MEC leaders are currently working with ALPA staff and pilot leaders to sort through the ramifications

Southwest slowly spooled up.

Autumn brought additional change to the airline. Southwest announced that the Milwaukee, Wisc., base, which was expected to stay open into 2013, would draw down and eventually close.

In preparation for the transition of the majority of Milwaukee-based pilots and at the request of the MEC, ALPA's Executive Council reviewed and approved the dissolution of the Milwaukee local council, with the remaining members joining the local council in Orlando, Fla., the previous headquarters of AirTran Airways and the original base for its pilots.

However, Orlando will also soon be shrinking as pilot transitioning across the partition increases and the number of routes flown by AirTran pilots decreases. The dissolution of the Orlando local council is on the horizon, and the remaining pilots will again reunite as one council—until that, too, is gone.

"The majority of our pilots are still waiting to cross the partition to Southwest," says Capt. Jim Morris, the pilots' MEC chairman. "For most of those who remain, the sublease of the B-717 fleet to Delta changes the landscape. We at the MEC are doing everything possible to make this work for our members, who expected this transition to look vastly different than it does today." 



Retired B-717 F/O Jo Beth Lynch after landing her retirement flight in Atlanta, Ga., on Oct. 28, 2012. Lynch is the first pilot in five years

to retire at AirTran and the first ALPA-represented AirTran pilot to retire. Lynch, an ALPA member for 28 years, is also a retired captain on the B-757 and B-767 for United Airlines. She made significant contributions to her fellow pilots, ALPA, and the airline industry with her dedication to safety in leadership roles at Air Virginia and United.

pilots on the former AirTran seniority list are now flying under the Southwest livery.

Facing transition within its own group, and as part of the Master Executive Council (MEC) officer term of office cycle, which ended in April, the MEC elected new officers to continue the work of representing the best interests of the AirTran pilot group. Whereas the former leaders were focused on seniority list integration and contract negotiations, the task of moving through the merger with Southwest belongs to the current slate of officers and representatives. Developing the goals and the strategy for maintaining a transition that is smooth and transparent was the first order of business.

for their members.

As one group of AirTran pilots was getting ready to begin conversion training at Southwest, another group of pilots filed a dispute resolution claim with the Dispute Resolution Committee, consisting of two premerger AirTran pilots and two premerger Southwest pilots, regarding the effect on the seniority integration agreement due to the sublease of B-717s to Delta. Meanwhile, AirTran's Negotiating Committee, at the direction of the MEC, engaged the company in discussions to obtain improvements to maintain the quality of life for the pilots who would remain on the AirTran side of the partition as the transition to

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2009
- **Number of pilots:** 1,500+
- **Pilot domiciles:** Atlanta, Ga.; Milwaukee, Wisc.; and Orlando, Fla.
- **Headquarters:** Dallas, Tex.
- **Operations/services:** AirTran Airways, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co., offers coast-to-coast and near-international service with close to 600 flights a day to 54 destinations
- **Fleet:** 88 B-717s and 41 B-737s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Combat Job Outsourcing

By John Perkinson
Staff Writer

Air Transat

The Air Transat pilots have seen the effect that government policy can have on airline operations. The pilots have had to endure the detrimental effects of Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the use of wet-leasing by competing airlines for the last few years. Sizeable losses and concerns about diluted demand pushed the airline into downsizing and restructuring in 2012.

ALPA and Air Transat's parent company, Transat A.T., Inc., banded together with Air Canada and WestJet to publicly denounce the Canadian Transportation Agency's November 2012 decision to uphold these practices. The group condemned agency

An Air Transat A330 at Montréal-Trudeau Airport.



COURTESY AIR TRANSAT

approval of Canadian airline Sunwing's seasonal use of four Czech airplanes and overseas flight crews as part of its winter operation.

ALPA and the other aviation stakeholders pointed out that half of Sunwing's pilots and two-thirds of its airplanes in use this winter are from other countries, giving the airline an unfair operating advantage and neglecting unemployed Canadian pilots. Sunwing and similar carriers use these tactics to take advantage of Canadians' travel to the Caribbean and Central and South America during the winter, when demand is at a premium.

"We laid off 56 pilots this fall and had to park two of our A310s," says Capt. Carol Lavoie, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. To provide the

airline some relief, the pilots agreed to extend the life of their contract by a year, to May 2015. They also agreed to a cost-of-living freeze, approving a bonus program to recoup lost wages if company performance improves.

"We understand that our airline is concerned about overextending itself," says Lavoie. "The airplanes that we parked were eventually going to be replaced, but now, with this fight, we're waiting to see what happens."

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program allows airlines to forgo hiring Canadian pilots and instead employ overseas pilots and save on initial training costs. However, several Canadian airlines have sidestepped the clause

that delineates that foreign workers can be employed only if the company can demonstrate that no suitable Canadian residents can fill the available jobs. Lavoie points out, "It appears that some airlines will overlook a Canadian applicant if he or she doesn't have the specific type rating for the airplanes that airline uses."

In addition, the program calls for reciprocity—i.e., use of available Canadian pilots in the program's participating countries during Canada's summer season—but this policy is not being properly honoured.

Lavoie notes that ALPA's Canada Board has been a strong ally, testifying before Parliament to mitigate the effects of job outsourcing on the Air Transat pilots and other Canadian pilot groups.

During testimony, Capt. Dan Adamus (Jazz), ALPA's Canada Board president, said: "The issue of hiring foreign pilots and its impacts on the labour force are subjects that need to be taken seriously by the federal government. Some airline managements have been abusing the Temporary Foreign Worker Program by using it for competitive advantages instead of filling a labour shortage as originally envisioned by the legislation."

Despite these challenges, Lavoie describes his pilot group's relationship with management as positive. "We have problems here and there, but we have a good channel of communications with senior management, and we're working together to help our airline succeed. However, we also understand that we're a publicly traded company and that we need to make money to stay in business."

Lavoie remains hopeful that the airline industry can convince the Canadian government to see the shortcomings of this destructive policy and act in the best interest of its citizens.

Air Transat offers both scheduled and charter flights using a fleet of Airbus A310s and A330s. The airline balances its southbound operations in the winter with trips to Europe in the summer and carries nearly 2 million passengers per year to 60 destinations in 25 countries. On Nov. 14, 2012, Air Transat celebrated its 25th anniversary. 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1999
- **Number of pilots:** 436 (including furloughees)
- **Headquarters:** Pierre E. Trudeau International Airport, Montreal, P.Q.
- **Pilot bases:** Montreal, P.Q.; Toronto, Ont.; and Vancouver, B.C.
- **Fleet:** 11 A310s and 12 A330s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The Difference A Year Can Make

By Tawnya Burket
Communications
Specialist

Air Transport International

By the time the newly elected Master Executive Council (MEC) leaders officially took office in March 2012, they were already fully immersed in important discussions regarding the future of their flight crew members. Meetings with management, the previous MEC, and the Capital Cargo MEC officers were already under way in evaluating scenarios for combining Air Transport International (ATI) and Capital Cargo International Airlines (CCIA), as the two airlines are owned by Air Transport Services Group, Inc.

Using ALPA merger policy as guidance, the two MECs worked closely with ALPA Representation Department staff in developing a transition and process agreement (TPA) that became the merger's blueprint—outlining the negotiating process to attain a joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA) and integrated seniority list, and ultimately creating one airline.

The arduous task of expeditiously negotiating a JCBA began after the crewmembers ratified the TPA. The joint negotiating committee (JNC) consisting of three members from each MEC and ALPA's Representation Department labor relations counsel bargained with management over the summer. On August 6, the MEC held a special meeting in Boston, Mass., where it appointed the Integration Seniority List Committee. Three days later, the JNC reached an agreement-in-principle on the JCBA. During the next weeks, the MEC reviewed the tentative agreement (TA) and authorized a crewmember ratification vote.

The MEC, along with the CCI MEC and Representation Department and Communications Department staff, met during the week of August 20

in Arlington, Tex., to create a strategy for educating the two groups on the JCBA. The meeting's outcome consisted of an educational packet that included the JCBA and a road show schedule to reach all the crewmembers. The JCBA ratification vote closed on September 24 with 63 percent of the combined crewmembers voting in favor of the joint agreement.

After the JCBA's ratification, Capt. Brendan Twomey, ATI's MEC chairman, commented on the work that had been done and the MEC's expectations for the future.

"The work of the crewmembers in reaching and ratifying this JCBA should signal to management that we share the goal of seeing ATI prosper. This merger was management's idea, and once the merger is complete, we expect to take part in that prosperity," said Twomey. "Our focus now will be implementing and enforcing our contract while welcoming our brothers and sisters from Capital Cargo into the ATI family."

Upon JCBA ratification, the TPA then required the ATI Integrated Seniority List Committee members to begin seniority integration talks with their CCI counterparts. According to their agreement, the two committees met multiple times within the allotted 30 days of direct negotiations in August and September but were unable to reach an agreement. During the first two weeks in October, the committees then met in mediation with Arbitrator Richard Bloch. On October 15, after mediation failed to produce an integrated

seniority list, the committees submitted their final written arguments and supporting documentation to Bloch, who is expected to issue a final integrated seniority list award shortly. The completed list will then be presented to management, which will conclude the ALPA portion of the operational merger.

In an unfortunate turn of events, management announced in December a reduction in the fleet and crew force. The announcement indicated that almost half of the airline's crewmem-



Capt. Dan Kuhn and F/O Brad Rath with Korean ground coordinators before departing in their DC-8 from Incheon, Korea.

bers would receive furlough notices before year's end.

"The announcement of a reduction in aircraft from management was disheartening news to our crewmembers," says Twomey. "We can only hope that the cargo industry turns around, allowing our fellow crewmembers to return to the airline and the synergies of the merger come to fruition." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** November 2009
- **Number of pilots:** 240, with 150 on furlough
- **Operations:** Combi passenger, military, and cargo operations around the world
- **Base:** Home-based
- **Corporate headquarters:** Little Rock, Ark.
- **Fleet:** Currently operates three DC-8 combis and three B-767s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Endgame Negotiations Within Sight

By Lydia Jakub
Senior Communications
Specialist

Air Wisconsin

Air Wisconsin pilots have been working to build the structure for a competitive contract over the past two years and are focusing their efforts on completing the process in 2013. The pilots, who are currently in their ninth year of a concessionary agreement, have clearly and consistently stated their justifiable expectations for this contract to management: improved pay, benefits, and work rules.

"We're at the 30-yard line, working to drive the ball forward," says Capt. Richard Swindell, chairman of the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC). "Air Wisconsin is a successful, financially viable company due, in large part, to the sacrifices made by our pilot group. It's time for those contributions to be recognized at the bargaining table through increased pilot pay, better benefits, and quality-of-life enhancements."

Since beginning negotiations in October 2010, the pilots have reached 16 tentative agreements with management. They have also narrowed down the list of items in many of the remaining 14 sections using a unique combination of traditional and interest-based bargaining methods.

With the Scheduling and Hours of Service sections, for example, the pilots met with management negotiators to identify the interests of each party and work toward agreements that addressed those interests to their mutual satisfaction. They have since passed proposals on these sections that included the FAA's new flight-time/duty-time regulations (FAR Part 117) to define utilization of flight crews, building schedules, and other work rules to enhance pilots' overall quality of life. Senior management representatives have indicat-

ed that they will start abiding by the new rules before the implementation deadline to enable both the pilot group and the company to become accustomed to them before they become regulatory.

In recent months, negotiations have focused on additional economic areas of the contract. Although the progress of negotiations has slowed, both parties remain committed to and engaged in the process.

"It's critical, given the turbulent state of the airline industry and rampant speculation about a looming pilot shortage, that we secure a ratifiable agreement in the near term," says Swindell. "Doing so will benefit the



Capt. Dave Beyer and F/O Brian Beyer, who are father and son.

pilot group and company by positioning Air Wisconsin for continued labor stability and future growth."

One challenge will be maintaining adequate pilot staffing. In 2012, Air Wisconsin hired approximately 100 new pilots and expects to do the same this year. The MEC secured preferential interviews for furloughed ALPA members last year, and the company has already hired many furloughed ALPA pilots from Comair, Pinnacle, and Trans States. With nearly all airlines planning to hire this year, however, the competition for qualified pilots will be fierce.

It's up to Air Wisconsin management to evaluate and seize opportunities as

they become available in the industry. Meanwhile, pilot leaders are monitoring the company's business plan, preparing for what they hope will be a profitable future, and developing contingency plans. They are also working to strengthen relationships with other pilot group leaders through their active participation in ALPA's US Airways Express Pilots Alliance. Furthermore, they are bridging the gap with their fellow Air Wisconsin employees by hosting events at headquarters to demonstrate that they, too, are committed to the success of the airline.

To keep the pilot group informed, the MEC reinvigorated its communications program. They maintain a presence on the line and in the crew rooms to answer questions and solicit feedback. A constant flow of information is also available via e-news updates, social media, and other MEC resources to ensure that pilots get the information they need in the format they want.

These and other strategies are being used to advance the pilots' agenda for a fair contract. The endgame is within sight, and a multifaceted plan is in place to ensure that the pilot group will be ready to act when called upon. 

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, N.Y. (LGA); Norfolk, Va. (ORF); Philadelphia, Pa. (PHL); and Washington, D.C. (DCA)
- **Fleet:** 71 Canadair 50-seat regional jets (CRJ200s)

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Working Toward a New Contract

By Jenn Sutton
Senior Communications Specialist

Alaska

The Alaska Airlines pilots are just months away from the April 1, 2013, amendable date of their collective bargaining agreement. The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) remains hopeful that when that date arrives, rather than enter into the status quo period—during which time there are no improvements to the collective bargaining agreement—the pilots will be working under a new, negotiated contract that reflects the role that they play in the airline's success.

A year and a half ago, when they approved their strategic plan, the Alaska MEC members drew up seven goals for the future. One of their most important goals is to find opportunities to improve the contractual cornerstones of the pilots' collective bargaining agreement—pay, work rules, job security, and benefits—on an ongoing basis. Within this goal, the MEC included a desire to work to reach a new collective bargaining agreement by the amendable date, noting that doing so would provide benefits to both the pilot group and the company.

Since ratification of Contract '09, the pilot group's Negotiating Committee, at the MEC's direction, has been working with management to address issues as they arise, including about three dozen memorandums of understanding (MOU) and letters of agreement (LOA), such as an MOU that allowed pilots more flexibility in how they bid for vacation and an LOA that allowed furloughed pilots an option to temporarily bypass recall if they desired to do so. Additionally, the pilots' Grievance Committee meets monthly with management to review grievance submissions in an effort to resolve issues on a more timely basis, and

the Scheduling Management Group—a joint ALPA-Alaska working group created with the ratification of Contract '09—has been meeting periodically to tackle and find solutions to problems with the application of scheduling language.

Last July, the Negotiating Committee began meeting with management's full negotiating team. The parties are now talking about language related to job security, one of the four cornerstones of the contract. Most recently, discussions at the negotiating table have included scope, merger, and acquisition language. While plenty of work still remains to be done, the MEC continues to stay fully engaged in the effort to reach a new collective bargaining agreement in a timely manner.

