

04/01/2014

Your FDX ALPA FOQA Gatekeepers would like to remind you that the FOQA data is and has always been de-identified.

Within the FOQA program, there are many initiatives underway to provide you with timely and relevant information that you can use while operating across the system. Whether it is regularly scheduled FOQA Facts, FP/R Alerts or Jepp 10-xx page notes, your Gatekeeper team is working with the company to “get you the facts.”

As our FOQA program continues to mature, we welcome the recent engagement and success with communication of aggregate FOQA data across all departments supporting our flight operations. Your Gatekeepers remain an integral part of analyzing this data. This is a win-win and specifically what FOQA was designed to do for us.

While the recent FCIF posting for “First Officer TAA QA Expert” (FCIF 14-0118 ADM/GEN) references FOQA, please be assured that whatever this Company initiated “Flight Operations QA program” may turn out to be, it is *not* FOQA, and no “identifying data” will be shared outside of the ALPA Gatekeeper’s responsibilities in the FOQA LOA. If you have questions or comments for your ALPA Gatekeeper Team, feel free to contact the FDX ALPA FOQA Chairman, MD-11 First Officer Gordon Oliver or Vice Chairman, Airbus Captain Chris Croce at FedEx-FOQAChair@alpa.org.

12/17/2013

A FOQA CHRISTMAS CAROL:

Do YOU know what WE know? Do WE know what YOU know?

A corny play on a timeless Christmas carol, maybe. Appropriate? You bet. Your FOQA Monitoring Team (both company and ALPA Gatekeeper representatives) has made some good progress this year with the way they approach the monumental task of data validation and analysis. We even gained a seat at the table of the respective Fleet Working Groups – monthly meeting between Tng/Stds, Tech Support, MX, ENG, Safety, FOQA, ASAP, etc... However, we have a long way to go in providing you with the data you need to mitigate the threats that challenge you on a daily basis. This includes the monthly publication of FOQA Facts, Jeppesen 10-10 series page alerts, NOTAM’s, FCIF’s, up-to-date trends for recurrent training and animations of events which provide good opportunities for learning. This will ensure that WE do our part so YOU can say an unequivocal YES when asked – “Do YOU know what WE know?” You should, and we will improve in that regard.

Back to the quip – “Do WE know what YOU know?” Chances are, if we call you, we don’t. When validating FOQA exceedances, all we see is “data”. In many cases, we “kind of” know what happened – i.e., Stall Warning because the crew slowed below SLAT EXT/FLAP speed on descent/approach. In other cases, we might not understand what other factors were present at the time or contributed to the exceedance. We use a specific matrix when deciding to identify the flight/date and “call” or “not call” the crew. We DON’T call for events:

- where we don't have flight data.
- - Which are "known" by Training/Standards, Safety, FAA, or NTSB (i.e., crew is already identified).
 - - When data can be gathered from another source (i.e., ATC audio playback – liveatc.net).
 - - When the time between the data being available (downloaded) and the crew contact opportunity exceeds 14 days.

We WILL call for events where the crew is the only entity which can provide the amplifying info which will help us better understand the factors that contributed to the exceedance. Specifically, which Human/CRM, weather, ATC directives or workload, MX/MEL or other factors were present at the time and contributed to the exceedance. Your assistance in helping us understand what YOU experienced will allow us to provide our brethren with a better product. When you do get a call from the Gatekeeper, it is truly an ANONYMOUS, non-jeopardy event. The Gatekeeper will be cordial. They will NOT call to counsel or harass. It is just the facts and factors. When we hang up, we will note the factors and DELETE any reference which identifies your name or specific flight. You have our word.

In 2013, we made over 80 crew contacts. We appreciate the support of the program and honesty shared by those crew members that we contacted.

We value feedback. If you have any questions, comments or desire more information, please email us at FedEx-FOQA@alpa.org.

