

# Alaska Air Group Inc. Pitch

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# **Industry Overview**

Alaska Air





# Airline Industry Primer: Four Types of Airlines Different Categories of Airlines



#### International

- 130+ seat planes that have the ability to take passengers just about anywhere in the world
- Typical annual revenue over \$1B



## Regional

- · Companies that focus on short-haul flights
- Revenues less than \$100M



#### **National**

- Usually these airlines seat 100-150 people
- Annual revenues \$100M \$1B



#### Cargo

• These airlines generally transport goods





# **Airline Industry Primer - Key Ratios and Terms**



Key Terms

 Available Seat Mile (ASM): The Basic Measure of Capacity - One seat (empty or filled) flying one mile is an ASM

Example: A 140-seat MD-80 flying a 500-mile segment creates 70,000 ASMs (140 \* 500)

 Revenue Passenger Mile (RPM): The Basic Measure of Production - A paying passenger flying one mile creates an RPM

Example: 100 passengers flying 500 miles generates 50,000 RPMs (100 \* 500)

Load Factor: RPM / ASM
 Example: 50,000 RPM / 70,000 ASM = 71.4%







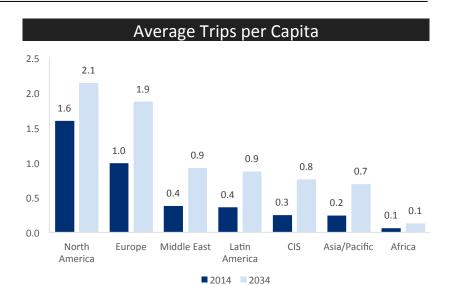
## **Global Outlook**

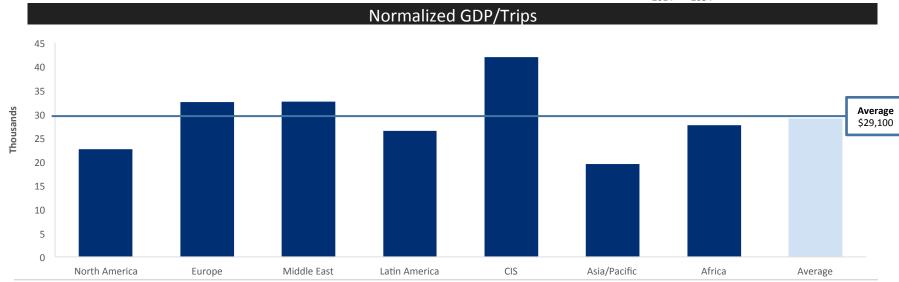
**Industry Trends** 



## **Global Industry Developments**

- Drop in fuel prices leads to lower costs and increased margins (assuming no hedging)
- Low-cost debt financing allows for fleet expansion
- Intense competition in a very saturated industry, particularly for regional airliners
- Little pricing leverage
- New regulatory changes regarding pilot flight hours and rest times will affect bottom line
- Currency fluctuations affect profitability



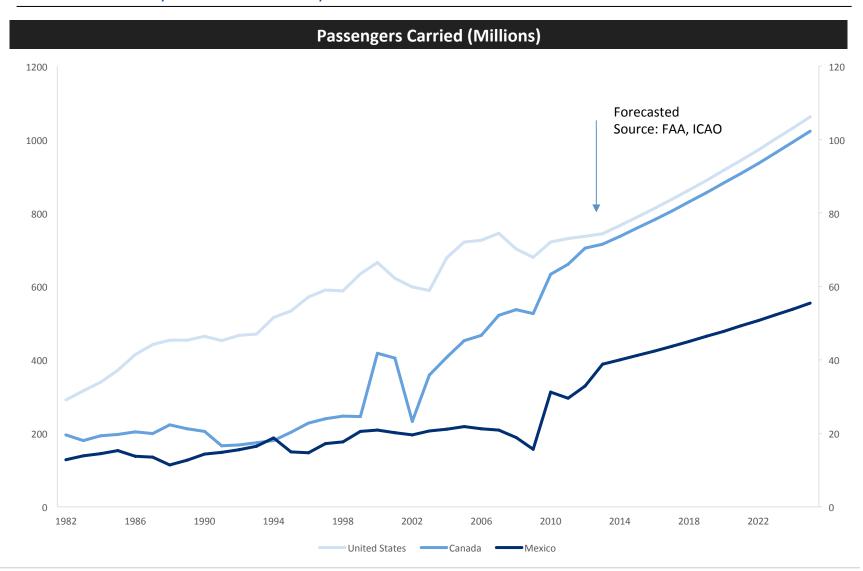




# Passenger Trend Analysis The Airline Industry is a Volatile Industry





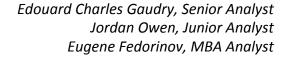






# **Company Overview**

Alaska Air Group Inc.





# **Company Description**

Alaska Air Group Inc.



