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More on DPA Accusations

A week ago, the Delta Pilots Association (DPA) apparently experienced difficulties with its website. It immediately accused "ALPA" of having "hacked" the website. They wrote:

- *"ALERT! ALPA has hacked part of the DPA website," and*
- *"The ALPA "Special Committee" is clearly responsible for this so reward them appropriately," and*
- *"This hack could be the product of an offshoot of the Special Committee or it could be ALPA members taking direction from leadership to conduct the crime."*

These are manufactured charges with no factual support and are completely false. ALPA and Delta ALPA continue to investigate the incident in an attempt to learn the facts. However, from the outset, it was abundantly clear that contrary to the DPA's absurd accusations, ALPA and Delta ALPA did not hack DPA's website and had nothing to do with the problems it experienced, nor did anyone create such problems at the request of, or on behalf of, ALPA or any of its Committees. Despite this, written communications by the DPA continue to make this baseless claim.

DPA's hosting provider is "Squarespace." ALPA is not a Squarespace client and even if it was, it would have no access to information about what occurred to the DPA website. It also has no access to DPA's Domain Name Server (DNS) records. DNS is a service that acts like a directory for the internet. For example, if you type in www.yahoo.com the DNS translates that name into a physical internet protocol (IP) address. If the DNS entries are incorrect, web traffic can be diverted to the wrong IP address for the website.

An organization desiring a full accounting of this incident would be securing documentation from both its hosting provider and its DNS records. This would reveal whether hacking activity actually occurred and provide evidence as to its source. For its part, ALPA would welcome the chance for the membership to review such documentation because we have no doubt that it will show that there is no evidence that ALPA, its officers, or any committee had anything to do with whatever problems developed on the DPA website.

However, instead of conducting an actual investigation and making available relevant information from its service provider and DNS records, DPA immediately accused ALPA of hacking and then announced that it reported this matter to the FBI - which, DPA claimed, would conduct an investigation at some unknown date in the future. ALPA has not been contacted by the FBI or any governmental agency, but if we are contacted we will provide all information generated in our investigation and will cooperate fully. The simple fact is that any such inquiry will inevitably establish that the DPA's charges against the Association are wholly without merit.

Because we do not have access to the various systems in question, we cannot be sure of the source of the temporary problems experienced by DPA. IT experts have advised us that the typical source of these sorts of difficulties is not hacking conspiracies, but rather errors in managing DNS records. From the documentation we could lawfully secure, there appears to have been several instances of errors in system administration, including one occasion when the DPA DNS was redirected to another one of their websites, announcing a failure to collect enough cards. Based on a review of saved records, the web domains from that site resolve to *another* Squarespace account, with a URL displaying affiliation with DPA's leadership.

We have learned that network traffic was briefly mixed with a private individual's account maintained with the same hosting provider as the DPA, in this case, Squarespace. These sorts of problems simply could not have been generated by persons without administrative access to DPA's accounts.

Ultimately, we are in no position to know the particulars of DPA's problems without relevant documentation from its service providers. What we do know is that ALPA had no involvement in this incident and the DPA's allegations and claims against ALPA are not true.

Being a legitimate collective bargaining organization requires basic due process to refrain from making accusations without evidence and before completion of an investigation. This principle applies with particular force with respect to those we represent or seek to represent.