

TECHNICAL ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

- Preven Naidoo

Introduction

It has been my pleasure in having the privilege of directing this portfolio for the past year. It is with great sadness as I vacate this post as my tenure expires this year. Tony Laubser took over the AGE portfolio, while Kristin Allen has been appointed as Communications Officer and has made an invaluable contribution to the efficiency and overall effectiveness of this portfolio. She has also taken over the ALPA-SA diary project from me, which I predict will be an overwhelming success. During February 2010 I attended a 5-day Aircraft Accident Investigation course hosted by the Mexican Pilots' Association and sponsored by IFALPA, this training proved an invaluable asset in my ability to run the technical directorship and understand aircraft accident at a profound level.

Similar to the previous year my primary focus this year was to establish a repertoire with the important safety stakeholders within the SA aviation industry. Thus far I am happy to report that we have established a good and open line of communication between ACSA (through Tony), ATNS (through Darren). With the help and coordination of Kristin, I hope to further strengthen industry relationships by having ALPA_SA host various local information sharing sessions.

A very exciting course in ALR was hosted and run by Gavin McKellar. This resulted in a batch of new volunteers tackling the various airports in SA.

Before a detailed analysis of various committees, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chairmen, namely: Darren Oliver, Carl Bollweg, Johan Guyt, Jan Van Graan, Mzi Manyamalala, and Carl Hager for all their hard work during the course of the year.

Accident Analysis and Prevention Committee Activities

Chairman: Johan Guyt

The follow through from the Airlink 2009 accident has kept Johan busy. Initially the pilot involved was unhappy with the preliminary report published, however after a detailed analysis of the report the ExCo was happy with the way it was written up.

Aircraft Design and Operation Committee Activities

Chairman: Mzi Manyamalala

Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept. No reports submitted as there were no significant developments.

Aerodrome and Ground Environment Committee Activities

Chairman: Tony Laubser

Tony is working closely with the relevant authorities and making significant progress. His report below:

After standing down as President of ALPA SA, I took over as AGE Chairman with little previous experience in this field except for having attended the first IFALPA safety course hosted by ALPA SA in Pretoria.

Current activities include:

King Shaka International

This is a new airport that has been constructed north of Durban. ALPA SA originally got involved when Capt Brian Greeves was invited to do an evaluation by the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA).

Unfortunately, he was forced to sign a confidentiality clause with ACSA which prevented ALPA SA from evaluating the process from the beginning. As President of ALPA SA I was concerned that there appeared to be little pilot involvement and raised my concerns with ACSA. ALPA only got onboard fairly far down the process and a number of faults regarding airfield layout were identified. Capt John Herselman, a SAA A340 captain, agreed to assist us as he lived close to the new airport. His involvement turned out to be invaluable. John's involvement with ATC also allowed pilot input into ATC procedure from the beginning.

This airport started operations 1st May 2010 and all went very well. Whilst the major safety concerns have been addressed a number of issues still remain. The AGE team intends reviewing the airport and to prioritize outstanding deficiencies. My team and I have built up a positive working relationship with ACSA and they are keen to work with us to ensure a safe and efficient airport. I must point out that a world class airport has been built and overall operations are of a very high standard.

Unfortunately, the only negative incident that has occurred was aircraft parking during the Soccer World Cup semi-final. ACSA and ATNS allowed too many aircraft without slots into King Shaka. These aircraft were not flown out as thought and the result was a number of scheduled flights had to hold and were diverted due to no parking space available. The result was that about 4000 passengers were affected with spectators involved

missing the game. The way forward is that ACSA and ATNS will apply strict slot allocations and ensure that scheduled flights take priority.

Issues that were recently raised with ACSA at a site meeting at King Shaka (KSIA) are as follows:

