

Podcast Transcription

Fly by Night: Captain Bill Schild, Security Committee Chair (Sept 2021)

Captain Chris Lee My guest today is Captain Bill Schild. Bill is the Security Committee Chair. Thanks for coming.

Captain Bill Schild Thanks for having me, Chris.

Captain Chris Lee Talk a little bit about your background before FedEx and what you've been doing since you've been at FedEx.

Captain Bill Schild Well, I started off in my aviation career by going to the Naval Academy. I graduated in 1991 with a B.S. and Aerospace Engineering and went on to fly F18s in the fleet, doing two deployments, one on USS America and the other on USS George Washington. Then I did an instructor tour in the F18 replacement squadron, teaching F18 tactics and also how to land on the ship as an LSO, which is a landing signal officer. Then I got off active duty and I came straight here to FedEx in March of 2001. So, I was pre 9/11, which is kind of significant, but continued to fly in the reserves flying the C20G, which was a Gulfstream IV on the Navy side of Andrews Air Force Base, and then retired from the reserves in 2011. Coming to FedEx, I started off as a 727 engineer, did that for about 10 months, and then went to the right seat of the 727 for two and a half years. Then I went to the MD11 and started flying international. I did that for about seven years and another five years on the 777 in the right seat and then I've been a 767 Captain for five years with three at Indianapolis and the last two here in Memphis.

Captain Chris Lee Talk some about your union experience.

Captain Bill Schild OK, I started a little over 10 years ago as a P2P rep and did that for quite a while until I got involved with the Security Committee about five years ago. I started off just as a member and then became Vice Chair for two years and I've been the Chairman now for two years.

Captain Chris Lee Who else is on the Security Committee with you?

Captain Bill Schild We also have Captain Rick Perkins. He's a 777 Captain. He has a Marine Corps F18 background, and he has an extensive amount of international security experience with embassy duty and various things when he was in the reserves. So he brings a lot to the table. Also, I have Captain Hans Krause another 777 Captain. He's been on the Security Committee in the past, so he's helping out again. First Officer Jarrod Moseley is an Oakland 767 First Officer. He was one of the two SIDA instructors at Denver and we all know Denver Airport is pretty locked down with the SIDA requirements and as far as getting in the ramp offices. So he's my SIDA SME (Subject Matter Expert). He helps us out with issues relating to ramp access and IDs and stuff like that, as well as other security issues. And the newest member is Captain Brett Williams. He's a 767 LCA and while he was a National Guard pilot, he was also a North Carolina state trooper for five years. So he brings a nice law enforcement background to the table. So we're excited to have him on board.

Captain Chris Lee And remind everybody what SIDA means.

Captain Bill Schild SIDA is the Special Identification Display Area. So that's basically when you access the secure area of an airport. There are various SIDA requirements. They tend to be different on the passenger side, more uniform, mandated by law and a lot of the cargo airports have exemptions. So, it kind of falls under the Federal Security Director who's a TSA employee that kind of is in charge of security at each airport. So on the cargo side, we tend to see a lot of different rules at a lot of different airports and that's why your ID badge at one ramp might get you in the ramp door and out to the airplane without any problem, whereas other places you need to be escorted because we can't get in on our own with our ID badge. So SIDA is the badge requirement and access requirement rules.

Captain Chris Lee Talk some about what the Security Committee does for the pilots.

Captain Bill Schild Basically, the Security Committee advocates for the security of our pilots. We do threat analysis, advocating for the crew force in all security-related matters. We try and collect, analyze and disseminate information to the crews that will help keep them safe and secure. And we work with the National Security Council at ALPA National and the Security Council is made up of all the security chairs at the different airlines. We have biannual meetings with the Security Council. That network is very active and we all talk to each other. I get information from other airline security committees via usually their security chair. And we also work with the President's Committee for Cargo (now the National Cargo Committee), specifically with Captain Rich Hughey and Captain Preston Greene and they report directly to the President on security and safety matters.

