

Continental Pilots Support Decision to Stop Merger

2008-04-29

But union states that it won't end efforts to protect pilot interests

The Continental pilots union issued a statement today after the Continental Airlines' announcement to its employees on Sunday, rejecting a combination with another carrier.

Said Capt. Jay Pierce, chairman of the Continental pilots union, represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l. (ALPA), "We've maintained throughout this process that we support management's preference to operate Continental Airlines as a successful, viable stand-alone carrier. We believe that despite the challenges of high fuel prices and an uncertain economy, there are benefits to our pilots in maintaining independence."

"The announcement to not pursue a merger now doesn't mean we won't have significant challenges ahead," stated Capt. Pierce. "To protect our pilots and our futures, we will continue our efforts to remain ready and prepared for all foreseeable options. No matter what lies ahead," said Capt. Pierce. "We will continue to work jointly with and support pilot groups at other carriers to protect all our concerns."

The Continental pilots union leaders have met with union leaders from other pilot groups during the merger activity, both recently and over the preceding months. Capt. Pierce spoke about the benefits gained for pilots from those meetings. "We support our fellow pilots at other carriers. As pilots with a large stake in the outcome of potential mergers, we've formed a new understanding of the challenges and opportunities before us in this new market landscape. Different pilot groups have different managements, but we've learned from this process that we all have to work together to protect pilot interests. The cooperation among pilot groups has never been higher and we will continue to take steps to strengthen those ties, merger or not."

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