

Getting It On ALPA's Whiteboard

Turning a Vision into a Game Plan

By John Perkinson, Staff Writer

A LPA has engaged in strategic planning from its beginning. Although probably not called “strategic planning” at the time, the key men who founded the Association had goals and developed strategies to achieve them. And since 2008, the official process of conducting strategic planning and communicating ALPA’s tactical blueprint to its members has been instrumental in advancing the airline piloting profession.

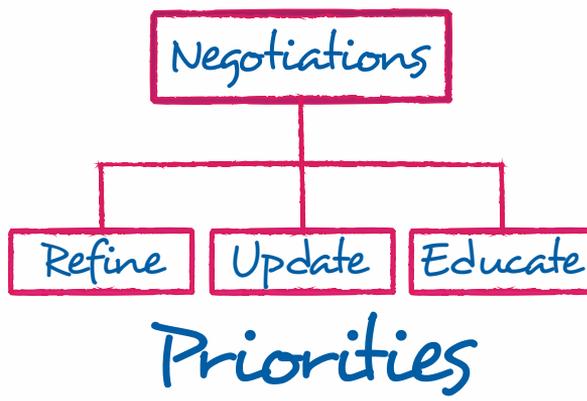
Strategic planning is an ongoing process. Members of ALPA’s Board of Directors (BOD), working in eight delegate committees, consistently weigh previous Association actions and objectives against the current airline industry environment to make the necessary adjustments. The globalization of the airline industry, coupled with the legal and regulatory environment and the state of the economy in the United States and Canada, continue to provide a unique set of challenges.

The following pages provide summaries of the eight BOD committees and the work, challenges, and progress that are guiding the Association. As the 2014 ALPA Board of Directors meeting approaches, take note of ALPA’s accomplishments—and what you think needs to be addressed. Then contact your council reps and tell them what should be included in ALPA’s 2014 strategic plan. →

Delegate Committee 1 ALPA Structure

Recognizing commonalities and building relationships across pilot group lines reinforces the power of ALPA pilots working together. Collectively, Association pilots are

- developing new initiatives for the US Airways Express Pilot Alliance and the Delta Connection Pilot Alliance, enabling the member pilot groups that are affected to better understand code-share family environments for bargaining and other purposes;
- promoting information-sharing within the Associations of Star Alliance Pilots, the SkyTeam Pilots, and the oneworld Cockpit Crew Coalition to enhance pilot career protection, progression, and contract and professional standards;
- broadening networking and coordination opportunities for air cargo, fee-for-departure, and Global Pilot Symposium initiatives; and
- promoting the ongoing use of strategic planning among ALPA master executive councils (MEC) as a foundation for these activities.



Delegate Committee 2 Collective Bargaining and Retirement & Insurance

Negotiating and enforcing ALPA contracts remain top Association priorities, and ALPA must continue to refine bargaining models and practices to adjust to changing political, economic, and legal environments. ALPA is

- updating collective bargaining and R&I policies (ALPA *Administrative Manual* Sections 40 and 55) to develop effective ranges, targets, and standards for ALPA member pay, work rules, benefits, and job security;
- revising negotiations training curriculum to include strategies and models that are best suited for the current negotiating environment;
- employing pattern bargaining and mutual support to build on previous contract gains and advance the profession;
- “mainstreaming” benefits issues to promote contract gains that other pilot groups have negotiated;
- visiting MECs to educate them on negotiations, etc.; and
- developing and updating data resources, such as the Dispute Tracking System and the “Brief Bank,” for use by both pilot representatives and staff to complement strategic approaches to contract enforcement.

Delegate Committee 3 Safety, Security, and FT/DT

ALPA's founding members chose "Schedule with Safety" as the Association's motto, and safety and security continue to be top ALPA priorities. To better advance these efforts, ALPA is

- promoting one level of safety and security for both Canadian and U.S. passenger and cargo pilots through its initiatives addressing
 - the new science-based U.S. flight-time, duty-time regulations,
 - pilot training, qualifications, and health standards to ensure the highest levels of safety and professionalism,
 - cockpit secondary barriers,
 - jumpseat access,
 - the carriage of hazardous materials/lithium batteries by air,
 - threatened airspace management, and
 - improvements to the Federal Flight Deck Officer program and funding;
- implementing risk-based security measures, including Known Crewmember and Restricted Access Identification Card (RAIC);
- supporting "just culture," improving safety reporting systems protections to limit how ASAP/FOQA information is used;
- championing next generation air transportation system modernization, including precision approach capabilities at all airports;
- supporting the safe integration of remotely piloted aircraft in U.S. national airspace;
- identifying topics to add to the list of successful one-day ALPA symposiums; and

- participating in a wide variety of industry groups whose goals are standard-setting recommendations for rulemaking and changes to procedures, all with the objective of enhancing the safety and security of airline operations.

