

## Podcast Transcription

### Retirement & Insurance Committee: Captain Kevin Biggins, Aug 2021

**Captain Chris Lee** My guest today is R&I Committee Chair, Captain Kevin Biggins. Thanks for coming, Kevin.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Hey, Chris, thanks for having me.

**Captain Chris Lee** Talk about your background before you came to FedEx and what you've been doing since you've been at FedEx.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Yeah, sure. So I was a graduate of the Purdue University flight program back in the late 90s. After graduating there, I worked at an airline down the road named Chautauqua Airlines at the time, flew a couple of turboprops and regional jets until I got here to FedEx in 2006. I got hired into the back of the 727 here, sitting sideways for four and a half years until I upgraded to the right seat of the 757. After a short stint there, I transitioned over to the MD11 as a FO, was in that seat until three years ago when I upgraded to the left seat of the 767.

**Captain Chris Lee** Talk a little bit about your union experience.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** I started out as a P2P rep a number of years ago. I did that until I interviewed and was hired into the R&I Committee in early 2018. From that point, I was a member until two years ago I moved into the R&I Vice Chair position and then earlier this year in 2021, I became the R&I Chairman.

**Captain Chris Lee** Talk a little bit about the R&I Committee and its makeup.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** I always kind of think about the R&I Committee as a big tent committee. We have a lot of touchpoints within ALPA and outside that we deal with on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis. The first part I'll mention is the pilots. We have four of our pilots on the R&I Committee, myself, and then the Vice Chair is 767 First Officer, Ben Monshor. Also, we have committee member 767 Captain, Ben Douglas and then Sean McCullers, who is a newly minted MD11 Captain.

**Captain Chris Lee** What about ALPA staff?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** So we deal day to day all the time with our three full-time benefit specialists, Brandy, Ann, and Stacey. We have the most benefit specialists of any ALPA carrier. So they do provide great service to our pilots. Additionally, we also have some attorneys in the local office here on Kirby and we also have national attorneys that specialize in retirement/insurance issues in the national office over in the DC area as well. On top of that, we also have at ALPA National a CFA, an actuary, and then other member insurance staff. So we have lots of contacts throughout the time as the committee works as needed. It just depends on what the situation calls for.

**Captain Chris Lee** Sounds like a big team.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** It sure is, because of that, though we do a lot of work. And that's the big reason why is that there's a lot of work our committee does and it requires a lot of support staff behind that work.

**Captain Chris Lee** What can you tell the pilots about the roles and responsibilities of the Retirement and Insurance Committee?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** A lot of the work is spelled out in the contract. If you looked in the contract under Section 27, which is Insurance, or Section 28, which is Retirement, you'll see there are meetings in there that are required by our CBA throughout the year and we staff those meetings, they're insurance board, retirement boards, pilot investment committees, etc. Those are staffed by our committee, supported by our staff and AALPA National. Additionally, there's a lot of things we do, especially this time of year, getting ready for open enrollment. We always do benefit seminars during that time so we can help our pilots and their families make the decisions they desire under their health care for the following year. Throughout the year, we also do retirement seminars. We averaged about two a month throughout the year as well as those folks are getting ready to retire and they want to go through a list of all the deadlines and options available to them as they get close to the end of their career. Leading up to this current negotiating cycle, we've been supporting the Negotiating Committee to achieve our contract goals concerning Section 28 and retirement improvements.

**Captain Chris Lee** Do you have this year's open enrollment dates?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Yeah, we do Chris. The company informed us over the summer the open enrollment, as usual, is going to be in October and this year it is from October 12th to the 27th. Once we got those dates, we decided to do these benefits seminars again, as we have in years past. However, due to COVID, it's going to be in a virtual setting. We'll communicate what those days are in the future. Stay tuned for that. They will be virtual and we'll provide information as that gets determined here probably next month.

