

EDITORIAL



Cpt. M. Chalk
ECA President

ECA is driving forward on behalf of its members!

New Executive Board Directors, new responsibilities and new challenges - it has been a busy few weeks for ECA! You will read elsewhere in this Cockpit News of changes in the Board -we will need an injection of vigour, given the challenges ahead.

Following the recent entry into force of EU-OPS at national level, and EASA's current drafting of both EASA-OPS and EASA-FCL, responsibility for shaping the creation and amendment of the regulations which govern entry to, and work within our profession is now fully at European level. ECA continues to draw on the resources of the experts in Member Associations across our continent to ensure that the voice of the professional pilot regulated by this legislation is taken into account in their drafting, adoption, and implementation. The recent ECA Conference also considered the clear need to expand our Brussels-based office to enable good coordination of this heavily increased workload.

One of the more important issues for our members in the EU-OPS and EASA-OPS regulations are those which protect them from being forced to operate whilst fatigued. EASA's FTL scientific study has been concluded and the draft final results are with EASA officials. ECA has urged the early publication of these results and full consideration of the recommended changes where they are based on strong medical and scientific evidence. This is an area of activity which will require our close attention, and maybe your support, for many months to come.

ECA has also worked hard to ensure

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Alitalia: The Decline of a Great European Airline



After protracted negotiations between the Alitalia Management, the C.A.I., the Italian Government and the trade unions, the "Phoenix Plan" proposed by the C.A.I. was finally signed by all stakeholders - out of spite for some of them - at the end of September. The plan will have bad social (and potential safety) consequences; the Italian Pilots' Associations (ANPAC and UP), supported by ECA and the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations, call for respect of pilots' safety decisions, independent pilot representation and for a sustainable business plan.

In April 2008, Air France-KLM withdrew their offer to buy the company, after Mr. Berlusconi opposed "French colonisation". Since then, the financial situation of Alitalia continued to worsen until it was declared insolvent in August. In early September, the Phoenix Plan was presented to stakeholders, who were given two weeks to sign it. Under the pressure of Alitalia losing its license for operations and the threat from the C.A.I. to withdraw, the pilots' trade unions finally signed the agreement at the end of September. However, the C.A.I. did not honour their agreement with the pilots and further downgraded terms and conditions.

What are the implications? Obviously, substantial job losses. All Alitalia workers will be dismissed, and only part of them will be hired again. Roughly 7000 Alitalia employees will lose their jobs, including almost 900 pilots. They will remain on a sort of "waiting list" valid for seven years, from which the C.A.I. management will draw when needed. For the pilots concerned, this will result in the risk of losing their licenses.

For the employees who will have their job 'saved', their terms and conditions will deteriorate substantially (one single con-

tract for all workers, cut in holidays and days off, etc.). Independent pilot representation will also suffer as all workers will be represented by one single entity, which will negotiate directly with the management. The independent voice of safety professionals will thereby be lost. Already now, many safety-related decisions by pilots are questioned by management, with

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several being subject to disciplinary action. Last but not least, the C.A.I. business plan raises many questions about its viability. No other airline in Europe is successfully and safely flying as many aircraft with as few crew, or at the level of productivity imagined by C.A.I. management.

ECA has been closely following this issue with ANPAC. At their General Assembly in November, ECA Member Associations unanimously voted to support ANPAC/UP in their battle. On 5 December, a further Press Release was sent to the European and Italian press, underlining our concerns and calling for "a competent, professional airline management, free from political interference". ■

To read the Press Release, please visit: <http://www.eurocockpit.be/content/view/663/1/>

First Trans-Atlantic Aviation Labour Forum

The EU-US 'Open Skies' agreement, which was implemented in March 2008, contains clauses which require the US and EU administrations to address the 'social effects' of the agreement. These clauses resulted directly from the efforts of the ECA, and its sister organisation in the US, ALPA, during the negotiations.

the lack of a European level structure for our Member Associations to negotiate terms and conditions with Trans National Airlines, following the consolidation process currently gathering pace in Europe. Six associations, co-ordinated by ECA, have recently signed agreements to ensure the pilot members of easyJet can be represented fully and fairly. This is another demonstration of the determination of the ECA family (36 members representing 38,200 pilots) to ensure that cockpit crew members are both represented fully in the current incoherent legal situation, and that we vigorously address the need for a coherent one!