Your ALPA FOQA Gatekeeper Team is:

MD-11/10:

CAPT Jim Gheringer
CAPT Lee Robinson
CAPT Mark Hession
FO Gordon Oliver (FOQA Committee Chair)

Airbus:

CAPT Chris Croce (FOQA Vice Chair)
CAPT Todd Carpenter
FO Glenn Gunn

757:

CAPT Mike Frey
FO Steve Mis

777:

FO Rick Hurley
FO Andrew Franklin

08/06/2013

Our ALPA FOQA Gatekeepers and Crew Contact Call-ups

Our ALPA FOQA Gatekeepers need YOUR help!

Crew contacts (call-ups) by our Gatekeepers have provided some very useful insight. In order for the FOQA team to get better information back to the crew force, we sometimes need to call. We have improved our data processing times and are now able to call in a timely manner. The FOQA team painstakingly validates each and every exceedance triggered by the FOQA monitoring software. However, only a Gatekeeper has the ability to “identify” the crew. Additionally, your Gatekeepers have all signed confidentiality agreements, legally binding them to protect your identifying information.

If a Gatekeeper contacts you, they will clearly identify themselves as an ALPA Gatekeeper and give you their name. You can expect a professional and cordial conversation regarding the flight in question. We would like to get some more insight about factors that we can't always determine from the data such as flight conditions, ATC workload, MX/MEL items, and HF issues. We use your input to assist in reversing trends, improve training, remove repeated distractions and give all FedEx Express crewmembers the tools they need to operate safely. The bottom line focus of your FOQA Gatekeepers is improving the overall safety posture of our airline without compromising the confidentiality of our crewmembers.

Your decision to speak with an ALPA Gatekeeper is yours and yours alone. The crew names, flight number and flight dates will never be shared with anyone outside of the Gatekeeper community. Furthermore, the crew CANNOT be disciplined from the information shared during a Gatekeeper call.

Here is an excerpt from the [June 2013 FOQA Facts article](#):

“The success of the FOQA program hinges upon maintaining full de-identified status of FOQA data. The only members of the FOQA Monitoring Team who have access to identified data (flight number/date) are the ALPA GKs. The ALPA GK’s normally operate the software/data processing tools in a de-identified mode. The only reason they will “identify” a flight is if, after much consideration and analysis, they need to discuss the event with the crew to better understand “WHY” the crew experienced the event exceedance.”

Please take the time to read the complete [June 2013 FOQA Facts article](#) for an update on the program. There is a good discussion on what Gatekeeper crew contacts as well as ASAP report submission. The document should stimulate thought and discussion; talk about it with your fellow crewmembers.

As always, we value your feedback. Contact the FDX ALPA FOQA Gatekeeper team at Fedex-FOQA@ALPA.org if you have any questions or comments.

03/05/2013 & 03/12/2013

The FDX ALPA FOQA team is looking for an interested 757 captain to work in Memphis as a Gatekeeper. Expectation is for 2 to 3 days per month of onsite work in the FOQA Data Analysis "Lab" (in the AOC). General responsibilities are to assist with data validation, analysis of trends, and crew contacts. You will find the work both enlightening and rewarding. At this time, 757 captains living in the Memphis area are preferred. On-the-job training will be provided by current

Gatekeepers and FedEx FOQA staff members. Interested MD-11 Captains should contact MD-11 First Officer Steve Mis at Steve.Mis@alpa.org with any questions.

02/05/2013

****MD-11 FOQA Gatekeeper needed****

The FedEx-ALPA FOQA team is looking for an interested MD-11 crew member to work in Memphis as a Gatekeeper. Expectation is for 2 to 3 days per month of on site work in the FOQA Data Analysis "Lab" (in the AOC). General responsibilities are to assist with data validation, analysis of trends, and in some circumstances conduct crew contacts. You will find the work both enlightening and rewarding. Those crewmembers living in the Memphis area are preferred. OJT will be provided by current Gatekeepers and FedEx FOQA staff members. Interested MD-11 crewmembers should contact the FOQA Committee Chairman, First Officer Gordon Oliver at Fedex-FOQA@alpa.org with any questions.

