

Year in Review

As we bring 2011 to a close, I'm going to share with you my new No. 1 priority for 2012: *You*.

I want to get a better gauge on how we relate to each other in this union. This year, that started with simple steps. First, some changes to our flagship publication, *Air Line Pilot*—an overnight change making the publication an enhanced member resource focused on information you can only find at ALPA. In every issue we added negotiations updates from the Representation Department, Market Watch information from the Economics & Financial Analysis Department, and legislative updates from the Government Affairs



Department. To keep you engaged from cover to cover, we also added industry news and lighter fare, such as *The Landing* and a sudoku.

Then there's the ways we've tried to get you more involved. We're running surveys now, the third one included in this installment of *Air Line Pilot*. We first asked our pilots about the union's strategic plan, then the Known Crewmember program. This month's will focus on legislation and politics. We're putting out two *FastReads* a week. We've created, and are continually updating, ALPA's mobile app. And we're holding an ongoing photo contest, which is garnering some tremendous photos (that's why we're using them in *Air Line Pilot*, set to music in a great video production, and in various advocacy materials).

Simply put, I want to increase the interaction you have with your union. I want you to know about all of the benefits and resources that come with the privilege of membership so that you can take advantage of all the ways they help protect you and your family. I want you to answer surveys or send in photos or write e-mails or tweets or Facebook posts.

Then, I want you to engage in the battles that we face ahead. If this Congress and White House are unable to pass an FAA reauthorization bill by the end of the year, your union will develop and implement a communications plan that will cause heads to turn. Every day that this bill remains trapped in political uncertainty is another dangerous day for our members, those carrying passengers, cargo, and troops. We take great exception when safety is blatantly ignored for reasons that have absolutely nothing to do with safety.

In 2012, your union will remain focused on the many opportunities and threats that permeate the airline industry. Opportunities come in the form of negotiations, mergers, and even divestitures—just ask the pilots at American Eagle about that. Sixteen pilot groups from both sides of the border will be in negotiations with the ultimate goal of securing

a positive contract. Airline pilots dealing with mergers—Atlantic Southeast and ExpressJet, AirTran, and United and Continental—will have the support of the world's largest pilots union as their companies acquire a single operating certificate, and a single seniority list.

Let's be clear—our window of opportunity to effect change in the airline industry is closing too fast. The decisions we make in the next five or 10 years will determine the strength of the U.S. and Canada in the global airline industry. Together, we can make the changes needed to level the competitive playing field worldwide.

It requires us to put aside the issues that divide us and to focus on the issues that we all agree on. And we just might agree on a lot more than you think. Everyone agrees that adding even more taxes to an industry that's already the most highly taxed in the country is a bad idea. We want to encourage

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people to fly. We want businesses to continue to use our pilots to fly their goods to stores around the world and their staffs to meetings around the world.

I've been telling you about the threats all year. Taxes are only the tip of the iceberg. I can tell you that an air show was just held in Dubai, and several Middle Eastern airlines increased their number of jumbo jets on order yet again.

With all that's going on, there's one thing I know for certain: We will not be able to compete as an industry if we're not all on board. That's why my No. 1 focus in 2012 will be educating you, our members. And if you don't know what this union has to offer you, I guarantee that by the end of next year you will.

Donald J. Moak
 Capt. Lee Moak, ALPA President