



So Much Training, So Little Time

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The events of September 11 have affected each one of us in similar, yet different ways. Our patriotic and national resolve against terrorism is undoubtedly first and foremost in our minds, and is obviously in lockstep with the rest of the country. As professional airline pilots, though, I believe that most of us take this personally. To think that radical individuals could take our aircraft from us and turn them into weapons of mass destruction is incomprehensible. Unfortunately, the incomprehensible has become real and our nation and certainly our airline industry has been changed forever. Every major airline (except for Southwest) immediately began to draw up plans to stem their losses, and ultimately downsize for the short term, until the traveling public began to regain their confidence in our air travel industry. Our management immediately added their numbers to the other industry layoffs as they announced 1,100 pilot furloughs among many other furloughs in other departments. Just a short seven days later, they added an additional 250 furloughs to this list under the auspices that these pilots would comprise the temporary training float.

One could only imagine that the furlough of 1,350 pilots from a 6,000-pilot airline would mandate an incredible number of training requirements. In actuality, this number is well in excess of 1,300 training events (this includes initials, requalifications, differences, and seat-specific training). While both the Association and the Corporation realized that this amount of training would be substantial, the Company disagreed with the Training Committee's perspective that they would be unable to train the

required number of pilots within the time frame allocated by the recent bid (01-05a). Recent events have proven that the pace of these furloughs and the training required to replace those positions have been unrealistic from the very beginning. From a scheduling perspective, one would be hard-pressed to find a pilot who has not either been called to fly on a day off or know someone who has, while the schedulers have rapidly been running out of Reserves. And remember the number of out-of-base trips that are being assigned to pilots while furlough dates continue to be pushed back.

Training is obviously paying the price in this matter as we find that each fleet remaining from the recent cuts is literally bursting at their capacities' seams. To exemplify this, I'd like to share some numbers with you from this recent bid. As a reminder, this bid covered the months of December 2001 through April 2002 and encompassed the furloughs of 1,100 of our brother and sister pilots, as well as the reduction of 577 Captain positions. This training began in earnest during the month of December, and all fleets are now at their capacities. What follows is the breakdown of training events and capabilities for each of our remaining fleets. These are numbers derived from ALPA's calculations and differ somewhat from the Company's numbers, whether it be up or down, yet the big picture is still the same. (These calculations would not have been possible without the help of John Bailey (PHL) of the Permanent Bid Closing Committee. I have simply taken his numbers from the required amount of training events and slotted them into the formulas for the capacities of each of our fleets.)

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A330

Capable of six training events per month

Required Initial Training:

5 Captains
32 First Officers
37 total / 6 per month = 6 months+

B-767I/767D/757D

Formerly capable of 14 to 18 training events per month, Company wanted 26 events per month

Required Initial Training:

35 Captains
170 First Officers
205 total / average of 16 formerly per month = 12.8 months
205 total / Company's need of 26 per month = 7.88 months

B-737-3/400

Formerly capable of 30 initials per month and 30 differences per month

Required Initial Training:

116 Captains
187 First Officers
303 total / 30 initials per month = 10 months+

Required Differences Training:

73 Captains
110 First Officers
183 total / 30 differences per month = 6 months+
* To alleviate this extended duration of training for this fleet, the Company has decided to train most of the differences events first, to be followed by the initials, reducing the total duration of training to approx. six months.

A319/320/321

Formerly capable of 60 initials per month, Company wanted 72 events per month

Required Initial Training:

221 Captains
389 First Officers
610 total / formerly 60 per month = 10 months +
610 total / Company's need for 72 per month = 8.5 months

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These numbers reflect a best-case scenario. There is no additional time factored in for substandard orals, substandard rides or not recommended for orals or rides. The current winter weather also needs to be considered as a factor, not only working against the timely completion of IOEs, but also hindering the ability of pilots to make it to the two training centers on time.

How does all of this pertain to your training? Unfortunately, the problem is multifaceted. Primarily, when the number of pilots required to undergo training is substantially increased, the needs of that particular training program increase proportionately. As you'll notice from the aforementioned figures, there are at least 888 First Officer training events scheduled, as compared to approximately 450 Captain events. It doesn't take rocket science to figure out that there have been, and will continue to be, a high percentage of First Officers who will have to undergo training together. As far as the Training Committee is concerned, this concept of constant seat swapping in the simulator is counterproductive to your training experience. Whatever happened to "Fly as you train and train as you fly."? I have lobbied Captain Ron Schilling (Director of Flight Training) for additional simulator time, without any contractual penalties, for two First Officers paired together if they require additional training. But in Captain Schilling's defense, he has had to deny

these requests, as our current contract makes no provisions for this scenario. You can bet your bottom dollar that this will be one of my major concerns during our next contract negotiations as they pertain to Section 11—Training.