12/13/2011 (Pete Harmon CASC Update)

There's a new bulletin on the Flight Safety Committee Page under *Safety News and Bulletins*. In the SE USA - there's GPS Interference testing being conducted for the next several days. Details on potential GPS Signal interference and reporting back any difficulties you have can be read here: <http://tinyurl.com/d3gkktb>

The Safety Bulletins have an RSS icon on it if you want to receive them that way. I will have the file permissions on the web site squared away soon so you don't have to be logged in to see the bulletins - allowing you to read them in your RSS client.

Our FOQA program has been in place since August. Data is being gathered and analyzed for trends that can hurt or help us. Your ALPA FMTs (FOQA Monitoring Team) have been working closely with FedEx personnel in the lab to get good data out of the program. This is a very labor intensive process to set up and is yielding some good data for us to use and pass to you. A couple weeks ago, I asked for some data from the FOQA Monitoring Team - and it turns out that some of this is VERY data intensive causing a 'run' to take several days on the server's task list. One of the things I want to present to you is a rate of N1 exceedances in the ramp areas.

Turns out that's a big deal because the ramps' geo-locations need to be put into the computer so the server can determine whether 50% N1 occurs on the open taxiway or in a congested area. Several other points have to be 'modeled-in' as well - aircraft speed, LTAET (Less than All Engine Taxi) etc. That data is currently being aggregated - look for it in a future update here soon. Why do we want this data? It isn't to 'burn' the guy who exceeds N1 limits. It is to identify hot spots where this occurs more than occasionally and get that info out to you on the line so you can be prepared for All Engine Taxi AET or if you choose LTAET to be aware of heightened potential for exceedances. Lacking that data today, please be aware of your N1s in congested areas. If you are not sure what's behind you - be sure to ask. Lacking the ability to get positive confirmation that your tail is clear, either start another engine or ask for a tow. It simply isn't worth causing damage - or worse - hurting someone. It's better to eat a delay than to 'think' you can make it and be wrong.

ASAP is also up and running. There have been two meetings of the Event Review Committee (ERC) and another is set for next week. Dozens of ASAP reports have been submitted and none have been rejected. This means we are getting data on hazards and 'busts' that we may not otherwise know about. It also means these crews are protected from discipline and enforcement action they might otherwise be facing lacking an ASAP program. We are now in the heart of peak. Be the amazing professionals you regularly are - flying the most challenging airline schedule in the world - and if you are asking the question, "Should I submit an ASAP report on that," I can assure you the answer is, "Yes."

Finally, FOM Revision 49 is out. It became effective on 10 November. You should have gotten a hard copy revision delivered to your address of record. If you're like me and keep such things electronically as well, be sure to check the 'Manuals' link on Pilot.FedEx.com and download the latest version for your personal library.

Captain Pete Harmon
FDX MEC Central Air Safety Chairman

10/25/2011 The 411 on FOQA (Jim Plover)

The 4-1-1 on FOQA

Written by: FO Jim Plover, ALPA FOQA Monitoring Team Gatekeeper

So there has been a lot of talk about FOQA, but what does it mean to the average crewmember at FedEx?

First, some background...

Flight Operational Quality Assurance (FOQA) is a collaborative data collection and monitoring effort in order to identify and mitigate collective threats to our air operations. Its participants include ALPA Flight Safety, FedEx Flight Safety, and the FAA.

