
UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT

**PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(D) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): January 12, 2006

ALASKA AIR GROUP, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation)

1-8957
(Commission File No.)

91-1292054
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification Number)

19300 International Boulevard, Seattle, Washington 98188
(Address of Principal Executive Offices) (Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (206) 392-5040

Not Applicable
(Former name or former address, if changed since last report.)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
 - Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
 - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))
-

Item 5.02. Departure of Directors or Principal Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Principal Officers.

On January 12, 2006, Alaska Airlines, Inc. ("Alaska") announced that Kevin Finan has been appointed Executive Vice President of Operations for Alaska. The appointment was made on January 12, 2006 and is not for a fixed term.

Mr. Finan, who is 58 years old, was previously Vice President of Flight Operations for Alaska and served in that position since July 2000. Prior to that, Mr. Finan was a flight operations base manager and captain for Alaska and a former chief pilot for Jet America Airlines. Mr. Finan also served as a commanding officer of a U.S. Navy Reserve F-14 fighter squadron and while in the military flew 90 combat missions over Vietnam, earning four air medals and two Navy commendation medals. In 1998, Mr. Finan was named an Alaska Airlines "Legend," the highest honor an Alaska employee can receive. Mr. Finan graduated cum laude from Gettysburg College, holds a master's degree from the University of Southern California and has attended the Aviation Safety School at the U.S. Navy Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

Exhibit 99.1 Press Release dated January 12, 2006.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

ALASKA AIR GROUP, INC.
Registrant

Date: January 18, 2006

/s/ Brandon S. Pedersen

Brandon S. Pedersen
Staff Vice President/Finance and Controller

/s/ Bradley D. Tilden

Bradley D. Tilden
Executive Vice President/Finance and Chief Financial Officer

Contact: Caroline Boren -or- Amanda Tobin
206-392-5799 206-392-5134

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 12, 2006

**ALASKA AIRLINES ANNOUNCES EXECUTIVE CHANGES IN
OPERATIONS AND SAFETY DIVISIONS**

SEATTLE – Alaska Airlines today announced the election of Kevin Finan as executive vice president of operations and Glenn Johnson as senior vice president of customer service for airports.

Both promotions are part of a succession plan following the Dec. 31 retirement of George Bagley as executive vice president of operations for the airline.

“These promotions recognize the talent and contributions of two outstanding individuals,” said Alaska’s CEO Bill Ayer. “Together they bring more than 50 years of aviation experience to their new roles of leading the day-to-day operations of Alaska Airlines.”

Alaska also announced today that Dave Prewitt, Alaska’s vice president of safety, will leave the airline next month to become vice president of safety for Connecticut-based Sikorsky Aircraft Corp.

“In six years with Alaska Airlines, Dave has led a safety division dedicated to upholding the highest standards in the industry,” Ayer said. “Under his leadership, in 2004 Alaska became the first major airline in the nation to be named a Shield Carrier, the highest award given by the Medallion Foundation, an aviation safety organization backed by the Federal Aviation Administration. Later that same year, our safety division achieved the distinction of being one of only a handful in the nation to be ISO 9000 certified.”

ISO 9000 certification is an internationally recognized mark of a quality safety management system.

Prewitt cited a desire to move closer to his family as a major factor in his decision to depart Alaska Airlines. “From day one, I’ve been impressed with the strong commitment of Alaska Airlines employees to the goal of being No. 1 in safety,” Prewitt said. “Sikorsky has offered me an opportunity to work with a team equally committed to that goal, while also allowing me to meet the needs of my family.”

Ayer has asked the Safety Committee of Alaska Air Group’s board of directors to guide the search for a new vice president of safety.

“This is a critically important position for our company,” Ayer said. “Having our board Safety Committee involved in the recruitment process will add essential expertise to the search for Dave’s successor.”

Alaska Air Group Director and Safety Committee Chairman Richard Wien said, “Safety continues to be the top priority of Alaska Airlines. The board’s goal will be to maintain this focus by selecting another proven aviation industry leader to oversee this critical area.”

Formerly vice president of flight operations, Finan, 58, will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the airline. This includes ground operations, flight operations, maintenance and engineering, and real estate.

Finan, who reports directly to Ayer, has more than 30 years and 9,000 flight hours of aviation experience. A former flight operations base manager and captain for Alaska Airlines and a former chief pilot for Jet America Airlines, Finan also served as a commanding officer of a U.S. Navy Reserve F-14

fighter squadron. While in the military, he flew 90 combat missions over Vietnam, and was awarded four air medals and two Navy commendation medals.

A cum laude graduate of Gettysburg College, he also holds a master's degree from the University of Southern California. In addition, he has attended the Aviation Safety School at the U.S. Navy Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

In 1998, Finan was named an Alaska Airlines "Legend," the highest honor an Alaska Airlines employee can receive. The program recognizes those who personify Alaska Airlines' core values of integrity, caring, spirit, resourcefulness and professionalism.

Johnson, 48, brings more than 23 years of airline experience to the position of senior vice president of customer service for airports at Alaska Airlines. He is a former senior vice president of customer service for Horizon Air, where he was responsible for station operations at 40 airports in the United States and Canada.

A graduate of the University of Washington, Johnson joined Alaska Airlines in 1982 as a staff auditor and was later promoted to director of revenue accounting. In 1991 Johnson left Alaska to become vice president and treasurer of Horizon Air. He returned to Alaska Airlines in 2003 as vice president of finance.

For the past six months, Johnson has led an operations improvement team focused on enhancing the airline's schedule reliability. Working with ground service and customer service employees, outside contractors, and others, he successfully improved the airline's on-time arrival percentage from about 50 percent in June 2005 to a high of 80 percent in October 2005. He also has led the airline's Ground Operations Division on an interim basis since October.

Alaska Airlines and sister carrier, Horizon Air, together serve 88 cities through an expansive network throughout Alaska, the Lower 48, Canada and Mexico. For reservations visit alaskaair.com. For more news and information, visit the Alaska Airlines/Horizon Air newsroom at <http://newsroom.alaskaair.com>.

###