1. Wide body parking – ALPA has raised concerns as to the availability of additional wide body parking if diversions took place especially with the summer thunderstorm season approaching. Virtually all foreign operators into Johannesburg (ORTIA) file KSIA as their diversion. ACSA will be drawing up a detailed operational and communication plan to handle this ASAP. ACSA has also requested that additional temporary wide parking on the main apron be looked at ASAP
2. Fire Simulator access road – This road was built initially to reduce the response time of the fire services vehicles getting to an aircraft on the runway. It appears that during simulations this road did not significantly reduce response times. This will be confirmed by ACSA. If this is the case and the threat that the road poses by being a possible aid to runway incursions, it was agreed that this road needs to be removed.
3. Visual Holds – To date no visual hold have yet been laid out on the airfield. There are a number of conflicting interpretations of the regulations between SA CAA, ATNS and ACSA that are hindering the process. ALPA requested that a working group be set up ASAP by John Herselman to get clarity on this matter.
4. Hotspot at intersection of taxiways N, A and G (see aerodrome chart below) – The solution here would be to extend B taxiway to beyond the intersection of these taxiways. As traffic volumes are low at present it was agreed that this should fall into the 4 year CAPEX plan at KSIA. This additional length of taxiway could possibly assist with emergency parking space.
5. Use of RET's for intersection take-offs – Unfortunately, due to the placement of the Terminal at KSIA, the use of RET H for take-offs RWY24 is used to avoid excessive taxi. As this is against ICAO Runway Incursion Recommendations as well as IFALPA Annex 14 to use RET's for intersection take-offs ALPA SA has requested that this be dealt with in the very near future. RET H has been identified as needing a 90 degree taxiway segment onto the runway to alleviate this issue.
6. N2 Toll Plaza – After observations over the past few months ALPA feels that highlighting this threat on the Aerodrome Chart as well as on the Approach Plates for FALE Rwy 24 is an adequate solution. ACSA will continue to look at other ways of improving the situation.
7. Bird Radar – To the south of the airfield a reed bed serves as the summer nesting grounds of about 2.5 million barn swallows. As the birds flock in early morning and early evening around this site, a bird radar was deemed necessary so that ATC could advise departing or arriving aircraft of potential threats. The bird radar is fully operational except that the link between the unit and the Control Tower is down. Work has been expedited to rectify this problem.
8. World Summit 2011 – ALPA has raised concerns that what took place for the SWC semi-final could reoccur if Durban is selected. ACSA has not yet been advised if Durban or Cape Town will be the venue. Nonetheless, research has now commenced on the size of the event and aircraft numbers involved. Once the venue is confirmed work will start on a plan to best accommodate the envisaged aircraft numbers. Unfortunately, King Shaka has limited aircraft parking in these cases as excess ramp space was not built as it is not needed for normal operations and therefore kept costs down for the operators. As the airfield matures this situation should improve.

George (FAGG)

This airport is located in the southern Cape Province of South Africa. Unfortunately it featured in the news late last year after an ERJ145 overran the runway in wet conditions. The aircraft was extensively damaged but there

were neither serious injuries nor fatalities. SA CAA imposed severe restrictions on operations in wet condition out of and into FAGG. This impacted operations of virtually all airlines that operated into FAGG. The preliminary report prepared by the SA CAA has identified a binding agent (anti fogging spray) that was applied after resurfacing operations just prior to this accident as a factor in this overrun. This agent appeared to reduce braking performance on this runway during wet conditions. In the brief I received from ACSA they informed me that all the work carried out on this runway prior to the accident conformed to ICAO specifications. ACSA has however decided that the possible threat needed to be addressed and have applied an Ultra thin Friction layer. This appears to have improved the braking action in wet conditions and ALPA SA is satisfied with the corrective action taken.

ALPA SA wants to review the limited overrun at this airport. ACSA advises that an overrun review will be taking place at all their airfields. I am awaiting a date when this should occur.

Cape Town International (CTIA)

Extensive work has taken place on the terminal building and a world class airport was ready for the Soccer World Cup. The next step is the design and building of a new runway. ALPA has been invited to join in from the start. I have set up a team to work with ACSA on the review of the runway and taxiway planning.

Johannesburg (ORTIA)

Major terminal renovations have been concluded and a much improved airport is now operating with a rail link now open between the airport and Sandton. ILS issues have been a major factor especially the first half of 2010. The ILS 03 L was replaced with a newer unit however operations were delayed when critical parts were stranded in Europe due to the volcanic ash event. A few reports of scalloping of the Glide Slope have been received and we are in contact with ACSA on this matter. ILS 21R has been operational since April. All runways at ORTIA now are ILS equipped. The next step that we are in consultation with ACSA on is the introduction of Cat III onto 03L and 21R. The recently formed team at ORTIA is looking at ways to improve line visibility during wet night operations and the correcting of a few signage issues.

East London (FAEL)

A few years ago the non compliant overrun for RWY 11 was identified as a threat. East London has a short runway of just under 2000m. A319's, B 737-800's and MD 82's make regular use of this airfield and regular poor weather conditions make for a very challenging approach and landing.

ACSA was approached regarding this problem and work got underway to fill the drainage ditch. The initial fill that was used failed to allow adequate drainage which resulted in pooling which in turn attracted birds. This was removed and other fill was sourced. A drainage system was also incorporated. I am pleased to advise that the overrun for RWY11 is now fully ICAO compliant.