Rooted in the guidance provided by FAA Advisory Circular 120-82, the program is a long-desired product of the collective efforts of our flight safety team and Negotiating Committee. From the advisory circular:

In recent years, the FAA and the air transportation industry have sought additional means for addressing safety problems and identifying potential safety hazards. Based on the experiences of foreign air carriers, the results of several FAA-sponsored studies, and input received from government/industry safety forums, the FAA has concluded that wide implementation of FOQA programs could have significant potential to reduce air carrier accident rates below current levels. A reduction in the already low U.S. airline accident rate is needed to preclude a projected growth in the number of accidents, which is expected to occur due to increased future traffic volume. The value of FOQA programs is the early identification of adverse safety trends that, if uncorrected, could lead to accidents. A key element in FOQA is the application of corrective action and follow-up to assure that unsafe conditions are effectively remediated.

Basically, the program uses de-identified aircraft flight data in order to discover deviations from established procedures, limits, or regulations in order to adjust the operational environment to avoid these events in the future. The data is organized and categorized by aircraft type and reported to all three FOQA participants. The FAA uses the information to identify trends within the air transportation system as a whole and at the reporting company. The company uses the information to adjust training programs in order to emphasize corrective actions and adherence

to regulations. ALPA utilizes the information to educate and inform the membership about real world hazards and potential pitfalls. ALPA and the company use FOQA reports to work cooperatively in order to give the crewmember as many tools as possible in an effort to maintain and improve system safety. Overall, the goal is to utilize the information to make the operation safer, without the burden of discipline or certificate action clouding the process.

What does all this mean to me?

The short answer is that the system exists behind the scenes, monitoring flight operations in all aircraft at FedEx except for the B727. The information is de-identified for all uses except in very narrow, controlled circumstances. The circumstances surrounding the use of identified data for a crew contact vary with the situation, but the overall guidance provides for identifying information only when the flight data indicates a statistically large deviation from normal operations.

When identification is necessary, it is performed **ONLY** by a trained and vetted ALPA representative, called a Gatekeeper. The Gatekeeper functions as the link between a flight's identifying information, such as flight number, date, and time, and the FOQA system. If a Gatekeeper has reason to believe that a crew contact should be initiated, it will be performed personally or by another Gatekeeper in the FOQA office. Data can only be linked to a specific flight within 14 days from the time the data is entered into the FOQA analysis system. After 14 days, no one (ALPA, Company, or FAA) can make a direct connection between a flight's data and its identifying information. The time from when a flight occurs to when the 14 day countdown begins varies greatly with regard to the data collection system in use. Some aircraft download data wirelessly while others require maintenance to physically remove a data card and send it to the FOQA office.

What is a crew contact?

A crew contact is a method by which the 'rest of the story' can be told by a crewmember regarding an event that a FOQA analyst has identified. The Gatekeeper will contact the crewmember by telephone and read a standard statement regarding the use of the information. The conversation is not recorded. There are no permanent records of any contact maintained by any agency participating in an approved FOQA program.

The Gatekeeper will explain what the data indicates and ask specific questions about a particular aspect that needs clarification or resolution. Some important things to remember:

- **YOU** do not have to speak to a FOQA Gatekeeper under any circumstances. No record will be kept about your participation, or refusal to participate in the program.
- **YOU** decide how much or how little detail to provide to the Gatekeeper. The goal is to gain information and perspective about an event that occurred on a flight, so open, frank, and honest participation is highly encouraged. Provide the information that you feel clarifies the situation.
- The Gatekeeper, after hearing your response to the inquiry, may recommend filing an ASAP report, NASA report, or both. **YOU** decide if this is the correct course of action given the circumstances and conversation.
- **YOU** can ask questions about what the FOQA data indicates and you will receive honest answers.
- **YOU** can ask the Gatekeeper to arrange for you to see the data if you feel it could help enhance your recollection or understanding of an event. This is entirely up to the crewmember being contacted.

The bottom line

FOQA exists to gather and monitor flight data so we do a better job of averting loss of life, injury, and equipment damage. Gatekeepers are the union's front-line troops in ensuring your interests as a professional are maintained as a priority while enhancing the safety culture at FedEx. Your participation in the data collection process is invisible for all normal operations. Crew contacts are infrequent, non-threatening, never recorded and cannot result in retraining, discipline, or certificate action. We encourage your active participation if contacted.

