

# Game Changer

For more than 80 years, ALPA has encountered every imaginable turn of events in the airline industry—and some no one could have imagined. Our union has amassed an impressive portfolio of resources and experience found in no other organization. Whether the subject is industry economics,



pilot contracts, or airline safety or security, ALPA has earned its place as the voice of airline pilots in North America.

ALPA has seen many airline mergers. We understand the equation necessary for airline management to secure success: a sustainable business strategy and total pilot involvement. The proposed US Airways and American Airlines merger is no exception. A

recent Bloomberg News story about the merger reported that “[Doug] Parker said he remembered his lessons from the aborted Delta merger: Work with investors and employees first...”

Here, past serves as precedent. While ALPA does not represent the pilots at the two mainline airlines, our union’s pilots at Air Wisconsin, American Eagle, ExpressJet, Mesa, Piedmont, PSA, and Trans States will perform more than 75 percent of the express flying if US Airways and American Airlines do combine. The tried-and-true solution to an effective merger means involving pilots, including those of wholly owned subsidiaries.

Let me be clear: these pilots—like all airline pilots—feel deeply invested in their airlines. ALPA takes ownership of this investment. The support of ALPA pilots who fly for the wholly owned subsidiaries is crucial to the merger’s success. Equally important is that ALPA’s pilots recognize the power—and fully release the potential—of working together in the merger process.

In June 2010, the US Airways Express Pilots Alliance (USEPA) was created by ALPA pilots flying under the US Airways Express brand to coordinate and promote safety, security, and training, while protecting and enhancing pilots’ job security. Through this key group, the pilots involved have joined together in a drive to find common ground and aggressively narrow the areas of potential challenge. These pilots are also focused on working together with their colleagues at the mainline carriers to foster an economically strong and sustainable airline industry that will create career progression and job protection for all airline pilots.

This work is absolutely vital. And while significant progress has been made, much more can be achieved. By working together, airline pilots can create the best possible opportunity for an integration process that achieves a strong airline and acknowledges the employees who have invested their careers in their companies.

Just as ALPA has earned its place as the voice of airline pilots in North America, so the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Associations (IFALPA) speaks for pilots around the globe. The necessary collaboration around the world to achieve a common goal works to everyone’s benefit. But that takes the time, cooperation, and hard work of many.

Overcoming the challenges of today and tomorrow is not easy. But if we hesitate, we will not succeed. Today, every aviation issue that a pilot encounters not only will affect the individuals involved, but also has the potential to reverberate across the global industry.

Pilots’ working together holds opportunities for international issues in our industry. Through the Global Pilots’ Symposium, held each year in conjunction with the IFALPA annual conference, pilots from across the globe gather to discuss shared challenges and innovative solutions to the labor relations, safety, and security issues facing the industry.

This year, leading experts will talk about a sustainable airline business model in this globalized era of code-sharing agreements and joint ventures. Discussions will also include effective regulatory and legislative, negotiating, and communication strategies for pilots to achieve their goals. You’ll read about a few of these international topics in this issue of *Air Line Pilot*—specifically, runway safety and the critical need to level the playing field in a global marketplace.

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The Bloomberg story on the US Airways and American Airlines merger went on to say that “[Doug Parker] knew that pursuing a merger with labor’s blessing could be a game changer.” Gaining the support of airline pilots and labor is a game changer, but it’s also up to pilots to change the game by pursuing proven ways—and finding new ones—to work together.

Capt. Lee Moak, ALPA President