"Reaching an agreement by the amendable date would benefit both our pilots and our company by avoiding protracted, contentious negotiations and a status quo period during which there would be no improvements to our contract," says Capt. Chris Notaro, the pilots' MEC chairman. "We remain hopeful we will reach that goal. But we still have a long way to go in key areas, and we will not sacrifice a quality agreement for the sake of expediency."

The MEC has been polling the pilots periodically, via both telephone polls and more recently through ALPA's new online polling system, to ensure they understand what their priorities are.

While the MEC members believe they're on a path toward achieving their goal, they also are prepared to

negotiate beyond April 1 and for as long as it takes to achieve a quality agreement. The MEC's Strategic Planning Committee is now in the MEC office full-time to focus on negotiations. Throughout 2012, the MEC grew and developed its Pilot-to-Pilot and Family Awareness Committees, training volunteers in all four of Alaska's bases who will help share information between the MEC and pilot group, with the goal of ensuring that the pilot group and their families are informed and engaged.

"Our goal remains a contract by April 1, but we must and will be prepared to negotiate as long as it takes



Capt. Tim Hope at Seattle-Tacoma Airport.

to achieve an agreement that reflects this pilot group's needs and requirements," Notaro says. 

At a Glance

- **Number of pilots:** 1,472
- **Operations:** 95 destinations with 436 daily departures in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. This includes 40 markets flown by Horizon Air, which provides traffic feed to Alaska Airlines under a capacity-purchase agreement. During recent years, Alaska has added new destinations to expand its network from its main hub in Seattle, Wash., as well as from its hubs in Anchorage, Alaska; Los Angeles, Calif.; and Portland, Ore.
- **Fleet:** An all-Boeing fleet of 24 737-400s, 17 -700s, 58 -800s, 12 -900s, 2 -900ERs, 5 -400Cs, and 1 -400 freighter

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Surpass Expectations During Bankruptcy Negotiations

By Kimberly Seitz
Senior Communications Specialist

American Eagle

It was a challenging year for American Eagle pilots as they negotiated their way through bankruptcy. However, they emerged from the process with an eight-year agreement that maintains key contract provisions and ensures that the pilots have job security and opportunity for career advancement, as well as scoring a contract that includes landmark furlough protection language.

“Emerging from bankruptcy with the majority of our hard-won contract in place is a major achievement in helping to ensure that Eagle remains a viable career choice for both existing and future pilots,” says Capt. Tony Gutierrez, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “The hard work is not yet over. Contract implementation will be tedious, but a massive piece of this process is now complete. And we look forward to expeditious approval from the bankruptcy court.”

As a wholly owned subsidiary of AMR (the parent company of American Airlines, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in November 2011), American Eagle agreed to provide furlough protection equal to the number of active pilots required to staff between 205 and 216 airplanes or 60 percent of American Airlines’ total regional fleet, whichever is less. This also includes guaranteeing that 50 percent of the active pilots retain captain pay. If Eagle is divested or American merges with another airline, Eagle will “furlough protect” 95 percent of Eagle’s pilots on the seniority list at the date of signing. Additionally, if Eagle is in furlough-protect mode, American may be required to increase the percentage of Eagle pilots in American’s new-hire classes.

“Historically, pilot groups lose furlough-protection

language in bankruptcy,” Gutierrez explains. “We are not aware of any other regional airline pilot group that has ever achieved furlough protection of this magnitude in a bankruptcy negotiation.”

The MEC also felt that pay banding—a system that pays captains based on their seniority instead of the actual equipment they are flying—could save a significant amount of money on costly training. The theory is that if a senior captain can hold the CRJ (the highest-paying equipment type) but is flying the EMB, that pilot will likely stay on the EMB if he or she is receiving CRJ pay. The pay banding system encourages pilots not to chase money by bidding on higher-paying equipment since there is no change in pay when changing equipment. Instead, a pilot’s seniority determines which airplane rate a pilot receives. The agreement also includes language protecting junior captains who might immediately incur a reduction in pay because they no longer can hold the pay band associated with the equipment they are actually flying.

Another creative cost-saving solution is the personal time off (PTO) bank, which combines regular sick and vacation leave into one bank. Monthly sick leave credit accruals and annual vacation credit hours are deposited into each pilot’s PTO bank. Pilots may then use that PTO credit for sick calls, vacation time, personal vacation days, and approved commuter and fatigue calls (at the pilot’s option).

And the final big piece of the puzzle was the implementation of a preferential bidding system (PBS). The new agreement provides a PBS that is built jointly by the company and ALPA. After the system is in place, the Eagle

pilots will still have the opportunity to decline PBS and provide equivalent savings in an alternative manner. ALPA also obtained limited control over the pairing generation and bid run processes.

“Although none of us wanted to navigate the bankruptcy process during our



American Eagle terminal at Chicago O'Hare International Airport during a winter afternoon.

career,” says Gutierrez, “we are pleased that this difficult chapter is now behind us and that we can focus on moving forward, exiting bankruptcy, reflecting, and pursuing paths to grow our company and ensure that we maintain solid piloting jobs well into the future.”

At a Glance

■ **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1995 (although Simmons had been an ALPA member since 1986, after the National Mediation Board’s 1995 ruling that the four airlines serving American Airlines—Executive, Flagship, Simmons, and Wings West—constituted a single airline, the Eagle pilots established a single MEC)

■ **Number of pilots:** 3,000

■ **Pilot domiciles:** Chicago, Ill.; Dallas/Ft. Worth, Tex.; Miami, Fla.; JFK and LGA, N.Y.; and San Juan, P.R.

■ **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:** CRJ700s, EMB-135s, EMB-140s, EMB-145s, and ATR 72s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Working Hard Toward A Combined Future

By Jen Lofquist
Senior Communications Specialist

Atlantic Southeast

In August 2010, parent company SkyWest, Inc., announced that Atlantic Southeast (ASA) would purchase ExpressJet and merge them. By December 2011, the carrier had one certificate—effectively making it one airline. A few months later, after an aborted attempt to name the airline SureJet, it got one name—ExpressJet.

Despite having one certificate and one name, the pilot groups remain separate—each having its own contract while they both negotiate with the goal of a single contract. Until that time, the ASA pilots continue to function as an independent pilot group and operate under their premerger contract.

Negotiations on a joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA) began almost as soon as the merger was announced. Communications went out jointly from ASA and ExpressJet, and the groups hold joint Master Executive Council (MEC) meetings and continue to communicate with each other on almost a daily basis. With preferential bidding system issues still dividing the two groups and the economic sections of the contract still open, the pilot groups have more work ahead. After that, seniority list integration will begin.

“Bringing together two groups under one contract is never a simple task,” comments Capt. David Nieuwenhuis, the ASA pilots’ MEC chairman. “Even under the best of circumstances, gaining consensus between management and one pilot group is a lengthy process. We’ve got two groups with different systems in place and different histories—not to mention different contracts. We’ve made tremendous progress, but we want to be sure that we come away with a contract that satisfies our

joint pilot group and all of the future pilots who will serve under this contract.”

The discussions about their collective professional futures have included not just the ASA and ExpressJet pilots, but also the third pilot group in the SkyWest family, SkyWest Airlines. In August 2012, the two ALPA groups met face-to-face with the leaders of the SkyWest Airlines Pilots Association to talk about SkyWest, Inc.’s financial situation and to compare notes and strategies. The three groups also met with SkyWest management to emphasize their goals and to review the current state of the U.S. airline industry.

“By forging a close relationship with the SkyWest pilots, we are able to better ensure that no one pilot group is being ratcheted against another and that we have access to as much

information as possible,” says Nieuwenhuis. “We all need to work together to move this entire corporation forward and make SkyWest, Inc., and all of its pilot groups a leading force in this industry and to raise the bar for all pilots, no matter what name is on their badges.”

Since last year, ASA has hired more than 75 pilots. In September, the company announced that it had entered into a four-year capacity-purchase agreement with American Airlines.

Beginning in early 2013, the airline will be flying 11 CRJ200s for American. These airplanes will be acquired from the current Delta system. The majority of the flying will be out of Dallas/Ft. Worth (DFW). Eventually,

a new domicile and maintenance base will be located in Dallas. Already, more than 100 pilots have bid into the new DFW domicile.

“As much as we are pleased with the additional flying, we are aware that this comes at the expense of our fellow ALPA pilots at American Eagle,” Nieuwenhuis says. “Although there has been no reduction in pilot positions at American Eagle, as airline pilots we need to encourage stability within the industry, rather than simply shuffling the same flying from company to company and being played against each other. We know that the most secure future for our careers is a vibrant and flourishing industry. We are colleagues—not combatants.”



PHOTO: JOSH HEWICK

F/O Nathan Somers completes a preflight check at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

The pilots have put these words into action by actively participating in ALPA’s Delta Connection Pilots Alliance. They have worked closely with other regional airline pilot groups, sharing information and ideas. When Pinnacle Airlines announced it had filed for bankruptcy, ASA pilots lent their support and recently attended bankruptcy court hearings in New York along with Pinnacle pilots. [▶](#)

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1977
- **First ALPA contract:** 1989
- **Number of pilots:** 1,477
- **Headquarters:** Atlanta, Ga.
- **Pilot bases:** Dulles, Va.; Atlanta, Ga.; and Detroit, Mich.
- **Fleet:** 112 CRJ200s, 46 CRJ700s, and 10 CRJ900s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Break New Ground Using Interest- Based Negotiations

By Doug Baj
Manager,
Communications
Department

Bearskin

The pilots at Bearskin Airlines and their company are breaking new ground, taking an unprecedented approach to bargaining their fifth contract and landing a quid pro quo agreement that benefits both the pilots and their airline.

In April 2012, the Bearskin Master Executive Council (MEC) leaders—Capts. Dan Parnham, Rob Marsh, and Steve Mauro—reached a tentative agreement with their company after only seven months of main table bargaining. They credit the successful and expeditious negotiations, which included improvements to pay and work rules for the pilots, cost savings, and efficiency for the airline, to the forward-

and loser in a disagreement. It's imperative to find common ground and consensus when views and opinions differ. Open doors and lines of communication have proven to be the best way of doing business and have contributed to the ongoing success of our airline. The Bearskin MEC believes that a harmonious and respectful labour-management relationship is integral to the prosperity of any successful business. Case in point—Bearskin will celebrate its 50th anniversary this July," says Parnham, the pilots' MEC chairman.

A commonsense approach to reaching consensus, in addition to the MEC's strong relationship with company executives, helped achieve a

scheduling flexibility and other inefficiencies within the operation in exchange for better pay and working conditions for its pilots. "ALPA's Economic and Financial Analysis Department was paramount in the success of these negotiations," Parnham says.

The MEC says that other than obtaining the latest contract, it's business as usual at the airline, which expanded its fleet over the last year. The airline purchased four additional Fairchild Metroliners, bringing the all-Metro fleet to a total of 18. The airplanes are equipped with twin-turbine engines and seat 19 passengers. More airplanes mean a need for more pilots. "Attracting and retaining qualified pilots is a growing concern for both the MEC and the company," says Parnham.

The airline—which has its primary base of operation in Thunder Bay, Ont., and smaller bases in Winnipeg, Man.; Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.; and Sioux Lookout, Ont.—offers more than 100 scheduled daily departures to 18 destinations in Manitoba and Ontario. The airline has established a niche market, providing smaller communities with service and frequency typically only seen in larger cities. This commuter airline has found a recipe for success that maintains profitability into its 50th year of operation. 



One of Bearskin's 18 Metroliners.

looking techniques they used.

In 2011, the MEC, which also serves as the Negotiating Committee, proposed interest-based-negotiations (IBN) to the company. IBN is a process by which both parties discuss their issues from a fact-based perspective and work to resolve them as a team, creating an outcome that both sides can support. The Bearskin pilots, assisted by ALPA's Economic and Financial Analysis and Representation Departments, were the first Canadian ALPA pilot group to successfully use the IBN process to complete their entire negotiations. "There has to be give and take on both sides during contract negotiations. There can't always be a winner

tentative agreement without the pilots' taking a strike vote or threatening a labour dispute. And the pilots haven't filed a single grievance in the last eight years. The MEC says it's the positive relationship with management that moves the airline in the direction both sides want and need. The MEC leaders also believe that their relationship will continue to allow them to mitigate any potential labour-management disputes, as well as successfully navigate their objectives in the ever-changing airline industry.

The new four-year contract—which at press time was drafted and nearly ready for distribution to the pilots—includes cost savings for the company from increased

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1997 (became an ALPA-represented pilot group when CALPA merged with ALPA)
- **Number of pilots:** 72
- **Pilot bases:** Thunder Bay, Ont.; Winnipeg, Man.; Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.; and Sioux Lookout, Ont.
- **Headquarters:** Sioux Lookout, Ont.
- **Operations:** Scheduled and charter passenger service
- **Fleet:** 18 Metroliners

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Reflecting Leads to Turbulence

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications Specialist

Calm Air

At Canada's Calm Air, an airline-wide reflecting project is making the carrier more modern, more competitive, and better equipped to take on new business, while also creating what's hoped are only short-term growing pains.

The combination of seat movement and training, unexpected layoffs, and preparing for upcoming contract negotiations has led to unanticipated turbulence for the close-knit pilot group, which flies to northern Manitoba and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut from bases in Winnipeg and Thompson, Man.

Formerly an exclusively turboprop operation, Calm Air

agement again announced it would lay off almost 10 percent of the pilot group—nine pilots—on December 9 because of economic pressures, strong competition in key markets, and difficulty acquiring suitable aircraft to replace the Saab fleet at a fast enough rate.

It was a huge blow to the pilot group, says Capt. Dan Cowan, the pilots' MEC chairman. "We offered many solutions to keep our members working, but unfortunately the viable options were very limited," Cowan observes. "We have not stopped trying to find solutions. We're told [our furloughees] may be recalled next spring, and we hope we can bring all of them back."



Calm Air's Hawker Siddeley HS748 is configured for cargo only.

added the first jets to its fleet in early 2012: two Dornier-Fairchild D328 jets brought in to provide medical services while flying under a contract with the territorial government of Nunavut.

In the summer, the airline announced it was embarking on a comprehensive fleet renewal plan. All of Calm Air's Saab 340s would be replaced with ATR turboprops as well as the D328s. At almost the same time, management announced it would be required to reduce pilot staffing levels. The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) responded by working with the company to negotiate voluntary leaves, which prevented forced reductions and layoffs.

But in November, man-

Those same economic pressures will also complicate the pilot group's contract negotiations. The current five-year agreement expires at the end of April 2013, and the Negotiating Committee began its preparations almost a year earlier.

"We've had a strategic planning summit in June with our ALPA staff experts and collective bargaining and Strategic Planning Committee representatives from other ALPA Canada pilot groups. Our negotiators got a strong response from the pilot group in a contract survey in July," says Cowan. "We're ready to get started bargaining for an agreement that will recognize our pilots' value to the airline while enabling the company

to grow and prosper."

