



Predictability

My Fellow Pilots,

For those of you who know me, you know that I like predictability. I like to know what tasks I need to accomplish, clearly understand what's expected of me, and be able to plan my day to meet those goals. To me, there's nothing more frustrating than being told to run five miles, then when you're about to cross the finish line, being told to run five more.

The same philosophy applies to flying. I know that there's nothing worse than having your month (and potentially your paycheck) blown up by events beyond your control. For example, I can't tell you how many times as a chief I would work with pilots to accommodate requests to attend a family or personal event on the first few days of the month. And I know that this happens at every base. Pilots would bid around it, but if a pilot flew a trip during the last few days of the month and he ended up being reassigned, there was no contractual ability to attend that special wedding, birthday or graduation ceremony. As a chief, we would always do our best to help in these situations, but it is a difficult and time consuming process.

I always see pilots putting a lot of energy into changing their schedules once they have been set. That's understandable, because everyone is trying to get the schedule that best meets their individual needs. Some may want to fly a lot during a particular month; some may be planning on taking an extended family vacation that month.

But I think we've got it backwards and could greatly reduce the time and effort it takes to get a better schedule. I believe that we should invest that energy on the front end of the process and build more customized flying schedules based on when and where you want to fly, and then have the flexibility to make further changes through daily SEP runs. The technology exists and it would make all of our work schedules more predictable. Pilots would have more control over their monthly schedules, and a healthier work-life balance. The company would get something out of this too, because it will help bring more efficiency to our operations. So it's a solution that offers benefits to both pilots and American.

Let me make it clear that I know that there are a lot of pilots flying as much as they can. I talk to pilots all the time who are flying their brains out. When we talk about making improvements to our scheduling system and the need to be more productive, we're not talking about that group. Our negotiating team fully understands that. The changes we have proposed will make it easier for those pilots to get their flying done. What we're trying to do is move pilots that aren't flying a lot – about a third of all pilots (reserves + line holders) fly less than 45 hours in a typical month – into more productive lines of flying. Even when you exclude reserves, almost one quarter of all line holders, on average, fly less than 45 hours a month.

Another area where we can increase predictability is sequence protection. With sequence protection, if a pilot builds a line of 73 hours, he knows that he will be paid for no less than 73 hours – assuming he makes himself available for an equivalent number of days (selected by the pilot) to make up any missed or dropped trips in the event the lost time is not recovered during the footprint of the affected sequence. That means greater financial security for pilots and their families. On the flip side, it gives the company the operational predictability it needs to recover from OSOs more quickly and get our customers where they need to go.

The company has put together a short video that provides additional details on its scheduling and reserve proposal. I hope you'll take a few minutes to watch. Doug Brown, Managing Director – Crew Resources, who lives and breathes pilot scheduling, provides a summary of what the proposed changes could mean for pilots and the company. The video can be seen in our For the Record section, or by clicking [here](#).

In closing, thank you for the emails you've been sharing with me. The responses thus far have mostly been thoughtful opinions about what we need to do to move negotiations and our company forward. I've also received a number of emails asking me to respond to the questions Captain Hill put forth. In my next column, I'll do my best to answer those questions.

Strength and Honor,



Captain John Hale
HaleComments@aa.com