**Captain Chris Lee** Are there any other enrollment deadlines that pilots need to be aware of?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Yeah, there is. So the open enrollment, as you mentioned, is October 12 to 27. The other one is for those folks who are enrolled in our CDHP plans. They have a wellness benefit associated with that election and the deadline to complete that wellness benefit, which consists of a questionnaire to be completed and a list of things (you must complete two of them) you must complete that by September 30th. And just as a reminder, if you're married, you have your own requirement and then your spouse would need to complete theirs as well. So the deadline, again, is the 30th of September to get that benefit to you. Additionally, there's other dates we can mention here. The Company has some Company provided Critical Illness and Accident Insurance wellness benefit for that. So it's a different benefit if you are enrolled in those products and want to get that benefit, you need to complete that by the end of this calendar year. For those pilots who are considering retiring a year from December 31st, so this will be December 31, 2022, you need to let the Company know by December 31st of this year. So you need to give them a year notice per our CBA.

**Captain Chris Lee** There's a new law in the state of Washington that might impact any of our pilots who live there. Can you talk about that some?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** The state of Washington has a new law which is going to require its residents to pay for a long term care insurance product through a new payroll tax. We believe that this will not affect our FedEx pilots living there because they are not domiciled

there as opposed to some other ALPA carriers. However, there might be exceptions to that if you have some side business or side income outside of FedEx income and you live in the state of Washington. It's a new law and a lot of our pilots may not want to be enrolled in this insurance product. And because of that, ALPA National has been working on creating their own product that if you have selected, you would not be required to opt in to the state long term care insurance product and thus be subject to their payroll tax. There is a rapidly approaching deadline to enroll in the ALPA National product, and it is this August 29th. So it's a Sunday, coming up soon here. If you have any questions, please contact ALPA National at Member Insurance or call us here at the FedEx office in Memphis and we will get you information as soon as we can on that.

**Captain Chris Lee** Well, [Contract 21](#) negotiations are underway and obviously retirement is a big issue. Talk about your involvement with the Negotiating Committee.

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Yes, so our involvement has included a lot of our subject matter experts that we mentioned earlier, the actuaries, attorneys, and so forth. And through those folks and then our own committee members and our staff here locally, we have been supporting the negotiating committee to meet the goals set up by the MEC, which is to improve the retirement benefits for all of our pilots. This has been no small undertaking, the time that's gone into these proposals and the work that has been done and will be continued to be done. We are in communication and constantly supporting the Negotiating Committee in close contact with the MEC and the Officers as well to make sure that we do meet these important goals set out by the MEC.

**Captain Chris Lee** What's the best way for pilots to reach out to they are not if they have any questions?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** The best way is through the [DART](#) system at [dart.alpa.org](http://dart.alpa.org). If you send us a message over there, it'll get to all the pilots on the committee as well as the benefits specialists, and then we'll get back to you soon on that. If it's a time-critical issue, you can always call the office during business hours. My personal information is online and I can be reached depending on my flight schedule but the [DART](#) is initially the best way to get a hold of us.

**Captain Chris Lee** Any final thoughts?

**Captain Kevin Biggins** Yeah, I just want to put a plug in for the website [fdx.alpa.org](http://fdx.alpa.org). If you go log in there under [Retirement & Insurance](#), there's a wealth of information on there, a library of knowledge. We mentioned earlier we're going to do open enrollment benefit seminars this year. If you can't make one of those, we have a [recorded benefits presentation](#) on there, [narrated](#) and [non-narrated](#). It's in a YouTube format that you can look at at your own time whenever it's convenient for you. We also have other articles on there and links to other subcommittees that make up the Retirement & Insurance committee, such as the Pilot Benefit Review Board or PBRB or the Premium Reimbursement Plan, the PRP. There are some articles in there. We get questions on those occasionally on what they are and so if you ever have some time and want to go and dig deep, there's a lot of information that we think you'll find helpful. So we just encourage you all to do that.

**Captain Chris Lee** Thanks, Kevin. Thanks for coming. Don't forget, open enrollment is coming up in October. It'll be October 12th through the 27th. If you have any questions

about open enrollment or anything else, please go to [fdx.alpa.org](https://fdx.alpa.org) and utilize the [DART link](#) and as always, be safe out there and we'll see you next on.