Calm Air is one of the four ALPA pilot groups with a representative on the new ALPA President's Committee for Remote Operations, which is examining the unique challenges airlines face working in high Arctic regions in an effort to improve service and safety. Some of the ideas being considered include creating RNAV approaches at every airport, improving approach lighting, and reducing the number of unpaved runways.

Like many airlines that serve the Arctic, Calm Air was born as a bush pilot operation, using floatplanes to serve remote fishing camps in the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1970s, a boom in mining and hydroelectric power production in northern Manitoba brought rapid expansion to the airline.

In 2009 Exchange Income Corporation (EIC), a Winnipeg-based holding company, purchased Calm Air. EIC is rapidly expanding its airline holdings, having bought another carrier, Bearskin Airlines, whose pilots ALPA represents, in 2011 and Custom Helicopters, Ltd. last February. The company also owns Perimeter Aviation and Keewatin Air. [✈](#)

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1997
- **Number of pilots:** 95, with 9 on furlough
- **Operations:** Scheduled passenger and cargo service throughout northern Manitoba and Nunavut, the newest and largest territory in Canada, including destinations along the western shores of Hudson Bay and into the high Arctic
- **Pilot bases:** Thompson, Man., and Winnipeg, Man.
- **Headquarters:** Thompson, Man.
- **Fleet:** 1 Hawker Siddeley HS748, 2 ATR 72s, 6 ATR 42s, and 2 30-seat Fairchild Dornier D328 jets
- **Fun fact:** The name "Calm Air" was not chosen to embody smooth flying—it's an acronym of the founder's initials: Carl Arnold Lawrence Morberg

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Confront Extreme Weather Conditions, Scheduling Challenges

By John Perkinson
Staff Writer

Canadian North

Flying in the northern-most territories of Canada, Canadian North pilots transport daily both passengers and cargo in what most of us would consider challenging conditions. Landings and takeoffs on remote ice and gravel runways in the polar Arctic weather are the norm for these pilots, whose distinctive skills are required to “bend the throttles” for this unique airline.

Capt. Chris Kampen, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, says that his airline has been steadily hiring new pilots for this demanding operation to fulfill its plans for expansion. Canadian North has announced that it will acquire additional B-737-300s to

charters, and cargo and has been with the airline since its beginnings, and the MEC looks forward to working with Hankirk.

With the ratification of the most recent collective bargaining agreement, the Canadian North pilots instituted a new credit system as part of the overall scheduling process. “That’s probably the biggest positive change as far as lifestyle goes,” says Kampen. “It has taken us out of the previous max-blocking system and is one of the biggest gains from our last round of negotiations.”

Because of the nature of Canadian North flying, pilots bid for days off and have traditionally worked 18 or 19 days a month, depending on

hardships that come along with flying in extremely challenging conditions. The pilot group is also developing a post-accident/-incident checklist to supplement the information ALPA provides on its Worldwide Accident Hotline “orange” card. The MEC pilot representatives, through both personal experience and member feedback, recognize that there are issues specific to Canadian North operations and that this new reference item will address the airline’s fleet and the nuances of flying in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

Along with these efforts, the pilot group is ramping up its current communications efforts and plans to establish a website as a resource for Canadian North pilots sometime early in 2013.

Sporting the slogan “Seriously Northern,” Canadian North was established in 1989 as a subsidiary of Canadian Airlines to provide air transportation for northern Canadian communities. The airline is owned by Norterra, an aboriginal-owned holding company divided between the Inuvialuit Development Corporation, representing the Inuvialuit people of the western Canadian Arctic, and the Nunasi Corporation, representing the Inuit people of Nunavut. Canadian North maintains its headquarters in downtown Yellowknife. 



A Canadian North B-737-300
at Yellowknife.

supplement its current fleet, which includes B-737-200s and Dash 8-100s in addition to B-737-300s.

F/O Wade Bowman, the MEC vice chairman, notes that 19 new pilots were added at the end of the third quarter of 2012.

With the next round of contract negotiations not set to begin until December 2014, the MEC is concentrating on quality-of-life improvements for its pilots. Facilitating this effort is the reasonably amicable relationship that labour and management share. Steve Hankirk recently replaced Tracy Medve as president of Canadian North. Hankirk has served as vice president of operations,

whether it was a 30- or 31-day month. The new system provides pilots with more credits for time away from base, allowing them to work as few as 14 days a month (although 16 to 17 days is probably more common). The MEC is also pressing for new scheduling software, as the current program is extremely outdated and pilot leaders would like to see the company move toward a system that allows pilots to bid for actual trips.

On its to-do list for 2013, the Canadian North MEC is working to establish a Professional Standards Committee to support pilots who need assistance in overcoming the additional

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2011
- **Number of pilots:** 133
- **Bases:** Edmonton and Calgary, Alb.
- **Headquarters:** Yellowknife, NT
- **Operations:** Scheduled flights and cargo services throughout Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, as well as charter operations throughout Canada and the United States
- **Fleet:** B-737-200s, B-737-300s, and Dash 8-100s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Navigate Negotiations

By Jessie Cornelius
Public Relations
Specialist

CanJet

CanJet pilots are keeping their spirits high this season, flying passengers to sunny vacation destinations in the Caribbean, Mexico, and beyond while also navigating contract negotiations with the company.

"I think, for the most part, we are being realistic about what we can achieve," says Capt. Alex Sirros, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "Our goal is to get a fair contract for our members while ensuring that the company maintains the flexibility it needs to continue its operations successfully." The pilots are making progress in what have been

contract. When a collective agreement expires in Canada, it remains in effect until a new contract is ratified, except in a situation in which the employees strike or the employer locks out the employees. Otherwise, the employer cannot unilaterally change or modify the working conditions in the contract during the negotiations process. In the United States, contracts under the Railway Labor Act do not expire. Instead, they become amendable and remain in place until an amended agreement is negotiated or the National Mediation Board releases the parties to self-help.



Capt. Alex Sirros, MEC chairman, heads to Cuba in 2012.

deemed smooth but tricky negotiations.

After seven negotiating sessions—which officially kicked off on Feb. 20, 2012—the pilots' Negotiating Committee has made considerable headway on administrative items, which have been tentatively agreed to, and plans to begin addressing financial aspects, including salary and per diem, this year. The pilots' current contract, which was ratified in May 2008, expired at the end of March 2012.

While the labour laws in Canada are different from those in the United States, collective bargaining agreements are treated similarly upon reaching the end of a

The CanJet pilots are optimistic that they will keep negotiations moving forward in 2013 and out of arbitration or litigation, which can severely delay the process and turn control of the outcome over to a third party. The MEC says that negotiations, so far, have been smooth and productive.

"ALPA gives us the tools that we need," says Sirros. "From negotiations to strategic planning to communications, the ALPA support system is in place and always there for us."

Once the negotiations are complete and a tentative agreement (TA) is announced, the agreement will be sent to the pilots for a

ratification vote. At that time, the MEC plans to begin road shows at pilot group bases in Halifax, N.S.; Montreal, Que.; Toronto, Ont.; and Vancouver, B.C., to discuss the TA.

The group's Pilot-to-Pilot (P2P) communications—which are a key part of their strategic plan—will also play an important role in informing the pilots about the TA. P2P pilot representatives will have face-to-face discussions with crewmembers on the line, in crew rooms, and at airports to provide factual information from the MEC and an open forum for asking questions and getting answers. P2P has been under way during the negotiations process.

Another key aspect of the pilots' communication plans is a new branding initiative. With the help of ALPA's Communications Department, the pilots are unveiling a new look that will reflect their unity and their work. The branding will be included in the pilots' e-mail updates known as "PayDay Hotlines," the website, newsletters, presentations, and social media tools that the MEC is considering using to better connect with the pilot group.

"Unity is our focus," notes Sirros. "We need to maintain positive relationships and break down any barriers that exist between us and management. At the end of the day, our goals are all the same—both ours and management—to have a successful company that we can work at for a long time." 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2006
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 130
- **Operations:** Provides subcontracting services to vacation charter airlines
- **Fleet:** 5 B-737-800s and 7 B-737-800s leased during high season

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

A Year of Change for Crewmembers

By Tawnya Burket
Communications
Specialist

Capital Cargo

The dedication and hard work of the Capital Cargo International Airlines (CCIA) crewmembers in the face of economic and operating challenges they confronted in 2011 did not go unnoticed by parent company Air Transport Services Group, Inc. (ATSG). In 2012, ATSG focused on eliminating redundant costs and providing a stronger, more secure workplace by merging Capital Cargo with another of its airlines, Air Transport International (ATI).

Although early conversations between the two group's pilot leaders and management began in February, ATSG didn't publicly announce the merger until May 10, 2012. The merger pace intensified after the parties negotiated a transition and process agreement (TPA) with management that streamlined the merger's progression, which was ratified on May 29 by 90 percent of CCIA's voting crewmembers.

The TPA first required both the crewmembers' and management's negotiating teams to begin joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA) expedited negotiations in June and concluded with an agreement-in-principle in early August. The CCI MEC then unanimously approved sending the agreement to the crewmembers for membership ratification. The ATI MEC mirrored the CCI MEC's actions.

A planning meeting with the ATI MEC and ALPA's Representation Department and Communications Department staff then focused on preparing educational information about the JCBA. That meeting lasted two days in Arlington, Tex., where a road show schedule, presentation, and informational packet were developed. The MEC strongly

believed that the CCIA crewmembers needed a thorough JCBA briefing as the contract is based mainly on the ATI agreement with important modifications, including new pay rates for the B-757 freighter and the B-757 combi, dual qualification on the B-757 and B-767, expeditious transition of CCIA crewmembers to ATI, and some other CCIA provisions that the parties recognized as beneficial to the larger group.

In September, the pilot groups jointly ratified the JCBA by 63 percent voting in favor.

"It was apparent to the crewmembers that this agreement would eliminate the whipsawing against each other, which drove down unity, pay, and quality-of-life issues. It also produces a larger, unified pilot group that will speak with a stronger voice than two smaller groups," says F/O Chuck Hill, the CCI MEC chairman. "Our future is at a combined ATI that provides management with the means to run a single, secure airline with room for growth."

The TPA similarly required an aggressive schedule for integrating the two seniority lists. Direct integrated seniority list (ISL) negotiations began in August and were followed in September by meetings with a mediator/arbitrator. The MECs submitted final written arguments to the arbitrator on October 15.

The CCIA crewmembers patiently await the arbitrator's issuance of the integrated seniority list, which will then be presented

to management. This will complete ALPA's primary TPA obligations and allow management to complete the regulatory requirements in merging operations.

As the year closed, unfortunate news came to the crewmembers as management parked the remaining B-727 aircraft and delayed an additional B-757 joining the fleet in an attempt to reduce costs and weather the tough economic storm. This decision resulted in more than 40 furloughs, which included all of the airline's flight engineers.



Capt. George Savage and F/O Curtis Waldeck performing a preflight check in Cincinnati, Ohio, before their flight to Nashville, Tenn.

"We received some devastating news from management and while we knew this day was coming, no one knew it was coming so quickly," says Hill. "I am hopeful that this setback is temporary and that once the economy and ATI recovers and grows, everyone will have the opportunity to return to work." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2007
- **Number of crewmembers:** 115, with 68 on furlough
- **Headquarters:** Orlando, Fla.
- **Operations:** Capital Cargo is an aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance (ACMI) carrier that provides airport-to-airport cargo transportation services both domestically and internationally
- **Crewmember bases:** Home-based
- **Hub city:** Cincinnati, Ohio
- **Fleet:** Currently operates B-757-200 PCFs—all aircraft are freighter conversions

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Building Proficiency

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications Specialist

CommutAir

For an airline pilot, “proficiency” is defined in a number of ways: aircraft and operational knowledge, mastery of flying the airplane, good CRM skills, and a professional bearing. Most of these traits are not natural skills but must be learned.

That same learning curve applies to union-building—a successful and unified pilot group is built not in a day, but over time, through attention to detail and doing the little things right. After five years of ALPA membership, the CommutAir Master Executive Council (MEC) is demonstrating its proficiency in representing its pilots, many of whom are first-time members of the Association.

“CommutAir is the first airline job many of our members have ever had,” explains Capt. Todd Harris, the pilots’ MEC chairman. “It’s also their first time being union members. Our mission as an MEC is to help our people learn to become the best possible pilots and ALPA members so that they can get their careers off to a good start.”

CommutAir pilots joined ALPA in mid-2008 and almost immediately began work on getting their first union contract. After several years of bargaining, the pilots negotiated a collective bargaining agreement that took effect on Dec. 1, 2011.

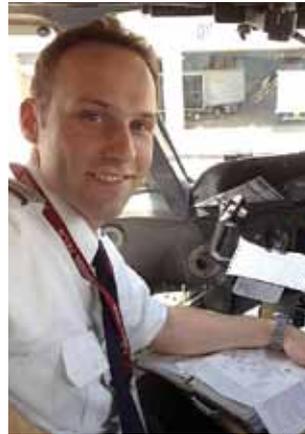
They were among the lowest-paid turboprop pilots in the U.S., but their new contract raised salaries to near industry standards while giving them more time off and securing other benefits and work rule improvements.

Throughout 2012, the CommutAir Contract Implementation Team began the complex but necessary work of fine-tuning and enforcing the new agreement. The team met with management on a regular basis,

identifying areas in which contractual language needed clarification or improvement.

Through their efforts, the pilots were able to negotiate several letters of agreement (LOA), including a vacation LOA that clarifies and improves the annual vacation bidding process. In addition to the LOAs, the MEC made sure pilots facing discipline had their newly negotiated due process rights upheld, preventing arbitrary management disciplinary actions.

An MEC is fortified by its committees and as such, committee members collaborated with management on issues



Dash 8 Capt. Peter Sik.

great and small in 2012: joining the Known Crewmember® program, getting pilots out of substandard hotels, and creating safe zones around aircraft operating in busy, congested ramp areas like those at IAD and EWR.

The newly created Critical Incident Response Program (CIRP) Committee came into existence just before superstorm Sandy hit, acting immediately to support members who were potentially affected by the hurricane. All pilots who lived within 100 miles of EWR were contacted to ensure the safety of the pilots and their families. CommutAir’s Training Committee is keenly focused on professional development, especially that

of new hires with limited flight hours. To help build proficiency, the committee developed a detailed Dash 8-Q200/Q300 study guide and quick reference guide, as well as a mentoring program for all new hires and upgrades so that they have a pilot to turn to with questions or issues on the line.

Other active volunteers were those on the Scheduling Committee. Trained on the company’s trip-building software, the committee helped create less fatiguing, more commuter-friendly trips. When management opened a third pilot domicile, the MEC and the committee convinced the company to move the base from Syracuse, N.Y., to Dulles, Va.

A looming challenge facing the CommutAir group in 2013 is its future relationship with United Airlines, where the United-Continental merger is putting many regional partnerships in transition.

“We feel we’re well positioned to succeed. We continue to add pilots, we are profitable and cost-effective, and the union continues to show its value both to our members and to the company by helping make our operation as productive as possible,” says Harris. “We hope United feels the same way and gives us even more responsibility as it grows.”