Delegate Committee 4 ALPA Resources

ALPA budgets its resources to ensure that services for local councils, MECs, and national projects receive proper funding. In consultation with the Association's Special Committee for Finance, Structure, and Services (SCFSS), ALPA is

- restructuring ALPA governing bodies to phase out nonstatus reps;
- adjusting member dues policy to include 401(k) (and similar Canadian plan) contributions;
- raising the required threshold to a clear majority for calling special MEC meetings to make decisions regarding Operating Contingency Fund allocations;
- encouraging the negotiation of company-paid flight pay loss for negotiations;
- developing policies to preserve the Association's Major Contingency Fund; and
- implementing the new dues rate of 1.9 percent, effective January 2014, to ensure the Association's continued financial strength. →



Delegate Committee 5 Communications/ Professional Development

To be successful, ALPA must fully engage its members as well as communicate its positions and preferences to airline industry stakeholders and the traveling public. ALPA pilot leaders support

- using technologies, tactics, and media combined with the introduction of analytics tools and new member communications vehicles like *ALPA Daily*, all-member messages, social network posts, BOD messages, and twice-weekly *FASTread* e-mail newsletters to improve ALPA's visibility;
- distributing *Air Line Pilot* to members of Congress and pilot groups not currently represented by ALPA;
- expanding the number of industry relationships to more effectively promote ALPA's priorities and enhance the airline piloting profession;
- strengthening the ALPA brand, particularly at Association-related events;
- studying the assessed effect of the projected retirement of 10,000-plus members who will turn age 65 within the next 10 years that ALPA's Professional Development Group is conducting;
- establishing a new committee to study retirements;
- supporting MECs and local councils by creating new publications and websites, etc.; and
- providing new micro-sites for campaigns.

Delegate Committee 6 Legal, Grievance, and Mergers

Protecting the union from threats through ALPA's Risk Management Program requires a thorough understanding of where and how potential assaults can occur. ALPA is bolstering its defenses through

- Kitty Hawk insurance to protect the overall viability of the Association;
- special attention to applications of duty-of-fair-representation insurance;
- training pilot volunteers and elected representatives on their duties and responsibilities; and
- active communication and public engagement to challenge external threats, such as the practices of the U.S. Export-Import Bank.



Delegate Committee 7 Government Affairs and Regulatory

Lawmakers and regulators set policies that can make or break the airline industry. ALPA recognizes this level of influence and fully supports a carefully coordinated leveling-the-playing-field approach to expand government's support for the U.S. and Canadian airline industries and their respective piloting professions by

- establishing national-level air transportation policies that promote U.S. and Canadian airline industries;
- maintaining an approach that balances economic, security, airline, and worker interests and priorities;
- providing timely legislative summits and training pilot volunteers to advocate for ALPA's legislative agenda;
- opposing detrimental policies like the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Abu Dhabi preclearance facility and the preferential financing offered to foreign airlines by the U.S. Export-Import Bank;
- eliminating the cargo carveout for FAR 117 flight- and duty-time regulations (i.e., supporting the Safe Skies Act);
- urging lawmakers to reform the Section 1113 bankruptcy process to better balance economic restructuring for distressed employers with worker protections;
- preserving the current U.S. airline pilot retirement age of 65; and
- communicating these policies with an effective strategic public affairs campaign.

Delegate Committee 8 Organizing

ALPA continues to look at organizing opportunities to strengthen and fortify the Association. Working through its Organizing Task Force, ALPA has

- clarified the process for determining whether to organize a pilot group;
- affirmed its metrics for assessing pilot group willingness to organize; and
- reinforced the importance of not just winning representation elections, but also negotiating good first contracts and building strong pilot groups. 🗳️

