

Comment to Docket #12501:

What started as an effort to unilaterally retire senior Captains at American Airlines on their sixtieth birthday, ended, because of union and government mediators refusal to accommodate the airline C.E.O.'s irrational attempt at dictating an Age 60 Rule. Frustrated by his failure so far, C.R. Smith (AA C.E.O.) turned to his friend, and fellow Army General during WWII, Elwood Quesada, now a new FAA Administrator, for assistance. The letters in the pilots petition attest to the underhanded methods used to thwart any semblance of due process. Quesada's appointment to the Board of Directors of American Airlines immediately after his departure from the FAA endorses the "conspiracy theory".

The history of studies contracted by the FAA are no less "shadowed". The pilots petition clearly points to repeated discrepancies in the methodology, with a foregone conclusion as the result. Only in FAA studies is there mention of a definite retirement age being needed. No independent study that I know, states that some age must be necessary, instead usually maintaining the view that individual qualification is a workable solution.

Can anyone make a case that the rest of the world is unjustified in raising their pilot forced retirement ages to 65 and in many cases, no age limit? What criteria are they using that we, in the most advanced nation in the world, have no knowledge of? Has there been a public outcry against pilots over age 60 in any of those countries? I would venture to say, "NO".

Has not the FAA granted, in the past, blanket authority to several foreign airlines to fly into the USA using pilots, including captains, without restriction due to being over age 60? Were there any documented problems due to age? I think not.

It's time to wake up and adjust accordingly. FAR 121.383(c) is not a safety regulation, and never has been. It is imperative to grant the exemptions requested.

Sincerely,

Bert M. Yetman
President
Professional Pilots Federation
September 21, 2002