Another facet of this current high demand (and subsequent capacity of training) is the use of "E" sessions in the simulator. For those of you not familiar with this session, "E" refers to the period between 1200 (midnight) and 0430. Our current contract allows for these sessions to be utilized as a relief valve for training only if *absolutely necessary*, and only for the use of training (no checking is allowed). Based on the recent number of telephone calls received by this committee, I came to the conclusion that it has become *absolutely necessary*, per the Company's perspective, to utilize these sessions. I have received numerous complaints by both students and check airmen/instructors in regard to the use of these periods, and I can only equate their comments to "taking two steps forward and three steps backward." The other inequity that truly concerns me is that there is once again no legal recourse for me to require more simulator time for pilots who were subjected to these "graveyard shift sessions" when they come up short prior to a check-ride. If you find yourself falling behind as a result of being scheduled during "E" sessions, please call your Training Committee, and we will attempt to intervene on

your behalf. No one could have ever imagined these sessions being utilized in their current numbers, but you can rest assured that they will also be on my short list during the next contract negotiations.

Out-of-base training has also reared its head once again as several fleets are taking their simulator shows on the road. It seems that both the small Airbus and the B-737-3/400 programs are doing a limited amount of training in Miami, but as of now, it is my understanding that all simulator checks are still being given in either Pittsburgh or Charlotte.

Rights and responsibilities

As a result of the recent massive increase in training, I felt that it was imperative to refresh your memories regarding your rights and responsibilities per our Pilots Working Agreement.

First, if you are a displaced pilot, you cannot be forced to attend training during any previously scheduled vacation. If you are displaced and find that you have been scheduled for training during your vacation, and your vacation has subsequently been canceled, *call the Training Committee immediately*. We will gladly intervene on your behalf in order to ensure that the Company's clerical mistake is corrected.

Second, if for whatever reason, things are not working between you and your instructor, call for a "time out." All of us have different personalities and learn in different fashions. Ground school or the simulator is no place to build up animosity toward the individual who is supposed to be teaching you. If you cannot work out your differences, or you do not desire to, simply go to a senior check airman, the fleet captain, or call one of us and request an instructor change. We'll ensure that it takes place, and there is nothing to feel bad or guilty about, as it is most likely not a direct reflection on either you or the instructor. It is much better to head off any confrontational issues early. Nobody will be upset with you for exercising your contractual right.

Third, as far as pay while in initial training is concerned, you can file for and receive either 2:50 per day or trips missed/trips flown junior. You are not required to make this determination until you file the first PE-39 form after your arrival in training. Normally, this form must be filed within the first few days of the beginning of the month, so if your training begins in mid-month, you have a couple of weeks to decide which would be more advantageous. Remember

that if you elect to file for trips missed/trips flown junior, you still must ensure that all applicable FARs would have been adhered to (i.e., 30 hours in 7 days and 24 hours off in 7 days). All other training (requalification, differences, recurrent sim and seat-specific) is paid and credited at 4:00 hours per day while we have pilots on furlough. Recurrent Technical (TGS) and Non-Aircraft Specific (NGS) ground schools are still pay-no-credit at 4:00 hours per day as well. And don't forget, if you are required to attend out-of-base training and need to spend an extra day at the beginning or end due to an "A" or "D" simulator session, you are entitled to an additional 4:00 hours of pay.

Not the end of the world

Now, on to some stuff that nobody wants to think or talk about, but everyone should know. What happens if you "stub your toe" while in training? What happens if you do not get recommended for an oral or a checkride? What happens if you unfortunately experience a substandard oral or simulator check? First and foremost, *it is not the end of the world*. It happens. The first thing that you need to do is to call your local member of the Training Committee. The Company must inform us of every training irregularity that occurs, so I will know about your situation sooner or later. But a well-timed phone call will provide either me or another member of the committee additional time to get the wheels in motion to address your particular training needs. Also, rest assured that your name and situation will remain in the strictest of confidence, and further, that we are here to represent your best interests in order to get you fully qualified and out on the line. Believe it or not, that is also the goal of the check airmen who are working with you. They too want you to shine and do well, and they are not out there to "eat you for lunch." It doesn't matter if it happens on an initial qualifying event or on a recurrent event (although they are two separate and distinct situations, as I will discuss shortly). The bottom line is to call us with your concerns, even if it is before an oral or checkride.

Let's review some of Section 11 of the Contract.

1. Failure to Qualify—Section 11(J)

Events Constituting a Failure to Qualify

- a. Failure of an oral examination conducted by a Company Check Pilot or FAA Examiner at the conclusion of ground school. (Notice: no contractual "strike" can be issued by an FCTI-

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Flight Crew Training Instructor for either a “no recommend” or a “PC Oral substandard.”)