A mismatch of the PAPI's and ILS Glide Slope was also identified on RWY 29. This appears to have been rectified. I will evaluate on my next flight into East London.

AGE Future Planning

Since taking over the Committee it became very clear that there was a shortage of manpower. My aim then became on how to build ALR teams at each airport served by our members. I discussed this with Gavin McKellar and the idea of hosting an ALR Workshop and getting interested members onboard was proposed. The workshop was held on the 4th August and we got a very good turnout. Managers from ACSA and ATNS joined us for a full day. This workshop also served to give the members that expressed interest basic tools to serve as an 'ALR'. Unfortunately, ALPA SA does not have the finances to send a full team to attend an international course. In this regard ALPA SA would like to offer to host the November 2011 AGE Meeting and ALR courses. We then can suitably qualify a number of our members as ALR's as well as get other African countries in the area to send delegates.

At present and in the near future, I hope to have teams/members representing ALPA at most of the commercial airports in South Africa. They include Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London, George, Lanseria, Bloemfontein, Kimberley, Upington and Wonderboom.

That concludes my report

Tony Laubser

Chairman AGE Committee ALPA SA

Air Traffic Services Committee Activities

Chairman: Darren Oliver

The importance of the correct R/T procedures in SA was discussed at various informal meetings between Darren and ATNS. Darren worked with ATNS in issues regarding the missed approach procedures at various airports. His reports have been disseminated to the ExcO and therefore do not form part of this report.

Dangerous Goods Committee Activities

Chairman: Mzi Manyamalala

Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct: No reports submitted possibly due to lack of significant events in this area.

Human Performance Committee Activities

Chairman: Carl Bollweg

Carl has been very involved in looking at fatigue risk management systems to be implemented in the near future. His monthly reports have been distributed to the ExCo and thus do not form part of this report.

Security Committee Activities

Chairman: Carl Hager

During the course of the year, Carl has examined the impact of non-invasive body scanners being considered. Please see his report below:

I was given the opportunity to attend three Security Meetings on behalf of ALPA-SA during this past year. The first meeting was the IFALPA SEC Meeting in Sydney from 17 to 19 May, 2010, the US ALPA Conference in Washington DC on the 30th and 31st of August and the second IFALPA SEC Meeting in Buenos Aires held from October 4 to 6, 2010. I found it very useful to renew my contacts and it is very good for networking.

We dealt with the usual amount of papers preparing Policy Statements for ratification by the IFALPA Board at the annual conference.

Papers presented and discussed at the Sydney meeting consisted of some of the following:

New Crew ID systems.

Security Code Systems during flight.

Laser attacks on aircraft.

Cargo Security.

Secondary Flight Deck Access Barriers.

Review of the ICAO Annex 17.

Role of the pilot in the Security Chain.

MANPADS.

Sky marshals / In Flight Security Officers (IFSO).

Body Scanners.

Security training for crew.

Disruptive passengers.

It was an eye opener to experience the Annual General Conference and meeting of US ALPA. It was very well attended, even though it was scaled down to three days due to the financial difficulties most US Airlines are experiencing. I managed to attend two of the three day meeting whilst on a flight to Washington. The sub-group meeting I attended, focussed on Security. The following papers were presented by a group of experts:

The following presentations were part of agenda on day 1.

INTRODUCTION by Captain John H. Prater – President, Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l Captain Robert M. Powers, ALA – National Security Committee Chair, Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l

NORTHWEST 253 by Captain Ray Miller, Executive Vice-President, Delta MEC – a report of what happened when the Northwest Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Netherlands, to Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport in Detroit, Michigan, United States. The flight was the target of a failed al-Qaeda bombing attempt on Christmas Day, December 25, 2009, a passenger tried to set off plastic explosives sewn to his underwear. The suspected bomber in the "Christmas Day bombing attempt" was 23-year-old Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who had concealed plastic explosives in his underwear, but failed to detonate them properly, resulting in flames and popping noises.

RADICALIZATION OF A TERRORIST by SSA Andrew Bringuel – FBI Behavioral Science Unit, FBI Academy

CAPABILITIES OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS by Dr. Bruce Tefft – Director, Threat Assessment Center, CRA, Inc.

DEFENDING AGAINST THE THREAT by Amotz Brandes – Director, Chameleon Associates, LLC

TRUST BASED SCREENING SYSTEM by Captain Robert M. Powers, ALA – National Security Committee Chair, Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l

Lastly, I attended the second IFALPA SEC Meeting of the year from the 4th to the 6th of October in Buenos Aires.

