

# Everything Matters. Taking the Lead.

Maybe you've noticed—in the past six months the Air Line Pilots Association, International, has been at the forefront of several timely issues affecting line pilots. Fighting fatigue, restricting lasers, promoting the FFDO program, achieving stronger lithium battery regulations, demanding accountability from the



Export-Import Bank in order to save U.S. jobs. The list goes on and on.

As I write this column, we just completed an extremely successful ALPA-led symposium on pilot training—a topic that has a clear effect on ALPA members and this union as a whole. The gathering was a powerful illustration of what can be achieved when airline industry partners collaborate.

A number of ALPA pilots, as well as airlines, manufacturers, regulators, and educators, were among the expert panelists and presenters who shared their perspectives on topics relating to the future of airline pilot hiring and training; advanced qualification programs (AQP); using technology to provide better training to pilots; and establishing the qualification standards for safe, proficient airline pilots. (See “ALPA Hosts Conference on Pilot Training,” page 21.)

Did we come up with a magic solution for how to keep up with a dynamic and evolving industry? No. But we established a launching point for collaboration, discussion, and partnerships among our counterparts. Staying engaged and leading the discussions is the only way the professional pilot perspective will survive as we help define the architecture of our industry's future. Our agenda of safety is always in competition with the agenda driven by revenue and politics. And yet, we are still regarded as leaders in our industry. In Washington, D.C., this is quite an accomplishment.

What's left with regard to pilot training and qualifications? We're waiting for the FAA to issue the final regulations in a number of training areas, but we have remained engaged every step of the way. And have no doubt, we will keep you informed of the changes ahead and let you know how you could be affected and the steps you may need to take to continue to be a part of our proud profession.

In early August, we host our annual Air Safety Forum, our premier safety event where we highlight more of what ALPA has done and continues to do in the name of safety. Each year, high-level aviation/airline players attend this event to hear what ALPA has to say about a variety of topics, including safety, security, and pilot assistance.

Currently serving within ALPA's Air Safety Organization are more than 400 devoted members who volunteer their time and efforts to advance the original motto of this union—Schedule

with Safety. It is a proud motto—one that has never lost its importance through the 81 years of this union's existence.

I look forward to the event and will be honored to recognize a few of our dedicated pilot representatives along with pilots who have done what we all are trained to do when the unexpected occurs—exhibit superior airmanship.

If you aren't able to attend the forum, we'll broadcast it live so that all our members have an opportunity to watch and see for themselves what their union continues to do on their behalf.

In addition to the efforts I mentioned at the beginning of this column, much more still needs to be accomplished. You've

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heard me say it before, but we face many challenges in this ultra-competitive global market, and we must overcome these challenges on an unlevel playing field. In this edition of *Air Line Pilot*, you'll find a synopsis of ALPA's newly released white paper, which I discussed briefly in my last column. Conceptually, it is the beginning of an aviation policy that will enable our domestic airline industry to compete with countries that do not currently face the same challenges that we do in North America. I encourage you to read the summary and also visit the website [levelingthefield.alpa.org](http://levelingthefield.alpa.org).

What you might find staggering in this paper are the details about aviation taxes. Let me sum it up: we are the highest taxed industry (above tobacco and alcohol) but operate on the lowest profit margin. How can that be? Well, stay tuned for our response. ALPA will host a summit, similar to the conferences on pilot training, fatigue, and lasers, and lead the discussion on leveling the playing field.

We are airline pilots because we love to fly. It's unfortunate that the profession we cherish is beleaguered by a number of challenges. But, as our rich history illustrates, the members of the Air Line Pilots Association—mighty stewards of our profession—will continue to act on behalf of all 37 pilot groups and their various needs. Because in our industry, everything matters.

  
Capt. Lee Moak, ALPA President