



## **C11 Special Update: From the Vice-Chair**

### **THE UNSTABLE APPROACH**

The Tumi TA has crashed on the runway and the fireball continues to burn. Many of you have asked me: how in the world did we get here?

When I took office as the C-11 DCA Vice Chair/FO Rep in March of 2021, contract negotiations had been ongoing for several years. Many contract sections had already been closed on the “heat map”. The content of those closed sections and the details of the ongoing negotiations were tightly guarded secrets held by the negotiators and the MEC Chair. The details were not shared with all members of the MEC.

#### **Section 6 Negotiations Accelerate:**

This year, as the negotiations accelerated, the MEC received some bullet point briefings from the Negotiating Committee (NC) on their progress. I was stunned by what I was hearing. I, and a few other Representatives, advocated numerous times that we don’t go forward in the direction the NC were going. For our members sake, we needed to go in a different direction. Our views were in the minority. We were passing the 1,000 foot gate on an unstable approach, but the majority of the MEC would not break it off.

#### **Agreement in Principle:**

When the NC reached an agreement in principle (AIP), the MEC received a full day briefing on the details. Those details were shocking to me. The NC had brought us a concessionary agreement. In stark contrast, our own ALPA President Joe DePete had just recently stated “This is the best negotiating environment in the history of ALPA”. How could there be such disconnecting realities? I hoped my fellow Reps would finally see how awful this agreement was for our members.

Despite the minority expressing grave concerns about the AIP, the majority of the MEC directed the NC to continue their approach. We were unstable passing the 500 foot gate, but the majority of the MEC failed to see the disaster looming in front of us, and refused to go-around. They directed the NC to put the AIP into final language.

### **Tentative Agreement:**

When the final language was completed and the Tentative Agreement (TA) was presented to the MEC, those of us in the minority pleaded for the body to reconsider. We warned them that many of the pilots would not be happy when they saw this TA. The MEC Chair, the NC, and a large majority of the MEC loved this agreement and were proud of what they had accomplished. They couldn't wait for their members to see it. Our repeated warnings were summarily dismissed. Our call for a go-Around was ignored. The MEC voted 15-4 to send this concessionary TA out for membership ratification. Wildly out of touch with their members, the MEC majority fixated on the touchdown zone. Now we had a fireball in the middle of the runway.

The minority was in touch with our membership and expected they would not be happy with this TA. I personally expected the TA would split the membership in half. I underestimated how overwhelmingly negative the response from the rank and file would be. Before we could even get the CON letter written, the members saw this TA for the concessionary agreement it was. **You got there on your own.**

### **Triage Zoom Call:**

Just two days after the TA was released to the membership, realizing his agreement was in trouble, the MEC Chair set up a Zoom call with the subject line: "Triage".

From Merriam-Webster dictionary, triage is defined as *"the sorting of and allocation of treatment to patients and especially battle and disaster victims according to a system of priorities designed to maximize the number of survivors"*.

Who's survival was in doubt? The Reps that voted Yes? The MEC Chair?

The MEC Chair's stated purpose on the invitation for the call:

*"If you can make it we are just going to review **everyone's** observations and talk about next steps as we head into the council meetings and town halls"*.

But **not everyone** was invited to share their observations and talk about next steps. All four of the Reps that opposed bringing this concessionary TA out for membership ratification were intentionally excluded from this call. We learned about this virtual meeting of the “cabal”, cabal being “*a secret political clique or faction*” (*Oxford dictionary*), and immediately demanded the MEC Chair include us, which he then did. The Triage Call lasted less than fifteen minutes. The first time one of the four Reps in opposition raised his hand to speak, most of the Reps who voted in Favor left the call simultaneously. It was clearly a pre-coordinated exit. Excluding the Reps with opposing views from even taking part in a discussion on the TA, demonstrates the dangerous level of groupthink on this MEC. Dissent is not tolerated. Discovery of the secret Triage call, begs the question: How many other secret MEC meetings have occurred? And when is the next one scheduled? This body is broken. They don’t want to hear from those in opposition and they don’t want to hear from their members. They think they know what’s best for us all.

#### **Burying the PRO/CON Letter:**

The signed CON letter was submitted for ALPA attorney vetting and system wide publication three days after the TA was released to the membership. Historically, the PRO and CON statements would be released simultaneously in written letter form in an email to all members. In a clear deviation from the MEC Policy Manual, the Tumi TA PRO/CON statements were not initially emailed to the members, but were placed under a button labeled “MEC Letters” on the TA 2022 site on ALPA.org. Our members had to proactively go search for them. They hid our signed CON statement and the unsigned PRO statement as deeply as possible. Acting on numerous complaints, they finally mailed the PRO/CON statements to all members. However, the PRO/CON statements were sent out as PDF file attachments that members had to open, not as clear text letters. Just the previous day, the MEC Chair sent a clear text letter, not a PDF file, in an email to all members voicing his support for the TA. We in the opposition were not treated equally to those in favor. **As not one MEC Tumi TA Yes Voter was willing to sign their own letter**, I can certainly understand why they tried to bury it.

