



# Perspectives & Priorities

My Fellow Pilots,

When I'm out flying or walking through the operation, I am often asked about the status of negotiations. I'm always happy to engage in these discussions – within the limits of the RLA – and provide whatever information I can about what's going on at the bargaining table. Because it's exactly these types of exchanges – honest and open discussions about proposals from both sides – that will allow each of us to make an informed decision when it comes time to vote on a new contract.

I'm encouraged by the number of questions I've been getting lately and the thoughtful discussions they have triggered. Before making a big decision I always want to see the facts for myself, do some investigation and understand what the impact of a decision will mean specifically to me and my family.

That's one of the primary reasons why the company mailed a summary of negotiating positions and proposals to each pilot's home. While there may be some that aren't interested in anything the company has to say about negotiations, I believe that we have a responsibility to share our views and offer concrete data to back up the reasoning behind the company's proposals. I hope you'll take time to read it and ask more questions about what's happening at the table.

I'm the first to admit that I don't have all the answers, but I'm always willing to try and find them. So if you have questions about negotiations or specific proposals, please email me at [HaleComments@aa.com](mailto:HaleComments@aa.com) and I will do my best to answer as many as I can. I'd like to promise that I will be able to answer every question, but I know that is not realistic. My goal will be to focus on negotiation topics of wide interest and concern and use this forum to share information with you.

Again, I will honor the boundaries of the process and will only talk about bargaining proposals that have first been communicated to the APA in formal negotiations. And this is not an attempt to circumvent the APA and directly negotiate with pilots. They have a job to do and I respect that. But once proposals have been presented to the APA, the company has the ability to offer commentary and engage in conversations about these proposals with pilots.

Contract negotiations are at times emotional. So during my conversations with pilots, I've always appreciated the ability to keep the dialogue professional and respectful. I will continue to focus on examining facts and data while avoiding needless rhetoric, hyperbole and personal attacks.

We've got some tough discussions ahead in negotiations on issues ranging from retirement security to scheduling and bidding. Now's the time to be thinking about how we can improve our operations and address pilot concerns – something I'll be discussing in upcoming columns.

I realize that there are many pilots eager to conclude negotiations and get a new contract. I can say with absolute certainty that company negotiators recognize the importance of remaining competitive and share that interest. I also know – based on my experience at the negotiating table – that a contract can be reached that is good for pilots and is good for the company.

Sure, each side has its certain priorities and objectives. But from a long-term perspective, a contract that responds to pilot needs while at the same time securing the long-term future of our airline is not a mutually exclusive outcome.

Strength and Honor,



Captain John Hale