

**Opening Remarks - Captain John Prater  
103rd Regular Executive Board Meeting  
September 9, 2008**

***"PLANNING FOR OPPORTUNITY"***

Traditionally, the September Executive Board meeting, preceding a Board of Directors meeting, is used for complying with the constitutional requirements of several ALPA committees reporting to you. It is a time when we prepare the agenda items and actions coming from the Executive Council that will require action from the upcoming Board of Directors meeting, and this year that format will be no different.

However, this year, in addition to our normal work, we will ask you to play a leadership role by preparing to lead the Board of Directors members in a planning process for the future of our Union.

As a Union, we certainly have our share of challenges facing us today but we also have great opportunity and great assets to deploy to return our profession and careers to their proper state.

I'll talk more on that in a moment, but first I'd like to update you on some important issues facing our union.

Let me begin with a review of the current situation at Polar and Atlas. The Executive Council has spent many

hours with the Atlas and Polar leaders since 2005 trying to help these two pilot groups and their leaders work together, build consensus and make progress in negotiations following a strike and a merger and to be completely open, a management and corporation that has experienced dynamic changes that have contributed to the problem of finding an acceptable solution for our pilots.

With US Airways and America West as a backdrop, we understand how members can be hurt when union leaders refuse or just plain cannot find ways to resolve problems and work effectively with each other. Each and every one of us has great empathy and understanding for Union leaders and pilot groups facing the trials of a corporate and seniority list merger.

On July 29, 30, and 31 in Herndon, meetings were held to prepare for joint negotiations. The sessions were difficult since the two negotiating committees from our MECs could not even agree to meet in the same room. Despite that practical problem, and with the expert assistance of Captain Joe Fagone, my personal appointee to assist and oversee the contract preparation, roughly ten sections of the new contract were discussed and proposals were largely completed.

With a little more successful work, five contract sections were completed and proposed to the company at a negotiating session on August 12 and 13 in Purchase, NY. The Joint Negotiating Committee worked together

constructively at that meeting, and there was typical back and forth across the negotiating table with management. The company hosted a dinner for the JNC and expressed its desire to move negotiations to a conclusion.

We have additional negotiations scheduled for next week on September 16-18. Preparation for that session is taking place this week. We'll have at least another five or six contract sections to present to management at that session. So, on the substantive provisions of the contract, work is proceeding constructively between the JNC members from Atlas and Polar

So what's the problem?

First, the two pilot groups have not yet agreed with each other, or the company, on a negotiation protocol agreement that will set out the process by which a single agreement will be reached and there are significant differences between the two ALPA MECs on the approach to take.

Second, there remain differing opinions on what their respective collective bargaining agreements require in this instance.

And third, like US Airways, there is a large group of pilots that would rather risk the uncertain route of going to a different union where they think that the larger pilot group

can impose its will on the smaller pilot group by leaving ALPA.

Of course, that hasn't solved problems at US Airways and it won't here either. But Teamster supporters have announced they have sufficient signed authorization cards to force an election. We are now waiting for the NMB to make its single carrier determination before an election is scheduled. That determination is expected to be announced soon.

In the meantime, ALPA -- through the actions of the Executive Council, Captain Fagone and Captain Rice and our Representation Department and the JNC -- is working hard to move the joint negotiations process forward. At

the same time, we have been providing facts to Atlas pilots to correct information distributed by Teamster supporters, and highlighting the difference between ALPA and the Teamsters.

As we know from US Airways, the bottom line is that Union leaders can't be forced by ALPA, or any other union, to work together or get along. They have to decide that it's in their mutual best interest to do that to avoid serious negative consequences for members. And we also know from the contract improvements at DAL/NWA, that when ALPA Leaders lead their pilot groups to work together -- even when they don't see eye-to-eye on certain issues -- they can do great things and benefit their members and raise the bar for all pilots.

There have been lies spread by Teamster organizers that ALPA does not want the Atlas and Polar pilots in our Union. I know you join me in our support of our Brothers and Sisters at Atlas and Polar.

We have and will continue to express our solidarity for each and every one of them, and demonstrate to their leaders and line pilots our respect, understanding and concern and show them how much we want their groups to come together and remain in our Union.

Changing gears a little bit, at one of our first Strategic Planning meetings with the Executive Council, we decided

one of our priorities was to put an end to the senseless passenger-style security screening of pilots.

After we passed a law and met with, lobbied, cajoled, insisted and finally picketed the TSA, they adopted ALPA's plan to remedy this problem. As a result, an evaluation of CrewPASS has been running at Baltimore, Pittsburgh and Columbia since July 17<sup>th</sup>. It has received rave reviews from pilots, airlines, and TSA alike. The agency's senior leadership has even claimed on several occasions that CrewPASS is a "win-win" for the government and industry, and ALPA couldn't agree more.

As the 60-day test ends later this week, we are pressing TSA hard to ensure that the evaluation continues to run

past its planned 60-day evaluation. As you know ALPA has provided the laptops to the federal government and now ARINC, has informed the TSA that they will operate the evaluation for an additional 120 days at no charge.

ALPA is leading these discussions with Arinc and is pressing the agency to include a biometric feature to CrewPASS – so that security and throughput are maximized – and then our goal remains the same -- to push the program to be implemented nationwide. That remains our objective and we will not back away from that goal.

Less than 1 month ago, in Washington DC, the Air Line Pilots Association hosted North America's premier Aviation Safety and Security Forum.

This year's event, ALPA's 54th, brought together ALPA leaders with almost 500 safety and security professionals from across industry, government, law enforcement, and professional associations from around the world.