My best wishes and thoughts are with all our members over the holiday period – and particularly with those whose company has failed or is in difficulty. ■

New ICB Chairman

The Industry Consultation Body (ICB), in which ECA has been involved for many years, is aimed at providing technical advice to the European Commission regarding the modernisation of the European Air Traffic Management ("Single European Sky" - SES Project). At its last meeting, on 26 Nov, the ICB elected a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively Per Arne Watle (former ERA Vice President) and Steve James from UK NATS.

Meetings - December 2008

3-4 Dec.: "Trans-Atlantic Labour Forum", Washington, US

08 Dec.: "Training, Licensing & Operations WG", Brussels, BE

8-9 Dec.: "Airspace Security Post 9/11", Brussels, BE

9 Dec.: "FTL Steering Committee", Brussels, BE

10 Dec.: "Flight Data WG", Brussels, BE

17-18 Dec.: "ECA Executive Board Meeting", Brussels, BE

25 Dec. - 1 Jan.: ECA Office closed

Cockpit News, Dec. 2008

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The **European Cockpit Association** is the association of Flight Crew Unions from European States. Based in Brussels, ECA has 36 member associations, representing over **38.200** pilots from 36 countries.

For more information: www.eurocockpit.be.

As a result, the European Commission last week hosted the first "EU-US Aviation Forum on Liberalisation and Labour" in Washington. In a packed conference room, ECA and ALPA, ETF and other US Labour Organisations, officials from the EU and US and airline executives discussed employees' concerns resulting from the liberalisation of the trans-Atlantic market.

Captain Carlos Salas, Chair of the ECA External Relations Working Group, detailed the concerns raised by the liberalisation of the aviation market in Europe. The 3rd Package has enabled truly pan-European airlines to grow, has resulted in a large proliferation of routes, competitive reductions in fares and many more jobs for ECA's members. However, it has also raised the difficult question of how such a multi-national pilot group can elect representatives, negotiate appropriate terms and conditions, and how such agreements would have legal certainty.

Captain Rick Brennan, IFALPA's Professional Affairs Consultant, explained how the EU-US stage 1 agreement had extended this question to network airlines. In a previous role, he had represented pilots for British Airways (BA) when they sought to set up a Manchester base for B757s operated to New York. Then, BALPA and BA had negotiated appropriate terms and conditions for the new company, ensuring



that all pilots were on the BA master seniority list. This year BA had set up 'Open Skies' following the implementation of the Open Skies treaty, to operate B757s from Paris to New York. Instead of the negotiated compromise of the previous occasion, BA this time abused the legal provisions of the European legislation to deny BALPA the ability to represent its members' strongly held views.

ECA's President, Captain Martin Chalk finally laid out ECA's concerns with any further liberalisation of the Trans-Atlantic market, without appropriate regulations governing collective bargaining. He urged reform to ensure all the competitive gains of the European and Trans-Atlantic liberalisation were not squandered by poor people management practices.

Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director for Civil Aviation at the European Commission, in his conclusion, recognised the concerns over an inadequate legal framework, insufficient job protections and quality standards. He also acknowledged the need for a European level collective bargaining framework and suggested a further forum next year in Brussels.

ECA will again be at the heart of those discussions. ■

If you want further information, please contact ECA Policy Advisor, Céline Canu at cc@eurocockpit.be

ECA Conference Faces up to Current Challenges

At its last General Assembly, on 25 - 26 Nov. 2008, ECA Member Associations debated the very challenging current situation for the aviation industry (economic downturn, Alitalia rescue plan, Sterling bankruptcy, etc.). On a more positive note, it welcomed two new Member Associations, elected two new Board Directors and re-elected for a third mandate its President, Capt. Martin Chalk.

After the Lithuanian and the Maltese Pilots' Associations joined ECA in February 2008, ECA was pleased to welcome into full membership the Montenegrin ALPA and the Pilots' Association of Bosnia & Herzegovina. ECA now represents 38,188 pilots, from 36 Member Associations in 36 European countries.

The ECA Executive Board is also pleased to include amongst its

members two new directors: Capt. Josef Kraus (Czech ALPA), and Capt. Régis Fusenig, who were elected as Professional Affairs Director and Technical Director. Capt. Martin Chalk was re-elected for a third mandate as ECA President. The Assembly General thanked the two outgoing Directors, Teppo Tyrmi and João Moutinho for their great contribution to pilot representation in Europe. ■



From left to right: Josef Kraus, Martin Chalk and Régis Fusenig