At a Glance

- **Founded:** 1989
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 190
- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2008
- **Headquarters:** South Burlington, Vt.
- **Pilot bases:** Cleveland, Ohio; Newark, N.J.; and Dulles, Va.
- **Operations:** CommutAir flies to more than 25 cities in the Midwest, Northeast, and Canada under a capacity-purchase agreement with United Airlines
- **Fleet:** 16 37-seat Dash 8-Q200s and 5 50-seat Dash 8-Q300s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Liftoff, and The Clock Is Running

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications Specialist

Compass

The pilots of Compass Airlines are the latest group to embrace the concept of fast-tracking the negotiations process in order to bring positive change faster than the traditional Section 6 process.

In November 2012, the Minneapolis-based airline exchanged contract openers with the pilots, and the two sides began direct negotiations in December. But the structure of the talks is radically different from the usual bargaining track, thanks to an unusual caveat that dates from Compass's birth almost six years ago.

Compass was originally created as a wholly owned subsidiary of Northwest Airlines, and the former Northwest Master Executive Council (MEC) negotiated its current contract in 2007. The contract included a letter of agreement (LOA) that requires Compass and its management to enter mediation-arbitration to amend its current collective bargaining agreement, instead of using the typical Railway Labor Act contract model.

"While mediation-arbitration is often used for settling grievance cases, bargaining an entire contract via mediator-arbitrator is a novelty for an ALPA pilot group. The process demands a clearly defined time line," says Capt. Dan Schultz, the pilots' MEC chairman.

"Under the terms of the LOA, our direct bargaining with the company will last no longer than 175 days from Dec. 11, 2012, and the entire bargaining cycle should be completed by the end of this year," explains Schultz.

If no agreement is reached by 175 days after the start of direct negotiations, the company and the pilots will engage in mediation with a mediator-arbitrator. After

265 days of negotiations, the unresolved issues (no more than 20 issues per side) will be submitted to the arbitrator for a final and binding award, to be issued no later than Nov. 25, 2013.

However, a lot has changed since the ink dried on the original Northwest agreement. Northwest merged with Delta, and Compass became a Delta subsidiary. Then in 2010, Delta sold the airline to St. Louis-based Trans States Holdings, which owns Trans States Airlines and GoJet, whose pilots ALPA does not represent.

Compass remains a Delta Connection airline, and almost half the pilot group has



Capt. Ryan Breznau is one of three pilot negotiators who will be conducting Compass's fast-track contract talks.

flow-up rights to Delta under a previous flow agreement.

A fast-track negotiation could be beneficial for the Compass pilots, since Trans States Holdings is notorious for its drawn-out bargaining. But there are challenges as well: if the process goes to arbitration, the arbitrator's award could be based on management's last offer, the union's last offer, or whatever

the arbitrator decides are industry-standard pay rates and work rules.

"The big question is whether the 330-day clock is realistic," Schultz notes. "We are committed to bargain within the time constraints, and we hope management is prepared to do so as well. Anything that keeps the negotiations from dragging on for years should be welcomed by both sides."

Compass is one of the top performers in the Delta system, operating Embraer aircraft of similar size and flying routes similar to those once flown by Northwest's Douglas DC-9s.

"It's a stretch to call us a 'regional' carrier, because like many of the fee-for-departure airlines, we are doing everything the mainline does—we fly internationally and transcontinentally using mainline-gauge aircraft, doing everything the DC-9s used to do," says Schultz.

While other regional airlines have merged or contracted, Compass continues to expand. The airline is slowly adding new-hire pilots to the group, which is organized in seniority blocks under the aegis of ALPA's Council 19. 

At a Glance

■ **Founded:** Compass Airlines was created as a Northwest Airlines subsidiary and began operations on May 2, 2007

■ **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2007

■ **Number of pilots:** 440

■ **Sale and acquisition:** On July 1, 2010, Delta Air Lines sold Compass to Trans States Holdings, Inc., which is running it separately from its other airlines, Trans States and GoJet

■ **Operations:** More than 190 flights daily to 57 destinations throughout the United States and Canada as Delta Connection

■ **Pilot bases:** Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minn., and Detroit, Mich.

■ **Headquarters:** Minneapolis, Minn.

■ **Fleet:** 36 Embraer E175s and 6 Embraer E170s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Continental, United Pilots Begin a New Chapter

By ALPA Staff

Continental

For Continental pilots, 2012 culminated in the joint ratification of a joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA) with United pilots, a considerable feat in itself, and an important step toward becoming a single, unified pilot group. The achievement was significant, given the more than two and half years spent in negotiations for the JCBA and the enormity of combining two disparate contracts into a single agreement that would be acceptable to all United pilots in this merger of equals. The task, critical to the successful creation of the world's largest airline, was unmatched in complexity, even when compared to previously record-setting airline mergers. The result was an industry-leading contract that provides substantial benefit to both Continental and United pilots, and advances the airline piloting profession by setting new standards for other airlines to use as the basis for their own negotiations.

Contracts of this value do not come easily. They require strategic planning, commitment, and a unified effort, such as the tremendous show of unity by Continental and United pilots in July 2012 as they overwhelmingly granted their union leaders authorization to strike, with 99 percent of those voting in favor of the authorization. This vote followed many months of joint efforts, including informational picketing, family awareness events, legislative efforts, news media communications, and other actions that were designed to exert leverage during negotiations and demonstrate the depth of solidarity between the two pilot groups.

The year was also significant for Continental pilots in other ways. With the delivery of the first B-787 Dreamliners, United Continental Holdings

became the first U.S. airline to fly this aircraft. The Continental pilot ranks grew as furloughed United pilots, fondly nicknamed "U-hires," were welcomed into the cockpits.

As 2013 unfolds, the Continental pilots will increasingly see the benefits of these efforts and their unity with United pilots through the JCBA, following gains in pay rates, per diem, retirement plan contributions, and other increases that became effective retroactively to Nov. 30, 2012. The other parts of the agreement, including industry-leading provisions in scope, work rules, and retirement and benefits, as well as the new FAR Part 117 regula-



Capt. Jay Pierce, the Continental pilots' MEC chairman.

tions, will be implemented on a defined schedule under the guidance of a joint implementation team, staffed in equal part by ALPA pilots. (United management agreed to implement FAR Part 117 in conjunction with the new agreement, ahead of the federally mandated January 2014 implementation date.) The undertaking and its results will be no less significant than the achievement of the initial agreement in moving the Continental and United pilots forward toward a new future.

The Continental Master Executive Council (MEC) Merger Committee will continue on a parallel path toward integrating the two seniority lists. The process

follows policy outlined in ALPA's *Administrative Manual*, Section 45, as well as the provisions negotiated between the two pilot groups in a protocol agreement developed at the time the merger was announced. The integration follows a defined time line designed to begin arbitration (if necessary) no later than 140 days from the date of the tentative agreement. Continental pilots and United pilots will be joined on a single, integrated seniority list—another large step closer to complete unity and well on their way to solidifying their position as a leading pilot group within the industry.

If the past is any indicator of the future, the future for Continental pilots will be both challenging and rewarding as the merger with United is finally completed. Work remains, but the last steps are being completed to interlace the strands of both groups into a new fabric that is stronger and more vibrant.

Says Capt. Jay Pierce, the Continental pilots' MEC chairman, "Most everything of value is the product of hard work and sacrifice. I cannot sufficiently thank the pilots and ALPA staff who have worked so hard and given so much over the years to get this contract done. I am confident that the day is upon us where we are not Continental and United pilots, but truly all United pilots, standing together." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots rejoined ALPA:** 2001
- **Number of pilots:** 5,019
- **Pilot bases/hubs:** Newark, N.J.; Houston, Tex.; Cleveland, Ohio; Guam; Los Angeles, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; and Chicago, Ill.
- **Headquarters:** Chicago, Ill.
- **Fleet:** B-787-8s/-9s, B-777-200ERs, B-767-200ERs/-400ERs, B-757-200s/-300s, and B-737-500s/-700s/-800s/-900s/-900ERs

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilot Contract 2012: A Game Changer

By Kelly Regus
Senior Communications
Specialist

Delta

In 2012, the Delta pilot group endorsed a game changer in the form of a ratified collective bargaining agreement, Contract 2012, which improved pay, work rules, and career opportunities more than six months *before* the contract's amendable date. Among the hallmark details that led to the successful negotiations and ultimate ratification were preparation, flexibility, an early opener, an intense eight weeks of negotiations, and a ratified agreement.

Initial preparations began in January 2011. Early strategy included contract modifications resulting from the joint Scheduling Optimization Team and ongoing problem-solving negotiations, working with senior executives on high-level business discussions, and engaging the pilot group in an informational and educational effort. These three aspects set the table in case the right opportunity to negotiate a new contract presented itself.

First, the optimization team concept capitalized on the opportunity to achieve meaningful mid-contract improvements in an effort to clear away the underbrush, even though these improvements were of the magnitude that normally would have been negotiated during Section 6 negotiations. For this reason, the optimization team concept remains valuable even after reaching the recent agreement.

Second, the Master Executive Council (MEC) was on the lookout for the right strategic opportunity to open and leverage negotiations, recognizing that a well-developed, efficient plan would most likely yield more meaningful gains than the traditional long, drawn-out Section 6 process. The MEC spent much of its time in strategic planning, and the right opportunity revealed

itself in early 2012. As Capt. Tim O'Malley, the pilots' MEC chairman, explained in a letter to Delta pilots, "We believe opportunities exist—right now—to reach a comprehensive agreement on an expedited time line, but let me make this point perfectly clear. While we will attempt to expedite the *process*, we will *not* compromise the product."

By early March, 10 months ahead of the amendable date, the MEC was prepared to enter negotiations. The MEC approved a contract opener and directed the Negotiating Committee to engage with management. O'Malley wrote to the pilot members an ambitious statement, "We chose not to wait." The goal was an expedited, comprehensive agreement.

Third, critical to the pilot education process was the Delta Pilot Network (DPN), which provided opportunities to share information with the goal of building unity through pilot unity building, or PUB, tours across the country in which pilots interacted with each other, ALPA, and DPN leaders.

The MEC also emphasized accessibility to information. DPN and Pilot-to-Pilot maintained a Frequently Asked Questions database. Additionally, the MEC disseminated more than 1 million pages of printed material to pilots and their families, and LEC representatives remained available in pilot lounges around the clock, all with the goal of providing the correct information necessary for the members to make an informed decision by the end of June, just 3½ months after negotiations began.

Section 6 negotiations often take years to complete, during which the probability increases that external strategic and economic events will affect negotiations. If the

National Mediation Board becomes involved, the time line can be substantially lengthened and more people who care less about pilot issues become involved at each step along the way.

Therefore, expediency in capitalizing on a favorable advantage was the soundest strategy to yield the most positive results in a timely manner. In his letter endorsing the tentative agreement, O'Malley summarized, "When viewed in the aggregate, this [contract] represents a huge win for the Delta pilots, particularly in the areas of scope, sick leave, and reserve work rules." 



F/O Len Empie, MEC Aviation Security Committee vice chairman, passes through the Known Crewmember® checkpoint at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

At a Glance

■ **Number of pilots:** 11,997

■ **Joint ventures and alliances:** Delta is the founding member of the SkyTeam Alliance and participates in joint ventures with Air France-KLM-Alitalia and Virgin Australia

■ **Operations:** Delta and its Connection carriers fly to more than 331 destinations in 60 countries on six continents

■ **Pilot bases:** Atlanta, Ga.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Detroit, Mich.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.; New York City; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Seattle, Wash.

■ **Hub cities:** Amsterdam; Atlanta; Cincinnati; Detroit; Memphis, Tenn.; Minneapolis-St. Paul; New York (JFK); Paris (CDG); Salt Lake City; and Tokyo (Narita)

■ **Headquarters:** Atlanta, Ga.

■ **Fleet:** More than 700 mainline airplanes: A319s, A320s, A330s, B-737s, B-747s, B-757s, B-767s, B-777s, DC-9s, MD-88s, and MD-90s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The Future Remains In Doubt

By Tawnya Burket
Communications
Specialist

Evergreen

The crewmembers of Evergreen International Airlines continued their battle to secure a new contract in 2012 after being in negotiations for eight years—many of which were in mediation conducted by the National Mediation Board (NMB).

The pilots rejected the first tentative agreement in 2010 by a 96 percent margin because, based on the company's financial condition, it lacked pay increases. Company finances continued to deteriorate and negotiations remained at a standstill in 2012 until March, when the crewmembers' Master

Notwithstanding pay increases, no concessions in the key business travel areas of the contract, and management's attendance at road shows to explain the company's dire financial condition, pilots again voted against the agreement—this time by an 80 percent margin—in late November.

"The members have spoken, and they have refused to accept the proposed agreement. There is too much doubt in their minds to trust management, with Evergreen making late payments on payroll and to vendors, furloughing more than half of the crew-

between the parties remains under the supervision of the NMB, with which the MEC and ALPA will consult to determine future steps.

Similar to other airlines in the cargo arena that are struggling with the current economy, Evergreen decided to park its B-747 Classic fleet in December, which triggered additional furloughs—including its remaining professional flight engineers.

"This is a very sad time and an end of an era," says Touchette. "Each flight engineer has always performed his or her duties in the most professional manner that I



CAPT. CLAUDE CHIMÈNE (EVERGREEN)

This photo of Mt. Etna in Siganello, Sicily, was taken during a period of frequent volcanic activity from the outside of one of Evergreen's B-747-200s.

Executive Council (MEC) Negotiating Committee informally explored ideas that might provide avenues to a contract that included pay increases. On September 11, the NMB resumed mediation in Washington, D.C., to attempt to close out the last two open issues, compensation and business-class travel. While a comprehensive agreement couldn't be reached, pilot leaders agreed to put out for pilot ratification management's last offer. It included pay increases in year two and three of the three-year offer.

members, and training delays occurring because of financial constraints," says Capt. James Touchette, the crewmembers' MEC chairman. "We will remain unified as we await direction from the NMB and ALPA officials, and continue down the path to achieving a contract that will satisfy the needs of the pilot group."

The current contract signed between TAG (the pilots' previous independent labor organization) and the airline in 1999 remains in effect, as do all subsequent letters of agreement. Bargaining

have ever witnessed. We have laughed together, we have cried together, and we have succeeded together. They will all be missed." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Flightcrew members joined ALPA:** 2007
- **Number of flightcrew members:** 214, with 135 on furlough
- **Headquarters:** McMinnville, Ore.
- **Pilot base:** New York (JFK)
- **Operations:** With a fleet of 5 B-747s, Evergreen specializes in charter and contract freighter operations around the globe

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Focused on Securing the Future

By Lydia Jakub
Senior Communications Specialist

ExpressJet

Several airline mergers and other types of airline transactions have occurred in the past few years, and throughout the U.S. airline industry continued consolidation will be the wave of the future. For the pilots of ExpressJet, the news that SkyWest, Inc., was again courting their company and subsequently announced in 2010 a merger with its subsidiary, Atlantic Southeast Airlines, came as no surprise.