#### **Sales Job Temporarily Suspended:**

Six days after the TA was released to the members, the MEC Chair called a special in person meeting to evaluate the American contract offer and “consider all available options”. My fear going into the meeting was that the majority of the MEC were looking for any excuse to pull the ballot. Having received a deluge of phone calls, texts, and emails from members system wide in opposition to the TA, I was very confident the TA was going to fail. I advocated strongly that the ballot

should remain open and the date remain unchanged. We all needed to learn where the membership stood. And we needed to send the message to the Company that we would not accept a contract that did not recognize our value on this property. The unanimous decision of the special meeting was to leave balloting unchanged.

#### **“I Voted NO!” on the Tumi TA Wristbands:**

In clear violation of our UAL MEC policy manual, those in favor produced hours of lopsided “sales job” videos emphasizing the “gets” and largely ignoring the many “gives” in the Tumi TA. Not afraid to face our members in person, those in opposition to the Tumi TA spent many days at the airport meeting our pilots face to face. I personally spent 22 hours over the Fourth of July weekend meeting members from all over the system, listening to their concerns, and handing out “I Voted NO” wristbands. Almost everyone was glad to take one or more. Meeting our members face to face and listening to their views, convinced me the Tumi TA would not merely fail, but would crash and burn. The only question was how big the fireball was going to be.

#### **Quigley Letter:**

Just four days before the TA vote was scheduled to close, Senior VP Flight Operations Bryan Quigley wrote that the TA “clearly missed the mark”. **I find it fascinating that management has acknowledged the TA is substandard, but many on the MEC continue to defend it to this day.** The Company asked to reopen negotiations because they knew the TA was going to fail spectacularly and they didn’t want the vote used as leverage against them. What is stunning is that **the MEC allowed the Company to hi-jack our TA ratification process.** And the Company isn’t even offering to increase the value of a new TA: “we continue to be committed to maintaining the overall economic package”. Translation? We want you to stop the vote, but we aren’t willing to give you any more money. Why in the world would we agree to this? It appears the Company is running the union on this property. By not counting the vote on time, the MEC has silenced your voice. With the outrageous months-long extension to the close of voting, we may never know how badly this TA was going to fail. **By not closing the vote on time, your MEC is perpetrating a cover-up.**

#### **The Lack of MEC Meeting Decorum:**

Vigorous discussion and debate should be encouraged in any representational body. Such interactions can occur without sacrificing civility and decorum. Unfortunately, recent MEC meetings have not maintained the decorum expected in a professional business setting.

- Without any evidence, a Rep rushed across the room to accuse me of leaking the TA in its entirety and threatened to take me to the lawyers. I encouraged him to do so.
- Just prior to the opening of last week's meeting, this same Rep plopped a box of stale donuts and a jar of sprinkles on my closed computer as I was sitting at the MEC table. It was not a collegial prank or joke. It was a menacing display. He put on an orchestrated show for his buddies across the room as they all watched and sniggered. It is hard to believe these are grown men.
- In a complete lack of decorum, Reps have yelled expletives across the room in my direction multiple times. This is not how professionals behave.
- At last week's meeting, I was accosted by a very angry Rep in the hallway. His behavior was so physically threatening that I feared he was going to strike me. The local police and ALPA National are both conducting investigations. The Rep was flown home mid-week.
- I have asked the MEC Chair repeatedly to enforce civility and decorum at our meetings, but he has failed to do so.

Now that we are faced with the burning fireball in the middle of the runway, what are we going to do? Members in good standing need to take our union back. The MEC Officers work for the MEC, and the MEC (your elected Reps) work for you; not the other way around. Demand your Representatives represent you. Stand and speak at meetings. Don't accept the status quo. And most importantly remember ALPA is its members, not its leaders. **ALPA IS ALL OF US. We are a union, it is far past time we started acting like one.**

Serving the members in Council 11 as your Vice Chair/FO Rep has been the highest honor of my thirty year airline career. When I ran for office, I promised to be transparent and forthright with the members. This letter is part of that promise. My focus has always been to serve my members and to protect our profession. I am humbled by the trust you have placed in me. I am a line pilot for line pilots.

In service,  
Anne

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