Captain Chris Lee Talk about how the Security Committee coordinates with the Company at FedEx.

Captain Bill Schild We coordinate with the FOTAC who is the Flight Ops Threat Awareness Coordinator. He is a member of the aviation security team at FedEx. He's not a pilot. He works for Aviation Security, which most airlines call Corporate Security. We have a corporate security department here at FedEx. We also have Aviation Security and that's what we're concerned with as pilots. So the FOTAC came out of Corporate Security, so he knows that side of the house, but now he works for the pilots and reports to the Fleet Captains and the Chief Pilots. So he's our first line of access for security reasons in flight operations. I also work with the Managing Director of Aviation Security. He runs a team of about 1600 security personnel all over the world. I believe that it's probably the best security department in all of the aviation airlines, with quite a lot of talent and capability there. They do have a new watch center that's only about five years old but has significant capabilities and they're really watching out for us. So it's good to have that connection and coordination with the Managing Director.

Captain Chris Lee Talk some about the FFDO program.

Captain Bill Schild So that's another big thing we do is help manage the FFDO program. Technically, the Company is the stakeholder, but the FOTAC helps run it for the Chief Pilots. But not being a pilot, he's not an FFDO. So really, we go to the stakeholder meetings as members of the Security Committee and as FFDO mentors. So the FFDO program obviously came about after 9/11, armed pilots. As being mentors and helping run the program we answer questions. We also go to the stakeholder meetings with TSA, where they set policy, advocate for the budget and procedures, and that type of stuff. In the FFDO program, we were about to do a big recruiting effort, but then COVID broke out. Currently, the federal law enforcement training centers where we train, they only reopened

(since over a year ago) this past July. So right now, they're very slow training new pilots because there's a vaccine mandate. So until that we get COVID behind us, there's not going to be a lot of effective training. But we do need to bring the numbers back up. They've been dwindling due to attrition from retirements and also COVID has caused some loss of FFDOs. So expect a recruiting effort there to get more FFDOs once COVID allows it.

Captain Chris Lee But they are now accepting applications?

Captain Bill Schild They are accepting applications and I believe the number is about 2000 approved pilots and they have started to train some new pilots. So it is happening. If you don't have the vaccine, they want a two-week quarantine and it's only a five-day course. So it doesn't really work out if you're not vaccinated.

Captain Chris Lee Well, Bill, are there any hot topics in security right now?

Captain Bill Schild We've got a [call to action](#) for the [Cargo Flight Deck Security Act](#). I think many pilots have probably seen it in the Positive Rate. What is the Cargo Flight Deck Security Act? So 9/11 happened and Congress passed legislation that mandated hardened doors or IRCDs, and that's an Intrusion Resistant Cockpit Door to give the flight deck a chance to react, create a reactionary gap and protect that flight deck. As that bill was drafted, it was going to include all of commercial aviation. However, cargo ended up being carved out. So we had three DC10 Captains back in the 2002 to 2003 period that refused to take animal handlers because they didn't have a hardened door. They did not have an IRCD. They were fired. Back then we were FPA. FedEx Pilots Association got those three DC10 Captains their jobs back and it was a critical victory for PIC authority. And we got IRCDs on our Airbus 300s, MD11s, and DC10s. Fast forward several years, we started to buy the 777 and then the 767 and they did not have hardened doors. Initially, we weren't supposed to have animal handlers, which are the main non-flight personnel that we do carry in our cockpits. The Jumpseat Committee, the Security Committee, and the President's Committee for Cargo (now National Cargo Committee) started pushing and advocating for hardened doors. We started off with the FAA and TSA. Unfortunately, we didn't get anywhere with those bodies. So we turned to a legislative fix. Several years of work have led to the Cargo Flight Deck Security Act. And it's very simple, it simply mandates an IRCD (Intrusion Resistant Cockpit Door) on our airplanes. Why do we need this? We need that for a reactionary gap. Here we are 20 years after 9/11 and we're in the same situation that they faced back then with no barrier to the flight deck. I've heard some concerns over the bill from the crew force. One of the concerns is that this could shut down jumpseats. We have confirmed with the attorneys at ALPA that jumpseats are protected under Section 26 of our CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement). We don't feel there's a threat there. Another concern was, would the FAA shut down jumpseats because of this bill? Well, really, this bill just puts us on the same level and we're looking for one level of safety and security, puts us on the same level as the passenger carriers. We're allowed to jumpseat on passenger carriers. They're allowed to jump on us. So we don't see any change there. Therefore, there shouldn't be any concern about this bill. So it simply mandates that we put hardened doors on our flight decks and that's an important thing moving forward to protect our flight decks and prevent another 9/11.

