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Crewmember Identity Verification Program

In his November 12 *Chairman's Letter*, following the announcement that the TSA had instituted revised Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) security screening measures, then Delta MEC Chairman Captain Lee Moak wrote "The rational solution to pilot security screening is CrewPASS. . . CrewPASS implementation will be my first order of business as ALPA president."

On March 21, ALPA President Captain Lee Moak and Air Transport Association President Nicholas E. Calio sent a joint letter to TSA Administrator John Pistole announcing that "The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) and the Air Transport Association (ATA) have reached agreement on a plan for implementing an enhanced crew screening system that is designed to meet applicable portions of TSA guidelines . . ."

Late today, Captain Moak notified ALPA's Board of Directors that ALPA and the ATA have "received approval from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for nationwide implementation of a crewmember screening system." The jointly sponsored program will tie airline employee databases together in a seamless way, enable TSA security officers to positively verify identity and employment status of crewmembers, and get pilots out of passenger screening lines.

"I look forward to the full national deployment of a known crewmember program at the earliest possible date," said ALPA President Captain Lee Moak. "As professional airline pilots, we have been through employment checks; we have been fingerprinted; we have been through criminal background checks. We are the most highly screened employees in the aviation industry, and we are on the frontlines of our nation's aviation security effort every day, empowered to help protect it. This enhanced process recognizes those facts by providing pilots with a technologically modern and highly efficient alternative to the traditional security screening process."

The program is operated jointly by ALPA and ATA with TSA oversight. ALPA originally promoted CrewPASS to the TSA in 2007. CrewPASS has been in use at three East Coast airports for several years, but for a variety of reasons, never became a reality at the rest of our nations airports. The new system leverages current technology to provide an effective yet cost efficient alternative screening solution.

What Happens Now?

The crewmember identity verification program can be implemented relatively easily and quickly because it relies only on an internet connection to a secure web server and a browser-equipped device (e.g. SmartPhone, iPad, laptop, etc) at TSA designated crewmember access points.

Over the next several weeks, the ATA will establish a web service using two isolated, secure servers to route crewmember data between airline employee databases and browser-equipped devices. Testing is then projected to begin at the following airports: Chicago O'Hare, Phoenix Sky Harbor, Boston Logan, Miami International, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Dulles International, and Seattle-Tacoma for a period of approximately 90 days.

Any pilot whose employer connects to the system and is currently capable of using CASS will be able to gain access through test checkpoints. ALPA, ATA and the TSA will work together to resolve any problems that may be identified during the test period.

Following the test, ATA member airlines and other TSA-regulated airlines will begin implementing the program at airports throughout the country.

Because the new program uses existing technology and databases, implementation costs should be minimal, and it is likely that in many if not all cases, participating airlines will assume these costs.

The crewmember identity verification program will quickly provide professional pilots with the alternate screening program we have been anticipating for many years. Expect additional details and more information from your union as the program is implemented.