

## **Bill Hubbell Strategic Preparedness Strike Committee (SPSC)**

**Captain Chris Lee** My guest today is Captain Bill Hubbell. He's the Chairman of the Strategic Preparedness Strike Committee also known as the SPSC committee. Thanks for coming Bill.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Thanks Chris, thanks for having me.

**Captain Chris Lee** Tell everybody about your background before FedEx and at FedEx.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Sure Chris. I grew up in Alaska. I started flying there when I was a freshman in college when I was 18. I flew as I had extra time and money during college which wasn't a lot or as much as I wanted to, but once I graduated with my undergrad I decided that this is what I wanted to do for a career. So, I went and did the flight instructing job for not quite a year. I've been real fortunate in my timing. So, I was a flight instructor for about a year. From there I got hired at Atlantic Southeast Airlines. I was hired into the right seat of the Brasilia turboprop which was a great airplane. We just didn't keep them around long enough but I did a little bit of a Captainship on that airplane until we parked them and then transitioned over the CRJ as a Captain for the rest of my time there. I'd started to be an instructor there right before I got hired at FedEx. September 2005, I was lucky and got hired at FedEx. I got hired into the backseat of a 727. I did that for not quite two years. I had the bid to go to Anchorage but that was our first round of purple nuggets. So, they trained those guys in front of me and I ended up in Anchorage as an MD11 First Officer in 2007. I did that for 10 years and then we moved back down to the lower 48 and I upgraded to MD11 Captain in Memphis a little over two years ago.

**Captain Chris Lee** What can you tell everybody about your previous union experience?

**Captain Bill Hubbell** At ASA there I started in the P2P program. I went through the P2P training and helped out with that committee. Then also right before I got hired at FedEx I started working with the grievance committee there at ASA. I had just started getting my feet wet there when I came to FedEx. Once I came to FedEx when I was in Anchorage I was the Anchorage Secretary-Treasurer from 2010 to 2013. After that ended, we were negotiating for CBA 2015. I worked with the SPSC and organized the picketing event in Anchorage. A couple months after that I went over to New York in November of 2014 and helped with that picketing event. A couple of years after that I was back here in Memphis and I was asked to come under the R&I committee. I was chosen to be the R&I Vice Chairman back in January of 2018. I did that job for about a year and a half just until this last summer. We handed that off. R&I was quite an exposure to a very large and diverse committee, work a lot with the company on that side. We had a couple of transitions with vendors. We changed over to Fidelity, very busy, very involved quite a steep learning curve but also really good work. We're able to really help a lot of our pilots there. I'm still involved with the R&I committee. I've just stepped out of the Vice Chairman role. I also sit on the PRP board through the R&I committee. That is the Post Retirement Premium Reimbursement for retirees, the VEBA, some people know it as. I still sit on that board and then this summer I was asked to head up the SPSC and became the Chairman of this committee in July.

**Captain Chris Lee** You mentioned you were the Anchorage Secretary-Treasurer which is LEC 79. Talk a little bit about your role in that job.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Sure. I was the Secretary-Treasurer which I didn't know at the time and I think a lot of people don't know it's considered a non-status rep. The non-status rep arrangement is basically every domicile every council other than Memphis you have a Chairman who has a vote at the table with the MEC and then you have a Vice-Chair and a Secretary-Treasurer which do not have votes. It's a little bit of a tricky spot because you go in the crew room, you go on a trip and people see that you're an officer of this council but yet you don't have a vote. I was fortunate to work with Susie Latvala and Ted Duell and they were extremely inclusive. They turned me on to every email, everything that was going on so that I did have those answers. But that was a great way to I guess get your feet wet if you will in union business. You got to see what went on at the table yet you didn't really have the responsibility of having a vote there. So, it was a good time to get involved.

**Captain Chris Lee** And in that role, you're involved with local council meetings, arranging them organizing them and putting them together.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Exactly. Yeah. We would have our meetings there that I would organize, take care of the minutes, take care of the menus, you know whatever venue we wanted to have them. I'd work with our local family awareness people there to do our annual picnic and we used to do it at the zoo. It was really good exposure. I got to work with the communications department. I got to see the finance side of it a little bit. It was just a really nice broad introduction to union work.