During this four-day event, attendees had an opportunity to network with key aviation stakeholders from around the world, shape the direction of aviation around the world, and hear presentations from industry and government leaders dealing with such subject matter as Threatened Management, safety data sharing and

analysis, crewmember self defense, civil aviation security, security in cargo operations, environmental issues associated with aviation, ATC system modernization, maintenance standards and quality assurance in tight financial times just to name a few.

The highlight of the week was the ALPA Annual Awards banquet where the Association – our union -- recognized its representatives for their contributions to the safety and security of our industry and for superior airmanship in dealing with near catastrophic situations during line flight operations. This event has become more successful each subsequent year and this year it was so successful that other organizations are attempting to copy our event.

There are other organizations that propose similar events but it is ALPA that has promoted One Level of Safety since our successful campaign in the mid 90's to bring the FAR 135 operators to 121 standards. They may try to copy, but they never can do what we do.

At the core of our Union for 77 years ALPA members have provided us their expertise, their spirit of professionalism and provided our Union with the resources to build the premier world-class staff.

The fact is that ALPA is recognized in the US, In Canada and throughout the world as a Union that will take on every safety and security challenge across all airlines, all governments to improve our industry and our profession.

We will not surrender our leadership as the safety and security advocate even if others adopt our slogans.

A few moments ago, I said the challenges we face would make us stronger. The way we are going to do this is to develop long range plans to keep ALPA the premier pilots union in the world.

While it is a constitutional requirement that the report of the Strategic Planning Committee be placed before you, we have not and will not produce a final document until we have your input and concurrence, and the input of the entire Board of Directors.

Many of the Executive Board members, along with the Executive Council and the National Committee Chairmen, have participated since last November in strategic planning sessions with me and the Strategic Planning Committee. We asked each other the hard questions and challenged each other during these difficult times for all pilots to discover what it will take for ALPA to remain a world-class union for our members across all segments of our pilot groups.

The ALPA Board of Directors is our highest governing body and they are responsible for setting the agenda for our union when they meet every other year. You, the Executive Board, continue to interpret their direction and

along with the Executive Council, provide clear direction to your officers and staff.

This Union is run by pilots for pilots. We do not turn to Business agents to make our decisions. We have a great staff of professionals and advisors and yes they advise us, but at the negotiating table, at the MEC, at the Executive Board and at the Board of Directors -- Air Line Pilots -- ALPA Representatives and ALPA members make the hard decisions and accept the responsibility of Command. That is why I have asked you to lead this effort here and at the Board of Directors.

Clearly we are a team when it comes to running this union. Clearly we all bear a great responsibility of thinking

about the future and planning for our union's success, through all of the consolidation and bankruptcies and whatever turmoil this industry or government can throw at us.

Whether or not the future rolls out the way we think it will or differently, one thing is for sure, pilots will command the Air Line Pilots Association. Clearly if we don't lead our members in to the future, nobody will.

Some of our greatest accomplishments of the past, and some of our greatest accomplishments in the future, will take place when our industry and our union finds itself in a crisis. The only way to take advantage of opportunities that are presented during times of crisis is if we have done the hard work of pre-planning for all eventualities and are

ready to seize these opportunities, and pilots will continue to make the hard decisions at the MEC, local council and Board of Directors level from Command Authority on the flight deck to leading our Union meetings.

Today we find ourselves in such a time. We are seeing an industry that is being totally revamped because of high fuel costs and overcapacity in the face of reduced demand. At first blush, one might think this is a crisis with no silver lining.

We are in very challenging times – some of our pilot groups are on the point of this spear – but I see it as a positive time for change and time to accomplish things we

may never have been able to accomplish had the current environment not existed. What exactly do I mean?

Well, as we continue in the merger world, the Northwest and Delta pilots have clearly demonstrated for us a new pattern that, at this time, is working better than anyone could have imagined. That does not happen without serious debates internally and externally, and a willingness to see and respect the views of others. It didn't occur without convincing managements that the only way it would happen is if our issues were met up front, and that line in the sand was delivered before, during and after this merger was conceived with clarity and conviction -- and our leaders never wavered.

As you know, we expect more consolidation and in light of that I established a Merger Policy Review Committee, chaired by Captain Mike Arcamuzi of FedEx. The work of revamping the entire ALPA Merger Policy cannot be done overnight. Certain aspects and opportunities provided for in Merger Policy were road-tested at Northwest and Delta.

These concepts, along with the resolution before this body brought by the United MEC regarding the study of a single seniority list, deserve your careful review.

ALPA can survive mergers and we can survive, prosper, and protect each other if we remain unified. This was begun anew in STL at the initiation of the Fee-For-Departure Summit. What happened there was that ALPA

members and leaders who want to take care of all ALPA family members were willing to listen, share, and were confident enough to speak the unspeakable as we start to make opportunities from the adversity that this industry has dealt us.

This summit brought together a generation of ALPA pilot leaders who are planning to raise the bar for pilots across all segments of our industry.

Since then, representatives from these pilot groups developed and have begun implementing a strategic plan to achieve mutual goals for expanding career opportunities and enhancing our members' job protections through the efforts of their Union---ALPA. They have

undertaken a number of key projects that focus on sharing information, ideas, and successes and collaborating on joint solutions to industry challenges.

This is a real example of the kind of work that we, as a union, have begun on the national level, and the Board of Directors will continue this October.

As we march toward our BOD meeting, I ask that you continue to lead your MEC's and prepare them for the hard work at the Board Of Directors meeting to build their plan to guide our Union into the future.

I commit to you, the National Officers, the Executive Council and our staff will do all in our power to be fully

prepared to excel as the Union our members and our Board demands. ALPA has the power, influence and resources to successfully meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

As always, thank you for your leadership and your unity when it counts. The support you provide to your Union by standing up and supporting the difficult decisions we make truly makes a difference. True union brothers and sisters go out and face the threats with solidarity. I know we can. I know we will.

Thank you.

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