Once again we had a high workload and had to cover a huge amount of paper work.

Some of the issues discussed were:

Crew ID

Security Code System in Israel

Laser Attacks

Cargo Security

Secondary Flight Deck Door Barriers

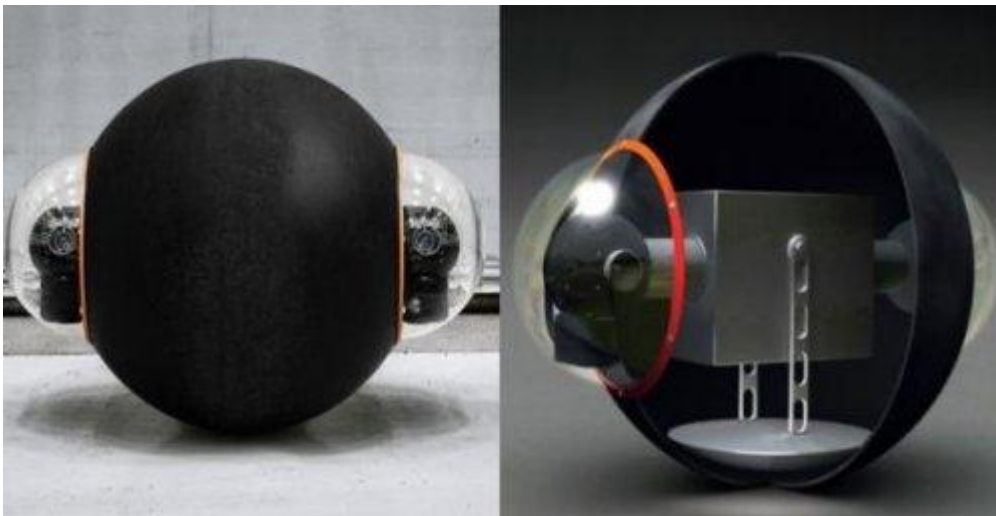
Carlos Limon, the President of IFALPA, advised us of changes at IFALPA head office in order to streamline the association, making it more efficient.

Pilots need different security screening from passengers.

There was a report of total lack of security at GVAC.

War zones can be classified by using the Geneva Convention on refugees

There was then a brief discussion on new technologies. The Dutch have a small ball that can propel itself around whilst transmitting a video feed of what is happening in its surrounds. (See the picture below)



There is an increase in laser attacks worldwide. The British courts are being extremely proactive with penalties. Custodial sentences (the last one was four months) and severe fines are being handed out, although this does not seem to be much of a deterrent. The problem is quite severe in Mediterranean ports.

The United States has introduced the “Securing Aircraft Cockpits Against Lasers Act of 2010.” Specifically the penalty clause states “Whoever knowingly aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.”

The following policy on laser attacks was adopted at the meeting:

In the interest of flight safety, it is vital that there is effective and expeditious communication between aircrews, ATC and law enforcement officials, especially in the event of a laser attack on an aircraft. Member Associations should promote such communications in order to ensure that the correct procedures and protocols exist and are followed. A major discussion took place regarding crew screening and health issues related to radiation exposure. It was decided that a policy on screening needed to be adopted by IFALPA.

The policy is “IFALPA rejects the use of ionising scanners as a primary security measure as they are believed to be un- safe. They should only be used as a secondary method. Crews should not be subjected to secondary scanning, as we are a strong link in the security chain.”

Crews should also be issued with radiation badges to monitor their radiation exposure. Pilots receive a higher dose of radiation than allowed for by protected groups that are subject to radiation exposure.

A formal policy on crew screening needs to be adopted by IFALPA. IFALPA rejects the use of any screening methodology that exposes crew members to ionising radiation. Any other screening technology must be proven not to present a health or safety concern.

Conclusion

Many technical issues are relevant to ALPA-SA and its primary mandate. The initial challenge faced by this portfolio was that of the availability of appropriately qualified volunteers, which have partially been mitigated through the efforts of Tony and the ALR course. Although many positions were vacant for some time, we have had success in filling them all during the past 12 months, however, having said this, it is expected that some posts may be vacated during the course of the next 12 months. Darren has indicated his reluctance to continue as ATS chairman. Due to some lack of experience the various chairmanships recently filled are expected to gain momentum soon.

The requirement of a chairman is to attain the necessary knowledge impacting his or her specific environment, determine the subsequent effect on SA members, report top and request resources if necessary from the association; this briefly details their activities. Given the nature of volunteering for an activity, it is expected that some chairmanships may reflect a low activity rate.