Captain Chris Lee Well, Bill, we hear a lot about primary and secondary barriers. What does that actually mean?

Captain Bill Schild The IRCD, that Intrusion Resistant Cockpit Door is the primary barrier under the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 and this was several years in the making. It mandates the passenger carriers to have a secondary barrier that would block the courier area. That barrier, more like a gate, a barred door would block access to the courier area so the flight deck can come out and get some food, use the rest facilities, so forth. So it protects the cockpit when they open the IRCD. They're not installing them yet. That's still being held up. But it's now law that mandates the installation of secondary barriers. We don't even have a primary barrier on our 767s and 777s. So again, One Level of Safety, One Level of Security is what we're looking for, so please act on the [call to action](#).

Captain Chris Lee Talk some about the importance of pilots filling out the Aircrew Security Reports (ASRs) and submitting DARTs to your committee.

Captain Bill Schild [DARTs](#) are the messaging tool to the Security Committee. The link is on our [FedEx ALPA website](#). That's the way to inform us of issues. The same reporting format for the Company is called an ASR, an Aircrew Security Report. Unfortunately, Insite reports do not reach aviation security. So when I get a DART that's a security issue I turn right around, answer it and tell them, hey, please also fill out an ASR so that the Company Aviation Security department knows about it. Sometimes the FOTAC will get certain Insite reports related to hotels, but a lot of times they don't get the right information to the right people if you fill out an Insite. So we need [DARTs](#) and we need ASRs. You know, knowledge is power. So when there are issues, we need to know. An important thing to note, though, is if you are in the field and you have a problem on a trip you're operating on, your best resource is calling the duty officer. He's got access to aviation security personnel and watch standards right there. If it's time-critical on a trip, call the duty officer, but otherwise fill out an ASR, fill out a [DART](#) report.

Captain Chris Lee Well, Bill, thanks so much for being here. Any final thoughts?

Captain Bill Schild We've just had the anniversary of 9/11, so I think it's an appropriate time for the Security Committee to be talking about this. And again, my last push to answer that [call to action](#) and tell your elected officials to support the [Cargo Flight Deck Security Act](#). Never forget. And finally, our FedEx Aviation Security Department does a great job watching out for us, but they can't see and predict everything. I do believe we have the best in the industry. However, if you see something, you need to say something. Fill out a [DART](#) report for the Security Committee, fill out an ASR for the Company. Unfortunately, we've talked about how Insite doesn't get to Aviation Security. If you're in the field call the duty officer. Here's a great example. I got a tip from a pilot about a protest that was going to happen in Louisville. This was last summer during all the COVID protests. I took that information to the FOTAC. He ran it by his Aviation Security contacts and then brought it up to the Chief Pilots and we ended up moving. There ended up being a negligent discharge of a firearm in this protest right across the street from the Brown Hotel where we layover. So that's a great example of how we need pilots in the field. They are the eyes out there. Information is knowledge. So if you see something, say something.

Captain Chris Lee Thanks again for coming, Bill, and thanks for listening. If you have any questions, please go to fdx.alpa.org and utilize the [DART link](#), and as always, be safe out there and we'll see you next time.