

Aviation Safety Action Programs



*Chris Beebe
MEC Chairman*

Capitalizing on our success with the Altitude Awareness and Safety Partnership programs—as well as the American Airlines' Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP)—ALPA's Executive Board took action last month to facilitate the implementation of aviation safety action programs for all ALPA-represented carriers. These programs will not only improve safety for our airlines, but will also enhance the FAA's effectiveness by emphasizing accident/incident prevention through education programs.

Our Safety Partnership Program was developed as a spin-off from the Altitude Awareness Program in early 1992. The concept is simple. When an incident occurs that is not of a gross-negligent nature, the crew is given the option of discussing the incident openly, understanding that no violation will be issued. Openness is emphasized.

Here's an example of how our Safety Partnership Program benefits the entire pilot group. In the second half of 1996, some of you may recall that the altitude deviation rate was beginning to rise. Through open discussions on this issue with many flight crews, the Safety Partnership Program was instrumental in effecting a rapid reduction in the deviation rate. In talking to crews, we came to understand common links that occurred during most of the deviations. With this information, we were able to alert crews on potential problem areas so that these problems could be avoided or mitigated. The program has consistently been effective in reducing the rate of clearance deviations such as runway incursions as well.

Some pilots without a clear understanding of the program may be reluctant to share informa-

tion for fear that there may be some repercussions. Our pilots know that the only action that may occur as a result of this open dialogue is a possible letter of correction or warning. However, if issued, this letter does *not* become a part of a pilot's permanent record. No certificate action can be taken as a result of anything that pilots say.

By removing the threat of certificate action, the FAA, Company and ALPA are able to obtain intimate details of activities that occurred during an incident. Our Safety Partnership Program is based on an informal relationship between the FAA, US Airways Flight Safety Department and your ALPA safety structure. The objective of the program is to perform an in-depth analysis of incidents in order to accumulate safety information.

The ability for flight crews to discuss issues frankly and willingly is quintessential to the program. The process is designed to educate the flight crew involved, then pass on the safety information to all flight crews via safety publications, such as Safety On-line. This helps prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

The American Airlines ASAP was directly derived from our Safety Partnership Program. Shortly after our program's inception, American pilots asked us to provide them with information to assist them in developing their own program, which they implemented in 1994. Their program does differ from ours in that their program is much more formal, and has been officially approved by their FAA counterparts through a memorandum of understanding.

As your representative on the 83rd ALPA Executive Board, I was a proud to participate in

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the Association's endorsement of aviation safety action programs. Our pilots initiated this safety concept and the profession is benefiting from it. As ALPA renews its efforts to implement these

safety action programs industry-wide, we can look forward to a more effective relationship with the FAA and even safer operations.



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Aviation Safety Action Program Resolution (5/99)

WHEREAS a Safety Partnership Program was successfully implemented at US Airways in 1992 and an Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) at American Airlines in 1994, and

WHEREAS ALPA has participated on the ASAP Steering Committee and has chaired the ASAP Advisory Circular Working Group, and

WHEREAS ALPA has continued to support efforts within the industry to promote and implement ASAP Programs at the carriers it represents, and

WHEREAS several carriers have submitted ASAP MOUs to the FAA which have protection provisions that differ from those contained in the American Airlines MOU, and

WHEREAS the FAA Administrator has recently stated the FAA is now prepared to approve ASAP MOUs which are similar in content to the American Airlines MOU, and

WHEREAS this approval process will begin in the late summer of 1999,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that ALPA will renew its efforts to implement ASAP Programs at the carriers it represents, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the E&AS Department shall provide a copy of the American Airlines ASAP MOU together with a draft ASAP MOU to the MECs, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MECs should approach their respective managements with ASAP proposals based on the aforementioned draft MOU, and following development of a jointly agreed to ASAP MOU, submit same to FAA for approval, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those MECs and their airlines who have previously submitted ASAP MOUs to the FAA for approval now review those MOUs to insure that their submittal contains all appropriate ASAP protective provisions and, if necessary, submit a revised MOU for approval by the FAA.