- b. Failure to obtain a recommendation for check-ride.
- c. Failure of a simulator check-ride.
- d. Failure of an IOE.

In a nutshell, the only time you are not in receipt of a “contractual strike” (in the above-mentioned examples) is in the event you were either not recommended for the oral (type rating or PC) or given a substandard on an oral PC by an FCTI. Any other not recommended or substandard would constitute a “strike” per the Contract.

Okay, so you had a not recommended for an oral in ground school. Now what happens? Quite simply, it’s no big deal. You will receive a minimum of five hours of additional training to bring you back up to speed, and then you’ll either re-take the PC or type rating oral. If you are a First Officer applying for the type rating, and you receive a not recommended for the oral, this will unfortunately disqualify you for the type rating during this particular training cycle. However, you will still not be in receipt of a “contractual strike” and will still receive a minimum of five hours of additional training prior to taking a company PC oral.

All right, you have made it through your oral, but now you have not been recommended for your simulator check, or you have “busted” your checkride . . . now what? You will receive a minimum of five hours of additional simulator training (with a different instructor) equating to two more simulator sessions. This additional training will either be followed by a type-rating ride or a company PC—depending upon your initial needs. Once again, if you were a First Officer applying for the type rating and you were either not recommended or you did not satisfactorily complete the rating ride, this would disqualify you from consideration for the type rating, and you would continue in the program for the proficiency checkride.

What’s up with these strikes that I have been referring to? Simply stated, any time that we go through training, it’s like a baseball player stepping up to the batter’s box. The only exception is that if we “swing and miss,” so to speak, we get some additional training before having to step back up in front of the pitcher. If this is your first time with a new bat (i.e., aircraft) and you are not doing well, then you always have the

opportunity to sit back down on the bench and use your old familiar bat once again.

For the non-baseball fans out there, this means that if a pilot is trying to qualify on a new piece of equipment, that individual has the opportunity to have three training irregularities before it’s time to decide what the future holds. An irregularity refers to:

1. A “substandard” on a type rating oral
2. A “not-recommended” for a simulator check
3. A “substandard” on a simulator check
4. An incomplete or “substandard” LOFT
5. An incomplete or “substandard” IOE

Obviously, having the first “hiccup” in any of these scenarios *must necessitate* calling any of the members of the Training Committee listed in the gray pages of the *US AIRWAVES*. The Training Committee will coordinate with your particular training needs and schedule (on a personal and confidential basis), but we can only help you if you call one of us.

If you continue to have problems while in training and end up with a second “strike,” things begin to get more serious, but you still have several options open to you. The first scenario calls for an additional five hours of training (two simulator sessions) and once again is followed by either the type rating or PC check, predicated on your current situation. I will forewarn you that at this stage of the game, it is almost a certainty that the FAA will be in attendance to observe your ride. But remember that they are there only to *observe* and that they have no desire to intimidate or otherwise elevate your blood pressure. At this point, you either pass the ride or you don’t. Assuming that you do well and get through the ride, congratulations are certainly in order. Remember though, your next step is to get through the qualification LOFT as well as the IOE, keeping in mind that you still have two strikes under your belt. From this point, most pilots have no problems and do just fine.

What happens, though, if you have had enough after any substandard or no-recommend or just flat out don’t do well the final time through? As per Section 11(J)6 of the Contract, you have the right to return to the last position that you were qualified to fly. If that position is not available (due either to the Company no longer operating that fleet or if your seniority can no longer hold that position), then you would be entitled to exercise your seniority to return to duty at the

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highest status for which you could qualify. In plain English: Pick another airplane. Unfortunately, there is a penance to be paid for exercising this option of the Contract. First, you will incur a 12-month freeze in that position and on that piece of equipment. This freeze can be lifted early only as the Company's needs may dictate. Second, you will return to that position in a Reserve capacity until the next permanent bid takes effect. In other words, you cannot bounce another Lineholder out of his or her position as a result of the fact that you were unable to satisfactorily complete new aircraft training and now must return to your previous type. Your relative seniority would prevail in the Reserve ranks, so if you were a Lineholder previously, you should at least have hope of a very senior Reserve position. (It is a small price to pay for being able to maintain your job and career.)