**Captain Chris Lee** Talk a little bit about what the SPSC committee does.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Well the SPSC really has a couple of different parts to it. The first and overlying is the strategic plan development. I work with the MEC with other subject matter experts and help them develop and manage the overall strategic plan of the FedEx MEC. We do things like a SWOT analysis, look at our strengths weaknesses opportunities threats. Get an idea of what direction they want to go with different goals and initiatives. And then once that's set we help them manage those. We give some accountability to those goals, a timeline so we can track progress and completion. The other part of that strategic plan now getting closer to 2021 is obviously helping plan for our negotiations in 2021. It's a similar process it's just a little more focused towards the negotiation side of that.

**Captain Chris Lee** Why is it important for the union to have a strategic plan?

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Just like a flight plan, if you don't have an idea of where you want to go you spend a lot of times kind of meandering. So, if you have an actual plan and have some accountability and some goals and some targets you can track that. I think it just leads to a more focused effort. Essentially, it's our flight plan.

**Captain Chris Lee** As we move toward contract 2021 and into bargaining the SPSC committee's role gets amplified.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** And that's more of the traditional strike committee that people are familiar with. You start looking at planning events supporting, of course, the MEC and the negotiating committee when things get busier essentially and we get further into bargaining. We go back to having events like we did in 2014 whether they're picketing events or family events.

**Captain Chris Lee** On the strategic side I know presently you're working with MEC creating internal guidelines. Talk a little bit about that and the path as you see it towards negotiations.

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Sure. The internal guidelines are that, they're internal helping the MEC develop guidelines and tenants on how they want to conduct business amongst themselves moving forward. And you know we're going to have turnover with the reps the next several years, just the nature of our structure and so we wanted to develop these guidelines to help the incoming reps understand what's been happening, how we've been conducting business. Moving forward from that we'll have some survey data, our initial survey data. From there we're going to help the MEC kind of craft their negotiating plan with more specific cornerstones and things we hope to achieve in this new CBA. And then moving forward from there we just help them manage that plan through the process as we move forward towards CBA 2021.

**Captain Chris Lee** Who do you have on your committee?

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Right now it's just myself and First Officer Eric Moraes. He stepped into the Vice-Chair role but we're planning on building out the committee as negotiations go on. We'll be looking for more help in different areas of the country.

**Captain Chris Lee** If there are pilots out there who are interested in volunteering how do you want them to contact you?

**Captain Bill Hubbell** The best way to get ahold of me is to go and fill out a PDR. It's on the front page of the [fdx.alpa.org](http://fdx.alpa.org) web page. Click on PDR and as you're filling out the form about midway down the form it'll say committee and issue type. That's a drop-down menu. If you select Strategic Preparedness SPSC that's the best way to get information directly to me.

**Captain Chris Lee** Well, Bill thanks so much for coming. Any final thoughts?

**Captain Bill Hubbell** Sure yeah, I try to encourage people to get involved and that's really going to become more important here is as we near negotiations. I was lucky to have a lot of good mentors in front of me that brought me through here and showed me why it's important to be involved. I think what everybody needs to understand is that our CBA's from the past didn't just happen with no effort. You know there were a lot of really good people who made a lot of sacrifices, spent a lot of time so that we have all of these benefits to enjoy, all of our work rules and our pay and our vacation. Everything that we have is because of our collective bargaining agreement and us collectively asserting ourselves. I feel very fortunate to work at FedEx. I think it's a great company. However, we also need to realize that our goals don't always align. FedEx is a Fortune 500 company and their goals are to maximize profits and shareholder value with a minimum amount of expenses. I think we have a lot of common goals. Obviously, we want it to succeed and be a great business but they don't always align. You know I'd like to see pay, benefits, retirement, work rules that acknowledge our contribution to the bottom line of the corporation. We're the ones out there generating revenue 24/7 365 days a year. It's important that we're recognized for that. For me, it's always important to leave a place better than when you found it. That's something that was hammered into me since I was a kid. If you borrow a tool or borrow someone's car you clean it up you fill it full of gas and that's kind of how I treat this job and the profession honestly. You know the last kind of takeaway is that the union is us. It's not a faceless nameless entity. It's only going to be as

strong as our collective involvement. So, I just really encourage everyone to get involved, get more involved if you already are involved. There's you know gosh there are hub turn meetings, there are local council meetings, there's textcaster, email, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, the new PDR system. However, you find you're able to get involved I really encourage it. Answer the call. We're going to need everybody involved.

**Captain Chris Lee** Thanks again, Bill. And thanks for listening to our podcast. If you have any questions or topic ideas please send us an email to [fdxpodcast@alpa.org](mailto:fdxpodcast@alpa.org). And as always be safe out there and we'll see you next time.