ExpressJet had long since distinguished itself as a leader within the regional airline industry and was looking to further its legacy. Pilot leaders, while optimistic that the merger would provide additional opportunities for long-term success, were



F/O Joe Costanza prepares for a flight at Newark International Airport.

determined to protect their pilots' interests throughout the process. Now two years into the merger, neither their focus nor their commitment has wavered.

"Our pilots are our highest priority," says Capt. Chris Grable, chairman of the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC). "We are, among other things, working to secure the right contract for the collective pilot group—one that recognizes pilot contributions, protects pilot jobs, and improves the quality of life for all our pilots."

Currently in negotiations for a joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA), the parties have reached tentative agreements on more than half of the contract

sections, and all sections have been opened for discussion. Negotiations ceased for a brief period in mid-2012 so that each of the three parties could evaluate their bargaining priorities and positions. JCBA discussions have since resumed, and the parties have made progress in some additional areas.

Over the past year, pilot leaders have also worked with management to harmonize their systems and programs. With scheduling, for example, management was interested in moving the line bid process to a preferential bidding system as is done for the Atlantic Southeast operation. The ExpressJet pilots investigated all available programs and worked to bring the one that

best met their needs to the pilot group for testing. That program is currently being used for phase-two bidding to provide reserve pilots with some

control over their schedules.

Additionally, management has leaned on the pilot group for support with its employee assistance programs after some corporate staff cuts resulting from the merger. The ExpressJet pilots' Pilot Assistance program is highly regarded and serves as a model for employees helping their fellow employees. Work was done to develop training, protocols, and procedures to meet the needs of the combined employee group. Through this program, pilots and other employees are getting the help they need at a time when they need it most.

Contract enforcement and education efforts, meanwhile, also remain high priorities. The backlog of issues that

accumulated before the merger has been addressed, and any new grievances filed are typically dealt with in a timely manner.

In December 2012, the ExpressJet MEC met to assess the current situation and determine the course for achieving the goals established by the pilot group. Key to their strategy is communications.

The MEC has made a fundamental shift in the way it keeps the pilots informed. Pilot leaders are working to provide line pilots with as much information as possible on where issues stand in the bargaining process. This, they believe, will help the pilot group better understand the negotiating process and end result. Members will also have more opportunities to speak directly with their union leaders, ensuring that they are informed and prepared to take action when called upon. Family Awareness events were held at venues near each of the pilots' four bases in 2012, and more events will be held throughout 2013 in areas with a high pilot population.

"We're committed to the success of the new ExpressJet Airlines," Grable says. "It was formed to be a powerhouse within the industry. As we work collaboratively to fulfill this objective and protect our pilots' interests, the resultant airline will attract and retain business and qualified professionals so that all may prosper." 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2004
- **Number of pilots:** More than 2,800
- **Operations:** Flies as United Express to 42 states plus destinations in Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean
- **Pilot bases:** Chicago, Ill.; Cleveland, Ohio; Houston, Tex.; and Newark, N.J.
- **Headquarters:** Atlanta, Ga.
- **Fleet:** 249 airplanes, including ERJ135s and ERJ145s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Meet Challenges In 2012 and Look to Build On Past Successes In 2013

By Courtney Bland
Communications
Specialist

FedEX Express

At the close of 2011, the FedEx Express Master Executive Council (MEC) knew several issues would need to be addressed beginning in 2012. The new year began with an important decision—should the pilots elect to accept the 12-month extension to their agreement ratified in 2011 or reject the extension and reenter Section 6 negotiations? After carefully considering survey results and briefings from key subject-matter experts, the MEC unanimously decided to retain a 3 percent across-the-board pay increase for 2012 and maintain the current contract through March 2013.

“The decision to extend the agreement an additional 12 months aligned not only with the opinions of the subject-matter experts but also with our crewmembers. Notwithstanding this decision, the MEC unanimously believed that the remaining contractual issues could not wait years to be settled and therefore used the better part of 2012 to resolve outstanding issues through interim discussions,” says Capt. Scott Stratton, the pilots’ MEC chairman.

Extending the duration of the contract did not delay tackling contract issues. In fact, the company and ALPA met every six weeks throughout 2012, pursuant to an interim discussion model agreed to during the 2010 negotiations. ALPA negotiators maintained the MEC-sanctioned focus on a limited number of core issues. The result was good strategic positioning for 2013. “Our negotiators have steadily worked their way toward the pilots’ cornerstone objectives. They have had detailed discussions on a number of issues that our pilots deemed critical, and they did it while every pilot enjoyed the benefit of a pay raise. The fact

that we were at the table with the company also enabled us to tackle a number of unexpected issues associated with the newest FedEx foreign duty assignment, Cologne, Germany. Considering that our amendable date is Feb. 25, 2013, we are pleased with our position and anticipate a timely conclusion to Section 6 bargaining,” notes Stratton.

Regarding the FAA’s new flight-time/duty-time rules, the pilots were disappointed by the government’s decision to exclude cargo operations from the new modernized, science-based regulations. However, the FedEx MEC,



F/O Amy Allen spends time with one of the children at Memphis Hope House during the pilots’ annual visit.

pilot volunteers, and ALPA national have been working diligently to remove the cargo “carveout” from the new rules. Immediately following the announcement, the MEC worked extensively with ALPA’s leaders and the Government Affairs Department, along with key Scheduling and Legislative Committee experts, to develop a course of action to urge the FAA to adopt the same rules for cargo operations as for passenger operations.

By spring 2012, Reps. Chip Cravaack (R-Minn.) and Tim Bishop (D-N.Y.) announced the introduction of the Safe Skies Act of 2012. “The introduction of this act speaks volumes about the work being done by ALPA and the FedEx MEC legislative team,” Stratton says.

This legislation would advance ALPA’s campaign for “One Level of Safety” for pilots by directing the Department of Transportation to apply the FAA’s flight- and duty-time regulations and minimum rest requirements to all-cargo operations in the same way that the regulations currently apply to passenger operations. As we move into 2013, this issue will continue to keep FedEx pilots engaged and fighting for One Level of Safety.

The 4,581 FedEx Express pilots are spread across the globe, represented by seven councils located in three domiciles as well as pilots assigned to foreign duty in Hong Kong and Cologne, Germany. Understanding the communication challenges that a global pilot group presents, the MEC continues to engage its members through a variety of media designed to better reach pilots, including interactive conference and video calls, video messages, e-mails, a revamped website, and text notification. The MEC office also underwent major construction to provide more meeting space and committee offices, all improvements designed to better serve the pilots.

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 more than 220 countries and territories, including every address in the United States. 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** June 1993–1996; rejoined ALPA in June 2002
- **First ALPA contract:** October 2006
- **Number of flightcrew members:** 4,581
- **Headquarters:** Memphis, Tenn.
- **Fleet:** 35 B-727s, 77 B-757s, 21 B-777s, 71 A300s, 35 A310s, 69 MD-10s, and 64 MD-11s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Seeking Consistency

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications
Specialist

At First Air, the pilots are currently facing the challenge of management turnover, as the revolving door of executives has forced the pilot leaders in the past two years to work with three different CEOs and three flight operations vice presidents.

"There's been no consistency whatsoever in the executive suite, and it's made it very difficult to get anything done," says F/O Devin Lyall, the Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman for the 142 pilots and flight engineers. "We can't build relationships with our senior management, whose first reaction when a new CEO comes in is to restructure the operation and look for things to change.

parade of airline executives have not reached agreement on key issues. Federal conciliation also failed, and the MEC is now preparing to apply for arbitration.

"We are not seeking major increases, but we do need cost-of-living raises since so many of us live in remote areas. We are also trying to make our work rules and other contract language more consistent with language contained in other ALPA pilot group contracts," says Lyall.

In August, the crewmembers observed the first anniversary of the crash of Flight 6560, a B-737-200 combination passenger/freighter that crashed on approach to the tiny airport at Resolute in Nunavut Territory, 600 miles

This has motivated the creation of ALPA's new President's Committee on Remote Operations, aimed at improving safety at rugged airstrips ALPA pilots fly into and out of in Alaska, Nunavut, the Northwest Territory, and the Yukon. Capt. Peter Black, First Air's MEC vice chairman, chairs the committee.

Looking back over the past few years, joining ALPA was one of the pilot group's best decisions, says Lyall. "Being members of ALPA gives our small group the resources to effectively represent all of our pilots and flight engineers. With this great support, we've been able to remain strong and unified so that we can go to work and do our jobs like the professional flight crews we are," he says.

Flying scheduled service to some of the most remote and inhospitable places on the planet, "the Airline of the North" provides a lifeline to a few dozen communities scattered across the Canadian Arctic and also flies cargo charters around the world.

The airline is wholly owned by the Inuit people of Quebec through the Makivik Corporation, which spent much of 2012 trying to sell the airline before it abandoned those plans. 



A First Air ATR 42 at Cambridge Bay Airport, Nunavut, Canada.

It's really beginning to take a toll."

This frustrating inconsistency, along with a tragic accident, increased competition, declining government subsidies, stalled contract negotiations, and the recent news of layoffs, has created tension and uncertainty at First Air. In November 2012, management announced plans to lay off more than 10 percent of the airline's flight crews and close its B-737 base in Yellowknife, NT.

First Air flightcrew members joined ALPA more than four years ago with the hopes of contract resolution. However, they are still operating under an old contract after more than two years of negotiations because the pilots and the ever-changing

north of the Arctic Circle. The accident took the lives of all four crewmembers, as well as eight passengers. Three passengers survived. Canada's Transportation Safety Board is still investigating the accident.

The Flight 6560 crew left behind seven young children, and all of ALPA has rallied to support the children and their families. The pilots created an aviation calendar that to date has raised almost \$20,000 for the survivors' education fund.

The Flight 6560 accident highlighted the realities of Arctic flying, where modern landing aids are rare. Most of the runways in the polar region are gravel at best and sometimes only temporary, bulldozed from the ice of a frozen lake or glacier.

At a Glance

- **Founded:** 1946, as Bradley Air Service, now owned by Makivik Corporation
- **Number of crewmembers:** 142
- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2008
- **Pilot bases:** Ottawa, Ont.; Yellowknife, NT; Iqaluit, NU; and Edmonton, Alb.
- **Headquarters:** Kanata, Ont.
- **Operations:** Provides scheduled passenger and cargo service between 30 northern communities plus charter service worldwide
- **Fleet:** 7 B-737-200s (four combi), 1 B-767F, 9 ATR 42-300s, 2 ATR 72-212s (all combi), and 2 Lockheed L-382 Hercules

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Cooperation Pays Big Dividends

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications Specialist

If you want a great illustration of how management and labor work well together, you need look no further than Hawaiian Airlines, where a new atmosphere of pilot-management cooperation has helped make the carrier one of the nation's leading airlines.

After the airline emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2006, the company's new management began the difficult task of rebuilding the airline's route structure and stabilizing its finances. Almost three years of sometimes contentious negotiations ended with an industry-leading contract in January 2010, and the pilots and CEO Mark Dunkerley have collaborated to bring Hawaiian to its

to fly to New Zealand.

"We're now seeing the result of some of our decisions in years past beginning to bear fruit," says Capt. Rick Horne, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "Working with management has been a win-win for both sides, but sometimes you need patience and foresight to make it happen. We won't always agree, but we strive to develop creative solutions to the challenges we face as the airline industry continues to change."

Hawaiian's rapid growth has been fueled in part by a new equipment LOA the MEC approved in 2008 that allowed management to buy fuel-efficient A330 widebodies as a replacement for their aging

And just last month, the MEC tentatively approved an LOA that could add a completely new aircraft type: the B-737 MAX or A320 NEO. If approved, the new narrowbodies would expand service to the islands from smaller mainland markets that cannot be efficiently served by widebody airplanes, and would also allow nonstop service from the mainland to smaller island airports like Maui and Kona to better compete with rivals flying similar airplanes.

The expansion has more than doubled Hawaiian's pilot group since 2008. Many of the new hires have come from the former Aloha Airlines, which ceased operations that same year, and Hawaiian has also become a "carrier of choice" for pilots from many other airlines.

"We have an incredibly diverse, talented group," notes Horne. "One of our MEC's current goals is to educate our newer pilots as to how much work went into achieving the contract we have and get them more involved with ALPA." 



A Hawaiian Airlines Airbus A330-200 at Tokyo International Airport (Haneda) in 2011.

strongest financial position in decades.

Since contract ratification, the pilots' Negotiating Committee has continued to work nonstop, achieving a total of 19 letters of agreement (LOA) with management. Many of these LOAs were triggered by the dramatic changes in the airline's route structure as it has evolved from a luxury niche player to a full-scale international airline.

Currently, Hawaiian is expanding in every sector of its operation: transpacific, interisland, and international. It's building a fleet of new state-of-the-art airplanes, is consistently hiring pilots every month, and soon will become the first U.S. airline

B-767s. The A330's longer range has enabled Hawaiian to add destinations in Australia, Japan, and South Korea. The airline now flies nonstop from Honolulu to JFK, has plans to add additional East Coast destinations, and will have opportunities to increase its global route structure when its first A350 arrives in 2017.

The airline is also focusing on its interisland operations. In July 2012, Hawaiian announced it would be adding turboprops to establish a subsidiary airline serving smaller islands not currently in its system, including Molokai and Lanai. The pilots authorized a turboprop operation in their 2010 contract, which becomes amendable in 2015.

At a Glance

- **Number of pilots:** 625
- **Headquarters:** Honolulu, Hawaii
- **Pilot bases:** Honolulu and Seattle, Wash.
- **Operations:** Hawaiian operates more than 150 daily flights between Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii. It offers nonstop service to the Hawaiian islands from 10 cities on the U.S. mainland and also has direct, nonstop flights from Honolulu to American Samoa, Tahiti, Australia, the Philippines, South Korea, and Japan. In 2013 it will be the first U.S. airline to fly to New Zealand and also plans to serve China in future years
- **Fleet:** 18 B-717-200s; 4 B-767-300s; 12 B-767-300ERs; and 9 A330-200s, with 3 more to be delivered. Firm orders: 6 A350-300X, to be delivered 2017-2020. The airline is also acquiring 2 ATR 42-500s and wants to purchase as many as 12 B-737 MAXs or A320 NEOs

Hawaiian

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The Next Phase of Interisland Travel

By Lydia Jakub
Senior Communications
Specialist

Island Air

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At a Glance

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

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Focus On Building Relationships, Working with Stakeholders

By Jessie Cornelius
Public Relations
Specialist

Jazz

Jazz pilots are charting their own course, using their strategic plan as a guide to brighten their future and overcome challenges presented by a volatile industry.

The pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) is committed to helping the airline become even more competitive in the marketplace. The airline and the pilots have doubled their efforts to improve stakeholder relationships and to keep potential new market opportunities in their purview. Although the pilots were disappointed when Air Canada—their major customer—announced in October 2012 that it would be

all stakeholders.”