All of the above reference "Failure to Qualify" for an initial program. "Failure to Maintain Qualification" is another matter entirely. The trigger events for this are as follows:

Events Constituting Failure to Maintain Qualification—Section 11(J)4

- a. Incomplete LOFT (performance related)
- b. Incomplete PT (performance related)
- c. Substandard PC
- d. Substandard Line Check

This means that you have already qualified on this piece of equipment, have flown the line, and for whatever reason, were unable to "pass the bar" upon returning for recurrent training. Should you be unfortunate enough to have any of these situations take place, once again, please call one of the members of this committee immediately. We will begin to coordinate the continuation of your training protocol with your specific fleet, but I want to emphasize here that this becomes a serious matter right from the outset, which can snowball into a very serious situation very quickly if you take it lightheartedly. Initially, however, should you have an incomplete LOFT or PT, keep in mind that these are *training events*.

In essence, if you are deficient in one or more areas while undergoing this training, the check airman will train you to proficiency. No problem here, other than you have used up valuable simulator time working on one or more events and may not have enough time left to successfully fill all of the remaining squares. Hence the incomplete instead of a substandard. If at the

conclusion of additional training (see above), and the squares have still not been filled, you now get the opportunity to shine in a PC (read: proficiency check) with no additional training to prepare for this event. If your substandard was on either your recurrent PC or a line check, you will also receive the minimum of five additional simulator hours prior to your PC, and, from those of you coming from a line check gone bad, it will indeed be a PC. Guys and gals, this is where it becomes serious. This is the real McCoy, because if this PC goes south, it now becomes strike 2 under "Failure to Maintain Qualification." If you don't think that the FAA and your Training Committee chairman become more interested at this point, pour yourself another cup of Starbucks and sit down. What you are contractually entitled to now is another two simulator sessions (five hours) to prep you for what may become the ride of your life (up to this point anyway). Once again, you will have the opportunity to water their eyes as you get to be on center stage as the star of your own PC (with the FAA sitting in the orchestra seats). If this ride goes well, you will triumphantly return to the line while being fitted for a smaller uniform after having successfully participated in the "Bet your Job Weight-Loss Program."

If, on the other hand, this ride does not go as we may have hoped, you will truly find yourself painted into a corner. There is no contractual check valve for me to have the opportunity to return you to your previous equipment. You have just proven three times over that you are not qualified to fly it. While your local LEC representatives and I will heartily be lobbying for your continued employment, we now truly leave ourselves at the mercy of the Company. The other caveat here is the FAA. Remember that I stated that they would be observing this third ride. Assuming that the ride was marked substandard, they have the authority to request a "44709" checkride. *This* now becomes the ride of your life! In concise terms, they will administer the next check (which in essence becomes a certification ride). The oral alone from this checkride has the capability to cause nightmares for years to come as you may be quizzed on items such as light gun signals and other interesting trivia from the AIM. If you blow this one, you walk out of the simulator minus whatever certificates that the FAA examiner deems appropriate to pull. It could be just your type rating on that aircraft or it could be your ATP, your instrument all the way on

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down to include your Private certificate. If you can no longer be certified as an ATP by the FAA, the ladies and gentlemen in Crystal City (as compassionate as they are) will, unfortunately, have no further use for your services. End of story. Do not pass Go, do not collect \$200. There is always the opportunity for ALPA to appeal the FAA's ruling on this, but I can assure you that it is a long and arduous process—with no guarantees.

Hopefully, the aforementioned scenarios have caught your attention. It can and has happened. But it doesn't have to. Any time you are scheduled to go to school, spend some serious time preparing for it. If you are on Reserve and not flying, call your chief pilot to have them buy you a trip for currency—especially if you are coming up on your recurrent simulator check. Come to your checkrides with all of your revisions up to date. Know the memory items in the QRH as well as all of your limitations—*cold*. Get hold of the 100-question study guide for your aircraft and research and learn the answers. Chair fly. Study Chapters 3 and 18 of your Pilot's Handbook and read over your FILs. You'll show up prepared, and it will show. Your ride will be a piece of cake, and the members of this committee will happily remain as anonymous names in the gray pages of this magazine. Our phones will remain silent.

If you've hung in there with me to this point, my sincere thanks. There is a lot of other information that I want to pass along regarding the restructuring of some of the fleet captain positions, as well as elaborating on Al

Beerley's previous Training Committee article on the Airbus program. Al's article was actually comprised of two parts (of which only one has been printed). While his first article pinpointed many of the prior deficiencies in the Airbus program, his second article will focus on the positive improvements that have, and continue to be made, under Captain Bob Skinner and his Training Department. This committee shares an excellent relationship with not only the Airbus program, but also all of our Fleet Training programs as well as with Captain Schilling. It is our combined intent to further improve these programs with your continued feedback and help. Please keep your ALPA critiques (both positive and negative) coming, as they provide for positive change in the programs. Due to the confines of space for this article, as well as your attention spans, I will defer on these additional perspectives until the next issue of *US AIRWAVES*.

*Show our unity,
wear your ALPA wings in training*

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