

Everything Matters: Ripped Straight From the Headlines

“FAA Urged to Adopt Fatigue Rules for Cargo Pilots”—USA Today

“ALPA Hopes to Lessen Opposition to Cargo Carrier Fatigue Bill”—Aviation Week

“Bill Filed to Apply FAA Fatigue Rules to Cargo Pilots”—The Hill

“Cravaack Introduces Legislation to Keep Skies Safer”—Fox News

The morning after the Air Line Pilots Association, International, hosted its “Closing the Gaps in Air Cargo Safety and Security Conference,” those headlines appeared as top issues of the day.

That says something. No airplanes fell out of the sky. No isolated, sensationalized event occurred to give our profession



a bad name. But one of our most relevant issues—One Level of Safety—was a hot topic of the day. We were competing with the final flight of the space shuttle *Discovery* and the news of Citibank shareholders rejecting an executive pay plan, and people still wanted to know what ALPA had to say. I'd say we're making headway.

Now, does this happen as often as we'd like? Unfortunately, no. We don't have the luxury of controlling the news media executives who are in round-the-clock, split-second competition for your mouse click, swipe of a finger, your choice of news feed, your subscription, and your willingness to come back.

But when you've got some momentum and you're making some headway, you've got to continue to push and push hard. To create a conference that brought together the voices of such high-level government and industry participants is more evidence that ALPA is regarded as a key stakeholder in the aviation arena in Washington, D.C.

So we'll use today's momentum to achieve an ALPA success. By now, you've heard me use the phrase “leveling the playing field.” Today we're talking about a critical safety issue for which we need to level the playing field.

Yesterday, it was calling upon the Obama administration to take action against the unbalance created by the EU's emissions trading scheme. Tomorrow it might be about our efforts to reform aviation taxes—another badly skewed playing field. Next week, maybe the unfair competitive edge of the Persian Gulf airlines. It's hard to comprehend just how many issues touch our profession. But we must be aware of and be engaged in all of

them so that we do what we can to level the playing field.

Today, it's One Level of Safety for cargo airline pilots. As you'll read in this magazine, the Safer Skies Act of 2012 was introduced on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. This bill, if passed, would close the gap (or the gaping hole) that was left in the new flight-time/duty-time regulation passed in December 2011.

Despite being a win on many levels, the hole was established on the basis of a government cost-benefit study that considered only the financial merits of the rule, ignoring the fact that a pilot who transports cargo feels the effects of fatigue as quickly as a pilot who transports passengers.

We applaud Reps. Chip Cravaack (R-Minn.) and Tim Bishop (D-N.Y.) for their leadership in introducing this pro-pilot, bipartisan bill. We all hope that Congress takes up and passes the bill as swiftly as possible. Ensuring that the right messages are conveyed to the right decision-makers, ALPA pilots and staff are working with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and across Capitol Hill to urge that the bill be passed in the name of safety.

Nothing, and I mean nothing, sends a stronger message than airline pilots in uniform knocking on the doors of members of Congress explaining why the exclusion of cargo operations does not make sense. It spits in the face of science and common sense. Your voices can be heard through our aggressive Call to Action. Please participate.

Yes, the introduction of a House bill is just a first step, but a very important one in achieving our goal. But I'm surrounded by relentless pilots and staff who will not waiver in their dedication to leveling the playing field for cargo pilots. I am confident that we will achieve success.

Because of the success that we've already seen from the cargo conference, and the laser conference last fall, we're already making plans for one later this year that will focus on achieving One Level of Safety in pilot training. We will advance the concept that all pilots should receive the same quality of training regardless of the airplane they fly or the type of flying they do.

Our work is never done because the evolution of our industry continues. With new equipment, new companies, new rules from our governments, and integrating and harmonizing standards on an international level, we cannot let down our guard. ALPA pilot representatives and staff are always thoroughly involved in all matters regarding a safe and secure flight.

Together, let's do our part to keep the news media headlines positive, highlighting the cooperative work of business, government, and labor to keep our skies the safest and most secure in the world.



Capt. Lee Moak, ALPA President