One of those stakeholders is their company, Jazz Aviation. The MEC has been working with management to continue to improve their relationship. At MEC meetings last year, Jazz management gave presentations on issues ranging from operations to crew scheduling. The MEC and management also joined forces to launch FLiCA, an innovative tool that gives pilots the ability to be hands-on with their schedules and allows them to swap, add, and drop trips online. The improvement was part of the pilots' industry-leading collec-



Capt. Isabelle Caron and F/O Marie-Claire Beaulieu.

transferring 15 Embraer 175 jets to Sky Regional Airlines as part of its plans to expand and diversify, the move has only strengthened the pilots' resolve.

“Jazz pilots have demonstrated the ability to be creative and innovative in other challenging circumstances,” says Capt. Claude Buraglia, the pilots' MEC chairman. “Our goal is to convince our customers of the advantages, flexibility, and value they have in utilizing Jazz's full potential. With regard to safety infrastructure, pilot experience, and on-time performance, we have set the standard, and we will continue to do so. We are a high-value airline. We will continue to reach out and work collaboratively with

transferring 15 Embraer 175 jets to Sky Regional Airlines as part of its plans to expand and diversify, the move has only strengthened the pilots' resolve.

“We believe in engaging our members more in the business at hand,” observes Capt. Terry McTeer, the MEC vice chairman. “We're also looking to be prudent with our members' money and providing them with the best bang for their buck.”

Reorganizing committees so that they are more effective and revamping communications with the help of ALPA's Communications Department have been a key part of the MEC's stewardship. The MEC provides regular online communications to keep its coast-to-coast pilot group—with bases stretching across Canada from Vancouver, B.C., to Halifax, N.S.—well informed. MEC e-bulletins, e-newsletters, online ALPA-

produced videos, and triannual MEC meetings are a core part of the pilots' communications efforts. The MEC members also conduct meet-and-greet sessions at pilot bases to have face-to-face conversations with their pilots.

At the end of last year, the MEC was working through changes resulting from the end of mandatory retirement in the federal jurisdiction of Canada, which became effective Dec. 15, 2012. The pilots had been planning for these major changes since last May.

An agenda item for late 2013 will be rejuvenating the pilots' Negotiating Committee for the next collective bargaining round; their collective bargaining agreement expires on June 30, 2015. While the Jazz pilots realize that their biggest challenge will be for management to maintain a fair and equitable agreement with Air Canada, their goal is to retain an industry-leading contract that promotes the pilots' quality of life and provides them with job security at a viable airline.

“The MEC will do everything necessary to advance the interests of the pilot group,” notes Buraglia. “I believe in the Jazz pilots and that we have a lot of potential. I also believe that sooner or later, opportunity will cross paths with that potential.”

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1997
- **Number of pilots:** 1,521
- **Operations:** Jazz transports approximately 9.1 million passengers annually on 800 daily flights to 82 destinations across Canada and the United States.
- **Pilot bases:** Vancouver, B.C.; Calgary, Alb.; Toronto, Ont.; Montreal, Que.; and Halifax, N.S.
- **Headquarters:** Halifax, N.S.
- **Fleet:** 127 aircraft, including Bombardier Dash 8-100/300s, Bombardier CRJ 100/200/705s, and Bombardier Q400s.

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Focus On Upcoming Negotiations

By John Perkinson
Staff Writer

Kelowna Flightcraft

Preparing for contract negotiations is a top priority for the pilots of Kelowna Flightcraft Ltd., a Canadian executive charter and cargo airline. Talks are slated for 2014 (the contract expires October 31), and the pilot group has already begun spooling up its communications and contract studies efforts, as well as grooming its Negotiating Committee members. The pilot group recently enlisted its first full-time communications chair, F/O Mireille Pare, who is bilingual and will be overseeing the Master Executive Council's (MEC) e-mail updates, website, and other communications tools to keep the pilots informed.

Keeping Kelowna crewmembers educated and



A Kelowna Flightcraft B-727.

up-to-date about contract goals and the MEC activities will be a challenge, as they are dispersed over a vast region. "Our pilots are spread out over bases from as far east as Halifax to as far west as Vancouver and commute from all corners of the country," says F/O Tim Wynn-Williams, the pilots' MEC vice chairman. "We're not a large group, but we cover a lot of terrain."

The Kelowna pilots are contemplating using interest-based negotiations (IBN) for this next round of bargaining. Wynn-Williams observes, "Part of IBN is being able to have some sort of civilized discourse with our employer as opposed to being at loggerheads."

Fortunately, the MEC, which includes local councils in Hamilton, Ont., and Vancouver, B.C., has maintained positive labour

relations with management in recent years. "We get along quite well with the company," notes Wynn-Williams, who says that "since 2009 when we negotiated our latest agreement, we've gotten better at working together."

With many pilot schedules that include late-night and early-morning hours, the MEC is interested in adopting a fatigue risk management system (FRMS) but is waiting to see what changes the Canadian government will institute. The process to update fatigue rules has been long and arduous.

In the most recent phase, Transport Canada's Canadian Aviation Regulation Advisory Council (CARAC) Technical Committee last fall reviewed recommendations from the CARAC Flight Crew Fatigue Management Working Group. The CARAC Technical Committee then made these proposals public, encouraging feedback from industry stakeholders like ALPA.

The challenge will be to foster provisions that are tied to the latest science and understanding about human fatigue. The MEC is monitoring this situation closely to ensure that the final rule does not contain a cargo "carveout," as is the case in the United States.

With contract talks on the horizon, the MEC is considering all of its options. "At this point, we're watching with interest to see how other negotiations are going for our fellow Canadian pilot groups like Wasaya," Wynn-Williams says. "We want to see what the playing field is going to look like."

Steady contracts with Purolator Courier and Canada Post have allowed Kelowna to maintain its fleet size and staffing levels. "We've been replacing the people who've left to pursue their careers elsewhere, but we have not

grown or shrunk in the last year," notes Wynn-Williams. "It's been status quo."

The MEC, also led by Capt. Derek Porter, chairman; Serge Fortier, secretary; and Kenneth Morrison, treasurer, has concentrated much of its effort on maintaining contract compliance and promoting a safe and secure operation. To help with the former effort, the pilots instituted a dispute tracking system to monitor and act on grievances in a more timely basis. And the airline can once again offer flight deck access to commuting pilots from other Canadian airlines, a benefit that hasn't been available since 9/11.

Kelowna Flightcraft is Canada's largest cargo airline. With its fleet of DC-10s, B-727s, and Convair 580s, Kelowna touts its ability to transport 1,000,000 pounds of air freight nightly across the nation. The airline also has an executive charter division and forest-fire patrols. In its other division, Kelowna is a leading aircraft maintenance operation and signed two contracts in 2012 with WestJet to maintain and update the carrier's B-737 fleet. Kelowna's Allied Wings Operation provides maintenance support to the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Last year, Kelowna contributed a B-727-100 to Mohawk College to assist its aviation program at Munro Hamilton International Airport. 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1997 (became an ALPA-represented pilot group when CALPA merged with ALPA)
- **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.; and Kelowna, B.C.
- **Fleet:** B-727s, Convair 580s, and DC-10s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Improvements For All Pilots

By Lydia Jakub
Senior Communications Specialist

In an industry where “everything matters,” the pilots of Mesa Air Group are leaving nothing to chance when it comes to their livelihoods. They are working vigilantly to protect and enhance the careers of all Mesa pilots and using innovative methods to fulfill this mission. In 2012, pilot leaders secured contract improvements for the entire pilot group and more than \$325,000 for pilots whose rights had been violated by the company’s management.

“We are proud of the work accomplished by our union volunteers and pilot group, especially considering the state of our company and



F/O Jacob Clymo at Chicago O’Hare International Airport.

the turmoil within the airline industry,” says F/O Marcin Kolodziejczyk, chairman of the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC). “These successes demonstrate our high commitment to our pilots, company, and profession.”

Negotiations for an improved contract began in March 2010, just days after the company emerged from bankruptcy as a stand-alone airline. Though ALPA successfully protected the pilots’ contract during the bankruptcy process, more than 400 pilots were furloughed, and hundreds more were displaced and/or downgraded, taking pay cuts of as much as \$34,000 per year.

The way in which the displacements were handled leading up to and during the bankruptcy resulted in ALPA filing four grievances; these

complex cases were mediated twice and were scheduled to go to arbitration in mid-2012.

By that time, the pilots had also reached tentative agreements during their negotiating sessions with management on 11 of the 26 contract sections.

In an unprecedented decision, the MEC approved a settlement agreement that provided payment for pilots downgraded out of seniority order and gains for all Mesa pilots. This agreement included a \$200,000 payment to be divided among those on the affected pilots list, immediate implementation of the 11 tentative agreements, resolving an additional four grievances, establishing common negotiating protocols, and opening the company’s books to ALPA’s Economic and Financial Analysis Department experts for review (an important provision, as Mesa is privately held and contract negotiations were beginning to move into the economic issues).

The tentative agreements, which became effective in July 2012, were all current book or better. Improvements include that (1) pilots must now be provided a written statement of charges before any company meeting and (2) an enhanced commuter policy be established to help the nearly 80 percent of Mesa pilots who currently commute by allowing the policy to now be invoked twice annually and extending it to offline/non-code-share partners. These contractual improvements—while certainly incremental and noneconomic—helped the pilots immediately, rather than simply delaying implementation indefinitely until a new contract has been completed.

Since then, negotiating progress has remained steady. The parties have reached a tentative agreement on an

additional section, and all but two sections have been opened. As for grievances, only 21 cases were open as of early December 2012.

Along with these successes at the bargaining table and with the grievance process, the MEC is working to secure pilot jobs. Mesa’s current code shares with United and US Airways are set to expire in 2015, as are contracts with other regional airlines. Recognizing the devastating effect a dramatic shift in flying could have on pilot careers, the MEC has formed alliances with other ALPA and non-ALPA pilot groups flying in the United Express and US Airways Express systems. Through these and other efforts, they are working to protect pilot careers and provide a measure of stability within the industry.

“The regional airline industry is changing,” concludes Kolodziejczyk. “While we cannot know what the future may hold, we will continue to build upon our successes of 2012 and forge a path for additional gains in 2013. We are also prepared to address any challenge or opportunity that may arise, from a transaction to a shutdown, and will stop at nothing to protect and advance our pilots’ interests.”

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1987
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 800, including 211 on furlough
- **Operations:** Mesa Air Group includes go! and Mesa Airlines, and operates as United Express and US Airways Express under contractual agreements and independently as go! in Hawaii. Serves 96 cities, 37 states, Canada, and Mexico with 465 daily departures
- **Bases:** Charlotte, N.C.; Chicago, Ill.; Honolulu, Hawaii; Kahului, Hawaii; Lihue, Hawaii; Phoenix, Ariz.; and Washington, D.C.
- **Headquarters:** Phoenix, Ariz.
- **Fleet:** 62 airplanes, including CRJ200s, CRJ700s, and CRJ900s

Mesa

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Stand Their Ground In Bankruptcy Negotiations

By Barbara Gottshalk
Lead Communications
Specialist

North American

North American Airlines (NAA) pilots are highly trained to face the challenges of daily flying into remote and dangerous locations. Flying to Manas International Airport in Kyrgyzstan and Kabul, Afghanistan, are just two examples.

But the challenges they have faced since parent company Global Aviation Holdings (GLAH) filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the U.S. bankruptcy code in February 2012 and dragged the airline and sister carrier World Airways into bankruptcy concessionary negotiations have been more problematic.

The year started out on a positive note, with the Master Executive Council (MEC) preparing for Section 6 negotiations (the pilots' contract had a December



Capt. Selim Wehber and F/O Christina Waugh preparing for an early morning departure from Leipzig, Germany, enroute to Atlanta.

2012 amendable date). In late January, the pilots won an arbitration relating to a vacation pay grievance.

Two weeks later, the outlook changed. With the news of the Chapter 11 filing and subsequent downsizing, the group learned that 40 pilots would be furloughed and 14 more downgraded.

The pilot leaders responded swiftly. Capt. Rob Lewis, the pilots' MEC chairman, along with several other pilot representatives and ALPA staff from the Representation Department and Economic and Financial Analysis

Department, met with representatives from GLAH and NAA in early March to discuss issues related to the bankruptcy filing. ALPA's general counsel law firm, Cohen, Weiss & Simon, was enlisted to represent the pilots in bankruptcy court. At the same time, they worked with ALPA Communications Department staff to begin educating the pilot group about the bankruptcy process.

The NAA-ALPA team exchanged proposals with management over the spring and reached an agreement-in-principle (AIP) in mid-June. Then, the pilot group got thrown another curveball: the Teamsters (IBT), which represents the World Airways pilots and flight attendants and the NAA flight attendants, petitioned the National Mediation Board (NMB) seeking a determination of single-carrier status for the two airlines.

"Immediately after learning of this, senior ALPA staff contacted me to discuss the situation and our plan for responding," says Lewis. "They assigned a team to cover the NMB process and act to protect our interests, giving us the same level of attention and resources we received to assist us with our bankruptcy negotiations, financial analysis, and legal representation."

By mid-August, the NAA-ALPA negotiating team had hammered out a tentative agreement (TA) under threat of a Section 1113 filing, but the pilots rejected it in the ratification process.

The Negotiating Committee went back to the bargaining table right away, with the goal of achieving a new agreement that responded to some of the concerns pilots voiced about the initial TA. After an intense bargaining session over a 36-hour period, the Negotiating Committee successfully negotiated several improve-

ments over the initial failed TA. On September 24, the pilots ratified the revised TA, with 76 percent voting in favor of the agreement. In addition to minimizing concessions, the new contract provides equity, profit sharing, a seat on the GLAH Board of Directors, and other valuable returns.

Under the new deal, the pilots and management agreed to meet within 90 days to discuss the implementation of additional operational savings and revenue-generating measures, review and resolve outstanding grievances, and find and clarify problematic contract language. "We understand that this is a critical and fragile time for our company, and we stand ready to work closely with our management to help our company regain its financial viability and advance our mutual goals for the future," Lewis says. "To achieve success, however, our management must fulfill the commitments it made to our pilots in this agreement."

Contract implementation is under way. In November, the pilots got the news that the NMB had denied the IBT's single-carrier petition.

"It's too early to tell whether the company will reorganize successfully," Capt. Lee Moak, ALPA's president, says. "But it tells the ALPA story: we never give up—and we always look for opportunities when the going gets tough." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2009
- **Number of pilots:** 150
- **Pilot base:** New York (JFK)
- **Headquarters:** Peachtree City, Ga.
- **Operations:** 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-767-300ERs

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Finding Common Ground

By Jen Lofquist
Senior Communications
Specialist

Piedmont

For the last 12 months, Piedmont pilots have revved up activities and built unity in a pilot group that has—based on its merger in the recent past—been disconnected both geographically and demographically.

The challenges for Piedmont pilots are many. While they number fewer than 400, they are spread across five domiciles in four states. With scheduling so tight much of the time, few pilots are available for events and meetings. The pilots also range widely in age and career expectations. Many are extremely senior and nearing retirement. But an increasing number are younger new hires just starting their airline



Capt. Russ Denney with the ramp crew for the last Piedmont flight out of LaGuardia Airport.

careers. In addition, the group has had significant attrition, with hiring unable to keep up with the number of pilots leaving the company. With concerted communications efforts, the Master Executive Council (MEC) and its committees have reached out to the pilots, making sure that every pilot is aware of not only the status of negotiations, but also how the group is collectively preparing for the negotiating endgame.