In the future you will see communications through various media and in Continuous Qualification regarding the trends that FOQA data has identified. Your input is critical to the process of enhancing safety using this new tool at FedEx.

08/09/2011

We are happy to announce that FOQA at FedEx is up and running. Last month, seven of your fellow ALPA pilots went to training in Dallas to learn FOQA Data Analysis. Dave Wright, who is currently leading the FOQA & ASAP programs for ALPA, is assisted by Jim Gehringer, Chris Croce, Gordon Oliver, Todd Carpenter, Jim Plover and Mark Abbott. Last Thursday afternoon, 4 August, the passwords were set and the 'Keys to the De-Identified FOQA Data' were turned over to these ALPA FMT (FOQA Monitoring Team) members. This is a VERY intensive 'Data Analysis' job. Please thank them for stepping up when you see them on the line.

What does this new FOQA program mean to you? "Events" are now monitored in de-identified sets. For example, Vref +15 knots may pop up on a flight. Which flight that is will not be available to anyone but the ALPA FMT gatekeeper. He may be able to look at the weather and see that this number accounted for a gust factor wind additive. He may see that this was a temporary and corrected situation. He may see this resulting in a go-around. In these examples and many others, that de-identified data provides enough info that the event set can be added to the data collection and kept as a valid trend indicator. The power of FOQA is in the larger trends of events that are seen. For instance, "Why are we seeing a large number of unstable approaches at XYZ?"

On rare occasions, the data from an event won't make sense. In that instance, the gatekeeper may initiate contact with the crew to see if they can provide clarifying information. This is where you, the line crew member come in. Should you find yourself the recipient of a call from an FMT Gatekeeper, you need to remember these three points:

1. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You do NOT need to speak to the gatekeeper. If you politely decline to provide information, that is your right. We at ALPA Safety and the FMT strongly encourage you to participate, however, because of point 2.
2. ONLY the FMT gatekeeper will EVER know who you are. While he may share the clarifying data, he is prevented from disclosing ANY identifying data due to a confidentiality agreement, EVER. Nothing that identifies you or your flight will EVER be shared with anyone else.
3. This is not about discipline or enforcement. Because the gatekeeper is an ALPA representative, he has no power over you by means of discipline or enforcement. And since he is prohibited from disclosing your identity in any way to anyone, any information you give can only be used to validate data and establish an event as a valid data set or not.

That's it in a nutshell. The FMT Gatekeeper will use the data you provide to validate or invalidate an event, and NEVER share any identifying information.

Additionally, FOQA data defaults to de-identified. Once events are looked at, a decision is made to either have the gatekeeper initiate contact or not. In a vast majority of cases, the gatekeeper will have enough data and determine that crew contact isn't necessary. After two weeks any data

that could ID a crew or flight number disappears into the ether forever. The gatekeeper could not get identifying information even if he wanted to after this point in time.

For now, the 757, Airbus and MD-11/10 fleets are fully in the FOQA monitoring program. In the near future, the 'event sets' for the 777 will be defined and entered into the computers and they too will be fully in the FOQA program.

Other airlines with FOQA programs have used that trend information to identify hazards and eliminate them. While this isn't a magic bullet, the accident rates on properties with FOQA have been reduced dramatically. We are thrilled that this program is in place at FedEx. The professionals who have volunteered their time and expertise are a fine initial cadre. You are a crew member in the big leagues - and you're out there 'playing varsity ball' all over the world. No one else faces all the challenges that FedEx pilots face routinely. This new tool in our quiver will help mitigate risks before they manifest themselves in broken airplanes or tragedy. Congratulations and thanks to all who have worked to bring this about at FedEx.

05/24/2011

FOQA LOA