"We are a very diverse group, with a wide range of opinions and—more importantly—expectations for this contract," says Capt. Bruce Freedman, the pilots'

MEC chairman. "We've been careful to listen to our group, explore options, and find our commonalities and focus on them rather than our differences."

As negotiations continued to drag into their third year, the MEC sent a clear message to management that the group was unified. The MEC unanimously agreed to put a strike authorization resolution before the members. This resolution authorized the pilot leaders to call a legal strike if the National Mediation Board concluded that negotiations had reached an impasse and released the groups from mediation, thus triggering a 30-day cooling-off period.

"Our diversity challenged us to find new ways to communicate with our pilots," Freedman notes. "We simply couldn't rely on one method to reach all of our pilots. We had to spread the messages across a multitude of channels, and we used them all—from Facebook to texting to flyers in crew room mailboxes. But our most effective method was just one-on-one and all-pilot calls."

The group also held all-pilot calls late in the evening with members of the MEC and Negotiating Committee on the line. The pilots came out in large numbers—especially considering the lack

of availability of most pilots due to scheduling—to listen. Those who couldn't make it accessed the audio files afterward. As the vote neared closing, the MEC was sending messages via every communications medium. A strong vote was important, but so was one that represented a large majority of the pilot group.

On August 10, the results were counted. Almost 93 percent of eligible pilots had participated, and of those pilots, 93 percent voted in favor of the strike authorization resolution. The message had been sent to management—and negotiations have been moving forward, albeit slowly.

In late November, Piedmont pilots and management had a rare moment of agreement at an arbitration hearing. The two sides opened their wallets and pooled their personal resources and bought Powerball tickets for the \$587 million jackpot.

"Our goal is not, and has never been, to call a strike," says Freedman. "However, we wanted to be sure that management knew that no matter how different this pilot group may seem on paper, we have much more in common. One thing every Piedmont pilot shares, whether they've been here 30 years or 90 days, is the desire for a contract that is fair and equitable. We think this is not only achievable, but within reach. We just have to work together to get there." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1984
- **Number of pilots:** 344
- **Headquarters:** Salisbury, Md.
- **Pilot bases:** New Bern, N.C.; Charlottesville, Va.; Roanoke, Va.; Harrisburg, Pa.; and Salisbury, Md.
- **Fleet:** 44 DHC-8s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Strength In Unity: Pilots Face Bankruptcy

By Kimberly Seitz
Senior Communications
Specialist

Pinnacle

Editor's note: Details of the tentative agreement reached between Pinnacle Airlines pilots and management on Dec. 17, 2012, were not public as of press time.

Pinnacle pilots have endured two years of turbulence that finally shows some signs of leveling off as 2013 begins and the pilots are poised to vote on a tentative agreement (TA) reached in the early morning hours of Dec. 17, 2012.

"We appreciate the support of all Pinnacle pilots throughout this grueling, year-long ordeal," says Capt. Tom Wychor, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC)



Capt. Tom Wychor, the Pinnacle MEC chairman, center with back to camera, talks to pilots at one of many pilot unity building events conducted in Pinnacle domiciles during 2012.

chairman. "Difficult decisions were made throughout this process as our negotiators crafted an agreement that preserves a future for our pilots and the airline."

The bumpy ride for Pinnacle pilots begin in 2010, with the surprise purchase of Mesaba Airlines by Pinnacle Airlines, Corp., and the subsequent successful negotiation of an industry-leading joint collective bargaining agreement negotiated in just 100 days. During 2011, the integrated (Colgan, Mesaba, and Pinnacle) seniority list was implemented, and a single MEC was established. However, the turbulence increased dramatically when Pinnacle Airlines, Corp., sought bankruptcy protection

on April 1, 2012, and announced that it would cease all of its turboprop flying.

Pinnacle pilots spent most of 2012 putting on a pragmatic defense of the industry-leading contract they ratified in 2011, starting with battling management's May term sheet of \$33.2 million in annual concessions followed by the showdown over the increased August demand for \$59.6 million in annual concessions—all while Pinnacle Airlines was spending millions of dollars on legal fees and consultants.

Since early May, the MEC had been overseeing bankruptcy negotiations and searching for acceptable solu-

tion in concessions; Pinnacle's proposal was not fair and equitable, finding that Pinnacle did not offer enough upside to the pilot group; and ALPA had good cause to reject management's proposal because Pinnacle overreached in its demands.

"Judge Gerber's ruling allowed us to avoid imposed terms, but it was not a solution to our problems," says Wychor "We knew our only future as Pinnacle pilots would come with a consensual deal that addresses Pinnacle's significant financial hurdles while also recognizing our pilots' needs.

"All along, we were willing to find a resolution to the problems that exist within the organization," Wychor observes. "Our negotiators and ALPA staff were always more than prepared to discuss alternatives designed to solve the company's liquidity crisis and provide a viable future for our pilots. This agreement meets both goals.

"This pilot group spent the year focused on getting this deal," says Wychor, "and if ratified, 2013 will see the start a new chapter for this airline. Without the tremendous support of ALPA, we would have been unable to navigate a successful conclusion to the Pinnacle story." 🌐

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1988 (as Express Airlines I before it changed its name to Pinnacle in 2002); purchased Colgan Air in 2007 and Mesaba Airlines in 2010
- **Number of pilots:** 2,467
- **Operations:** More than 800 daily flights for Delta Air Lines to 110 airports across the United States and Canada
- **Pilot domiciles:** Atlanta, Ga.; Detroit, Mich.; Memphis, Tenn.; Minneapolis, Minn.; New York's JFK; Boston, Mass.; and Newark, N.J.
- **Headquarters:** Memphis, Tenn.
- **Fleet:** 141 Canadair CRJ200s and 55 CRJ900s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Prove Their Value

By Barbara Gottshalk
Lead Communications Specialist

PSA

“Our day has value” was the strong message PSA pilots conveyed to management as they marked the third anniversary of the start of contract negotiations in June. With contract talks down to the major economic items, the pilot group wanted to signal to management their unified position: now is the time to reach a deal that rewards PSA pilots for the valuable service they provide to their airline and their passengers.

“Securing a fair, improved contract now not only would recognize the important role our pilots play in PSA’s operations, but it also would provide the necessary stability for PSA to succeed in this dynamic environment,” says Capt. Jesse Coeling, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman who took office in January 2012.

Throughout the summer and fall, the pilot group kept the pressure on management on parallel fronts. At the bargaining table, the Negotiating Committee stood firm even as management employed stalling tactics and made little movement, especially in the key economic areas.

Meanwhile, the MEC launched a determined communications drive that included pilots displaying their support for the Negotiating Committee with stickers, badge backers, and bag tags; taking their message to the news media; and pilot unity building events.

This high level of engagement was a key MEC objective as it began charting the pilot group’s course for the future. Led by Coeling, the MEC focused on revitalizing the PSA committee structure and expanding its communications program.

To that end, the MEC developed an MEC policy manual that defines the roles

and responsibilities of each committee. The MEC also provided the committees with ALPA’s full support and resources through various volunteer training programs and participation in Association activities and on ALPA committees.

In May, MEC officers, the Negotiating Committee chairman, and ALPA staff from the Representation Department and Communications Department began the strategic planning process. “We adopted a strategic approach that centered on building a robust cadre of well-trained pilot volunteers, tapping into the expertise and experience of ALPA’s professional staff, and engaging the pilots in union activities,” Coeling says.



Capt. Mark Hinczynski, MEC secretary-treasurer, left, on an initial operating experience trip with Capt. Chad Frey.

This approach is paying off. The PSA Contract Enforcement Committee and Grievance Review Subcommittee have resolved a number of grievances, often achieving positive results. The Hotel Committee’s collaboration with management, TLX (which administers layover hotels), and the flight attendants has led to improvements in layover hotels, the hotel selection process, and contractual compliance. The Pilot Assistance Committee, together with ALPA’s Critical Incident Response Program (CIRP) chair, is working with management representatives to enhance CIRP at PSA, and the Scheduling Committee

launched an online survey to get pilot input for making improvements to future schedules.

Additionally, the pilots responded in force when Coeling called on them to send a collective message to management to reverse its decision to opt out of the Known Crewmember® (KCM) program. As a result, management agreed to continue to participate in the program. On October 30, PSA pilot leaders were on hand at Charlotte Douglas International Airport for the launch of KCM there.

The pilots’ main goal continues to be securing a contract that recognizes their importance to the airline’s operations and helps PSA maintain its competitiveness in the US Airways system. In September, the pilot group received a \$1 million grant from ALPA’s Major Contingency Fund. The newly formed Strategic Preparedness and Strike Committee and the Communications Committee are mobilizing to help pilots prepare for the negotiations endgame.

The messages that the pilot group has been sending to management have been getting through. At their bargaining session in November, management negotiators finally made a proposal that moved the parties closer to reaching their goal of a consensual contract. 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1988
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 500
- **Operations:** PSA is a wholly owned subsidiary of US Airways Group. It operates 327 flights per day as US Airways Express, serving 65 airports in the U.S.
- **Bases:** Charlotte, N.C., Dayton, Ohio; and Knoxville, Tenn.
- **Headquarters:** Dayton, Ohio
- **Fleet:** 35 CRJ200s and 14 CRJ700s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

The Future Remains Uncertain

By John Perkinson
Staff Writer

Ryan

It's been a rough ride for the pilots of Ryan International. Poor decision-making by former management led to drastic capacity cuts and a bankruptcy filing in March 2012. Consequently, the airline has experienced sizeable fleet and personnel reductions, compelling the Ryan pilot group to work with the new corporate leaders to find solutions to keep their operation running.

"We've been walking a tightrope between enforcing the contract and allowing management some relief to keep the airline in business," says Capt. Erik Sparks, the pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman.

Section 6 contract negotia-

service until April.

The costs associated with these government dictates were too much for Ryan, which is owned by a real estate holding company with limited airline experience. In February, the carrier announced it would park two of its B-767s and immediately furlough pilots based on aircraft type rather than seniority number.

"A week after the company's ill-advised announcement, we negotiated a deal to bring those pilots back. We cut our guarantee and days worked for everyone flying the B-767 by 25 percent," Sparks says. "We later learned that, days before the illegal furlough, management



A Ryan International B-767-300ER glistens after a thunderstorm passes in Kansas City.

tions began in fall 2011 but quickly turned into bargaining for a series of letters of agreement as management sought short-term solutions to ease its fiscal crisis. By August, ALPA suspended bargaining altogether so that pilots and management could focus solely on saving the company.

The problems began when Ryan received notice from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) in mid-2010 that its military passenger lift would be reduced and larger aircraft would be required to retain its DOD contract.

Management scrambled to find a large widebody to meet the DOD's demands but lost precious time seeking used B-777s before ultimately leasing an Airbus A330-300 from Virgin Atlantic. Even then, the DOD delayed approving the Airbus for military use until February 2012, and Ryan wasn't able to put it into

personnel had awarded themselves bonuses."

The airline filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on March 6, citing a "precarious cash flow crisis" from decreased military contract revenues. A month later, Ryan lost a key U.S. Department of Justice contract and immediately grounded its four MD-80s, which it had used for prisoner transport. By August, the airline would return the leased A330-300 it had spent so much time acquiring to Virgin Atlantic, replacing it with an A330-200 previously flown by Atlas Jet, a Turkish airline.

Meanwhile, creditors applied pressure to limit the role of Ryan's owners and to change senior management. Jeff Potter, former president and CEO of Frontier Airlines, was hired as "chief restructuring officer" and immediately took positive steps to stabilize operations. The pilots have welcomed the addition of

Potter, but they remain frustrated that more action has not been taken to restructure management.

Although Ryan pilots have done their part to save their airline, losses have continued to mount, and management has furloughed more and more pilots. Since 2011, the active pilot group has shrunk to approximately a quarter of its former size, and Ryan has lost seven of its airplanes.

"We're a resilient group and have been through tough times before," notes Sparks. "We're still working hard for our pilots, even though the majority of our committee volunteers and MEC members have been furloughed."

While Ryan's future remains uncertain, the fact that the airline continues to operate is due in large part to its dauntless pilots and their spirit of cooperation and sacrifice.

Ryan Aviation Corporation began as a fixed-base operator in 1976, providing fueling and maintenance services in Wichita, Kan. Changing its name to Ryan International Airlines, the organization hired pilots and started transporting freight. By 1984, Ryan began flying passengers on a charter basis. The airline ceased cargo operations in 2004 and moved its headquarters to its current location in Rockford, Ill., in 2006 after its purchase by the Rubloff Development Group. 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1998
- **Number of pilots:** 211 (including furloughees)
- **Pilot domicile:** Rockford, Ill.
- **Operations:** Ryan International Airlines (not to be confused with Ireland-based Ryanair) provides scheduled and charter services for customers around the globe
- **Fleet:** 1 A330-200 and 2 B-767-300ERs

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Growing in Numbers and Strength

By Jen Lofquist
Senior Communications Specialist

With their contract not amendable until 2015, the Spirit pilots have been focusing their attention on contract enforcement, sending a clear message to management that they will not tolerate its disregard for their collective bargaining agreement.

“For a new contract, and one that very clearly spelled out terms, we are dealing with an enormous number of failures of this management to abide by the very contract it signed,” says Capt. Chris Amongero, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. “We should still be in the honeymoon phase of a new agreement. Instead, it appears we took our entire

same arbitrator found that management had disobeyed his award, with hearings continuing in an effort to find a remedy.

“The nature of the disagreement is pretty simple,” continues Amongero. “We want all our pilots to have an equal opportunity to pick up open-time flying at a set premium. Management executives, however, seem to wish to bestow open-time flying, and the accompanying premium pay, to only certain pilots using a system known only to them.”

Junior manning is only one example of management’s disregard for a contract that extends through the summer 2015. The pilot group, and its leaders, spend an inordinate amount of time filing grievances, attending arbitrations, and settling arguments over contract language that leaves no doubt of intention or process.

Using ALPA’s Representation Department, Spirit pilots have responded by filing grievances and refusing to roll over when their hard-won contract is violated. Also, thanks to an innovative, expedited dispute resolution process included in the contract, these grievances are being settled quickly. But no matter how quickly one grievance is resolved, another one pops up.

“We are winning the vast majority of these arbitrations, which you would think would cause management to think twice about ignoring the contract,” Amongero observes. “But this simply isn’t the case. No matter how clear and precise the contract is, management just does what it wants until an arbitrator says it can’t. Sometimes, as in the case of junior manning, management continues to violate the agreement even after an arbitrator has said it can’t.”

Adding to the struggles are the company’s near-record growth and profits. Spirit currently encompasses just 1 percent of the market share in the United States, but it has announced a goal of tripling that over the next few years. Bolstered by a profit margin of nearly 9 percent, in an industry where the norm is just .02 percent, the company is adding new routes and, most notably for pilots, hiring. Currently, it’s adding more than a dozen pilots each month. This has put an additional strain on the pilot group, as it seeks to encourage growth but not allow management to unfairly take advantage of the airline’s growing pains.

The pilot group has also become more geographically diverse, with a new base in Las Vegas, Nev., that opened in February and a new domicile in Dallas, Tex. The company is also adding new airplanes, planning to nearly double its fleet by 2015.

“With the number of new faces on the property, we also have new challenges,” says Amongero. “Those of us who were here during the strike need to make sure that pilots coming onto the property understand the situation at Spirit. We’ve seen a lot of the newer pilots, especially those who came from other ALPA pilot groups, step up to take leadership roles. It’s this sort of commitment that will protect our contract—now and as Spirit continues to grow.”

Spirit’s fleet includes 27 A319s, 16 A320s, and 2 A321s.



list of arbitrators on the honeymoon with us.”

As an example, though the contract clearly spells out the procedure for junior manning—calling up pilots to pick up additional flying—management abused the policy almost as soon as the ink was dry on the hard-won collective bargaining agreement, which came after a five-day strike in 2010. In April 2012, an arbitrator found that management had violated the contractual limits on junior manning, and he required the company to “cease and desist.” However, management ignored the finding and continued to use junior manning to shore up scheduling. In September, the

Spirit

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1996
- **Number of pilots:** 657
- **Headquarters:** Miramar, Fla.
- **Pilot bases:** Atlantic City, N.J.; Detroit, Mich.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; and Las Vegas, Nev.
- **Fleet:** 27 A319s, 16 A320s, and 2 A321s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Parity Is a Priority

By Rusty Ayers
Senior Communications
Specialist

Sun Country

As contract talks enter the three-year mark at Minneapolis-based Sun Country Airlines, the Master Executive Council (MEC) has condensed its negotiating goals into two simple words: parity, period.

With the airline consistently making a profit over the last several years, expanding operations, and finding new business after almost going out of business four years ago, pilot leaders believe it should no longer be necessary for employees to provide financial support by continuing to work for subpar wages. "Now that the airline is doing well, we think it's time that we were brought into parity with our peers," says Capt. Dennis Vanatta, the pilots' MEC chairman. "Unfortunately, it's taking us far too long to get management to agree with us."

Almost two years out of bankruptcy and a year into its relationship with a new owner, Sun Country's pilots still languish near the bottom of the narrowbody pay scale, a situation the group's leaders are working hard to change.

The two sides are still far apart on a number of issues, but most especially pilot pay. When the pilots and management exchanged pay proposals in mid-September 2012, the company proposed a five-year agreement with a 2 percent signing bonus and a one-time 2 percent raise that is conditioned on events over which the pilots have no control. The pilots are currently paid about 20 percent less than pilots at other airlines flying comparable equipment.

In addition to face-to-face negotiations, the pilot group spent 2012 building its volunteer organization. It created Family Awareness, Pilot-to-Pilot, and Strategic Preparedness Committees

and has sponsored several high-profile events to educate and unify the group.

The MEC's first-ever informational picketing event, held at MSP on September 19, was a huge success, generating strong news media coverage as more than 100 of the airline's 184 pilots participated.

"We've proven we can perform any kind of flying the company gives us, and with a high level of professionalism," Vanatta says. "We have just begun work with a federal mediator, and we hope he will be able to jump-start our talks so that we can reach agreement on a new contract early in 2013."

Originally built in the early 1980s with a single



airplane flown by furloughed Braniff Airlines employees, Sun Country developed a comfortable niche market as a vacation airline to Florida, Mexico, and the Caribbean. After two bankruptcies in the past decade, the airline is reinventing itself once again as a small-scale network airline with big ambitions.

The airline is slowly adding pilots and new aircraft to its fleet of B-737NGs and is building its network of year-round service to business destinations. It added new service to Costa Rica in 2012 and continues to fly from MSP to London's Gatwick Airport in the summer months.

And after winning ETOPS certification and becoming a member of the UPS Contractor Team for the U.S. Transportation Command, in 2011 Sun Country began operating military charter

flights. It currently flies U.S. service members to and from Kuwait.

The pilots and Sun Country entered negotiations in 2010 while the airline was still in bankruptcy. In 2011 Cambria Holdings, a Minnesota-based, privately held family company with no labor experience that's better known for making countertops, bought the airline for \$34 million.

The airline has been profitable since 2010. But the Davis family, which owns Cambria, has been unwilling to make any further investment in the business, saying any growth in the company—including employee salaries—must come from the company's own earnings.

"We recognize Cambria's

view, but it needs to understand ours: we believe profits are what's left over *after* you have paid your employees a fair and reasonable wage, not *instead* of paying your employees," Vanatta says. [▶](#)

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1996
- **Founded:** 1982
- **Number of pilots:** 184
- **Pilot base:** Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minn.
- **Operations:** Based in Mendota Heights, Minn., Sun Country flies scheduled service to 32 destinations, 11 of which are served year-round. The airline also operates 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 and is a member of the Department of Defense's Civil Reserve Air Fleet
- **Fleet:** 15 B-737NGs, with 3 more planned for 2013 and more aircraft leased seasonally

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Cruise Control Set at Trans States

By Kimberly Seitz
Senior Communications Specialist

Trans States

After working under their new contract for just more than a year, the Trans States pilots are finally in a position in which their Master Executive Council (MEC), and newly appointed MEC chairman, can focus their energy on enforcing their hard-won contract.

"After more than five years of negotiations, it's important that we ensure that management adheres to the items it agreed to and that the pilots get the full benefit of their sacrifices and the Negotiating Committee's hard work during our last contract negotiations," says Capt. Cliff Simmons, the former Negotiating Committee chairman who was elected to

amid furloughs and a further anticipated fleet reduction. However, things turned around by springtime. "The company reworked the aircraft leases and code-share agreements to maintain our current fleet size at 22," Simmons says, "and all furloughed pilots are now back." Trans States, which flies regional jets for United and US Airways, continues to hire 10 pilots per month and plans to hire into 2013 to meet the demands of attrition and the company's need to reach its desired staffing levels. Additionally, all pilots who were downgraded as a result of the furloughs should be back in the captain's seat as this issue goes to press.

lished a joint committee to look at various vendors. "Our plan is to run tests as soon as possible so that the pilots can decide if PBS is right for them. We'll also need to negotiate a separate LOA to integrate PBS with the terms of our current agreement," Simmons adds.

The pilots also continue to participate in the US Airways Express Pilots Alliance (USEPA), a collaboration of ALPA-represented US Airways Express pilot groups. "USEPA continues to provide invaluable networking opportunities among regional airlines at our level," says Simmons. "With a focus on safety, training, and job security, the alliance members work together to



One of Trans States' 22 EMB-145s.

WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

serve as the MEC chairman in September 2012.

Simmons notes that the operations director at Trans States has made it a goal to have a more open and continuous dialogue between the ops team and the pilot group. "We hold planned labor relations meetings," Simmons says, "and have so far been successful at quickly dealing with important issues and, in some instances, avoiding grievances."

While the union and the company do not always agree, Simmons says that management is "working in a positive direction" to effectively and efficiently rectify concerns. "Good labor relations and contract enforcement go a long way in attracting and retaining qualified pilots," he notes.

The pilots started 2012

The pilots and the airline reached a major milestone in 2012 with the implementation of an Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) training initiative launched in October. A leading objective of AQP is to provide effective training that will enhance professional qualifications to a level above the present standards.

The pilot group's next challenge is deciding how to test and implement a preferential bidding system (PBS). Historically, PBS adds value to both parties in staffing, efficiencies, and cost savings. The contract contains a provision for the parties to evaluate whether a PBS is beneficial for use at Trans States. The company and the pilots signed a protocol letter of agreement (LOA) at the end of the year that estab-

ensure that our energy is used to support each other during negotiations."

Simmons explains that information exchanged at USEPA meetings helped his pilot group craft a Flight Operations and Quality Assurance (FOQA) LOA in 2011 and that he continues to collaborate with alliance pilot groups that are in negotiations. 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1993
- **Signed first ALPA contract:** 1994
- **Number of pilots:** 260
- **Operations:** More than 150 daily flights to 39 cities, serving more than 2.1 million passengers annually while flying as United Express and US Airways Express
- **Pilot domiciles:** St. Louis, Mo., and Washington Dulles, Va.
- **Headquarters:** St. Louis, Mo.
- **Fleet:** 22 EMB-145s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Pilots Stand At Threshold Of a New Day

By C. David Kelly
Senior Communications
Specialist

United

The pilots of United Airlines, at last, stand at the threshold of a new beginning; a day they have been working toward since the horrific events of Sept. 11, 2001. The recent ratification of the joint collective bargaining agreement (JCBA) by the pilots of United and Continental represents a giant step toward the dawning of that new day.

Much work remains before United and Continental pilots can combine to become 12,000 strong. Now the integration of the seniority list must be completed, a process that is expected to take several months. But the ratification of the JCBA cleared a huge hurdle toward bringing these two pilot groups together.

"It really has been a trying and challenging time for the pilots of United," says Capt. Jay Heppner, the United pilots' Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman. "One would be hard-pressed to find a pilot group throughout the history of the airline industry that has weathered such a sustained series of threats to our jobs and the profession. Arduous schedules, the economic realities of corporate America, and a company mindset that seemed intent on pitting management against labor at every turn are just a few of the realities that have consumed much of our energy these past several years.

"Through all the challenges and threats to our careers, however, we have continued to stand tall together. Our collective determination led us toward a JCBA that will usher in a new era for 12,000 United Airlines pilots and will help us to put the dark days of working under bankruptcy-era contracts behind us. As United pilots, it would be impossible to reflect on what has transpired in our lives since Sept. 11, 2001, and not

be proud of how we, together, have met each and every challenge with professionalism and courage. We have honored our profession and continue to set the standard for airline excellence."

With the combination of two pilot groups, there are bound to be unique challenges. As in any merger, there will be growing pains. But there also will be unique opportunities.

"Bringing 12,000 pilots together, getting the 1,436 furloughed United pilots back on the property, and working shoulder-to-shoulder toward a common goal will unlock great opportunities," Heppner says. "There is power in numbers. And United management will be dealing

in the areas of safety and training. He calls on United management to, once again, welcome ALPA's presence at the table and listen to the pilots' expertise in these arenas. He calls on management to step up and make a positive change to United's corporate culture.

"United Airlines is presented another chance to usher in a new start in management-labor relations," notes Heppner. "Management shouldn't squander this one. We stand ready to work as equal stakeholders in building the new United. Management must stop viewing pilots as adversaries and recognize us as essential and respected partners in this airline. Once that occurs, our passengers



United operates a mix of A319s, A320s, B-747s, B-757s, B-767s, and B-777s.

with a group that is not only unified but also determined to be respected as a vital part of the world's largest airline. United management should not make the mistake of assuming that the differences in cultures and histories of the two pilot groups will enable it to approach us as separate entities. This group will move forward together with one common goal: to represent the interests of 12,000 United pilots and tirelessly defend our careers."

Heppner hopes that management will recognize the talents and contributions of this pilot group, especially

and shareholders will finally be able to reap the full synergies that were promised by management when it announced the United-Continental merger." 

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 1932
- **Number of pilots:** Approximately 7,500 (1,436 on furlough)
- **Headquarters:** Chicago, Ill.
- **Pilot domiciles:** Washington Dulles, Va.; Chicago, Ill.; Seattle, Wash.; Denver, Colo.; San Francisco, Calif.; New York (JFK), and Los Angeles, Calif.
- **Fleet:** A319s, A320s, B-747s, B-757s, B-767s, and B-777s

The PILOTS OF ALPA 2013

Closer to a Contract

By Jen Lofquist
Senior Communications Specialist

Wasaya

As the Wasaya pilots enter their fifth year as ALPA members, the pilot group that came into the union with no contract and few protections has grown not only in number but also in what it would like to achieve in its next contract. As it continues working toward its second collective bargaining agreement, the pilot group has changed tactics and bargaining methods. Unlike the nearly three years it took the pilots to achieve their first ALPA contract in 2010, negotiations are now interest-based rather than under the traditional proposal-based bargaining model.

In interest-based negotiations (IBN), the two sides share their ideas for solving

more cooperative labour-management relationship. “Both sides are more collegial and committed to a common goal—a contract that is fair to both pilots and management,” says Harding.

With negotiating sessions planned through March 2013, the group is well on its way to a second agreement that is more mature than the first, which is reflective of a more established pilot group.

Not too long ago, the pilot group had significant, if not staggering, turnover rates. Many junior pilots viewed Wasaya as a stepping-stone for building flight time and then leaving for larger airlines and bigger paychecks. However, with a new contract improving upon the pilots’ achievements,

communities rely on the airline to transport not just passengers, but also fuel, food, and medicine. Given the vital necessity of these flights, and the pilots who fly them, in 2010 the union and management experts determined that Wasaya constituted an “essential services” provider under Canadian law. Stopping, reducing, or even delaying these services could risk the safety and well-being of the northern residents.

The essential services designation is more than just a sign of Wasaya’s importance; it also prevents the disruption of services that a strike or a lockout could cause, according to the Canada Labour Code. This left the door open for alternative negotiating styles, including interest-based, when the two sides began negotiations.

“We strongly believe that management shares our commitment to strengthening and growing this airline,” Harding says. “This commitment can only be assisted by pilots who plan to stay at the airline long-term, and thus achieve solutions, not just patches to problems, until they leave. By putting in place an improved pilot contract that makes Wasaya an attractive, long-term employer, we are building an airline that offers greater opportunities for the people on both sides of the table.”



A Hawker Siddeley HS748 prepares for loading.

the specific issue on the table and then move toward a collaborative solution, rather than spending time formulating written proposals that can “anchor” a party’s thinking. “Even though we are still in the early bargaining stages,” comments F/O James Harding, the pilots’ Master Executive Council (MEC) chairman, “we’ve made substantial progress. We’re further along since just September 2012 than we were in our second year of our prior negotiations.” A by-product of the interest-based negotiating approach is that it assists in fostering a better,

they are reconsidering their career paths. “The quality-of-life improvements in the first contract and a better relationship with management helped transform Wasaya into a place where a pilot could work, support a family, and eventually retire. A new contract will continue this trend—and build a group of pilots committed to the long-term success of Wasaya,” Harding says.

Wasaya’s primary business remains serving the 25 First Nation communities of Ontario and Manitoba—communities often inaccessible by any method of transportation other than air. These

At a Glance

- **Pilots joined ALPA:** 2008
- **Number of pilots:** 77
- **Hub:** Thunder Bay, Ont.
- **Pilot domiciles:** Thunder Bay, Ont.; Pickle Lake, Ont.; Sioux Lookout, Ont.; Timmins, Ont.; and Red Lake, Ont.
- **Operations:** Thunder Bay, Ont.; Pickle Lake, Ont.; Sioux Lookout, Ont.; Timmins, Ont.; and Red Lake, Ont.
- **Fleet:** 27 airplanes, including Beech 1900Ds, Cessna C-208Bs, Hawker Siddeley HS748s, Pilatus PC-12s, and Dash 8s