#### **Company Description**

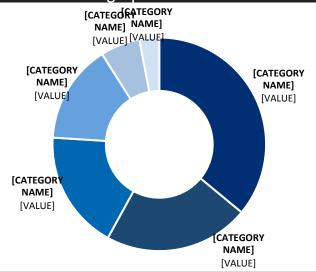
- Alaska Air Group Inc. is currently the 7th largest U.S. air carrier and is based in Seattle, Washington
  - The airline's origins date back to McGee Airways, formed in 1932, founded by Mac McGee
  - A merger with Star Air Service in 1934 created the largest airline in Alaska
- The firm now serves more than 100 destinations in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and four Hawaiian Islands
  - ALK owns and operates a fleet size of 188 aircrafts

#### (values in \$M, as of March 16th, 2015) \$68.68 Share Price S/O (mm) 131.3 Market Cap \$9,870.0 + Total Debt \$803.0 + Minority Interest \$0 + Preferred Shares \$0 - Cash \$1,217.0 **Enterprise Value** \$9,456.0 Beta 0.92 Dividend Yield 1.16% Return on Common Equity 29.10% 52-Week High \$71.4 52-Week Low \$40.7

Public Market Overview

Finacials & Multiples	LTM	FY2015E	FY2016E
(values in \$M)			
Revenue	\$5,368.0	\$5,620.0	\$6,028.0
%Growth		5%	7%
Operating Income	\$1,003.0	\$1,299.0	\$1,355.0
%Margin		23%	22%
Adjusted EPS	\$4.42	\$6.1	\$6.46
% Growth		38%	6%
P/E	13.5x	11.1x	10.5x
P/B	3.7x	3.3x	2.7x
(Source:Thomson One)			

#### Geographic Distribution



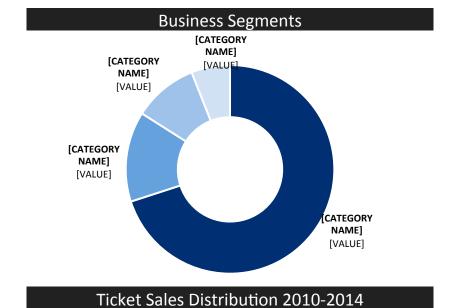


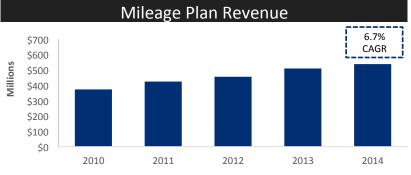
## **Business Plan Overview**

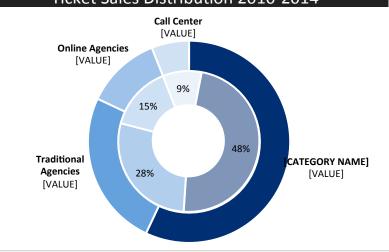
How the firm generates its cash



# Alaska Airline Over 100 seats and operates under the mainline segment Horizon Air Close quarters flights and operates under the regional segment







 Bonus miles upon approval Bonus miles awarded
 Yes
 No
 No
 No
 No
 No
 No
 Southwest Rapid Rewards Premier

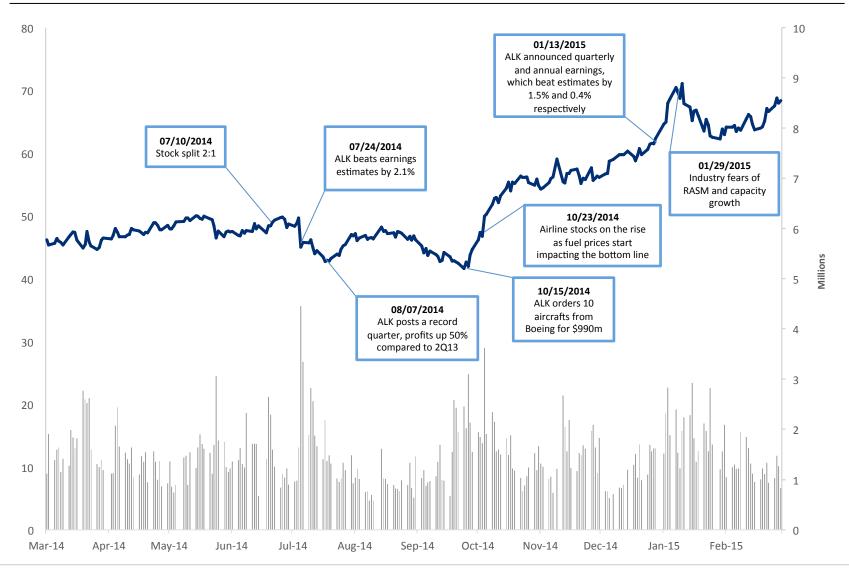
 Bonus miles upon approval Bonus miles awarded
 25,000 upon approval
 30,000 after spending \$1,000
 50,000 after spending \$2,000
 Annual fee
 \$75
 \$95
 \$99
 \$99
 No
 No
 No
 No
 No
 No
 First bad free
 No
 No
 No
 No
 No
 Bould reserved
 No
 No



# **Annotated Stock Chart**





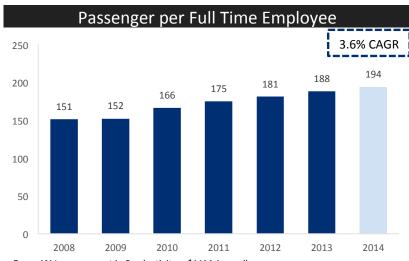


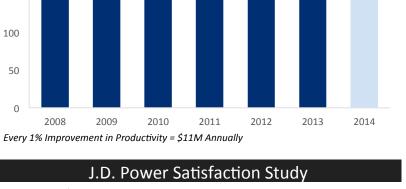


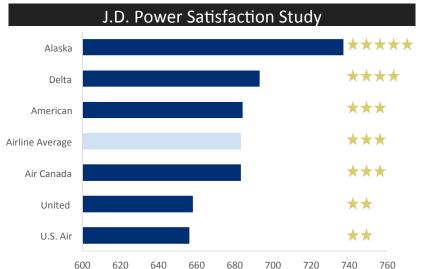
# **Expanding Markets and Employee Efficiency**

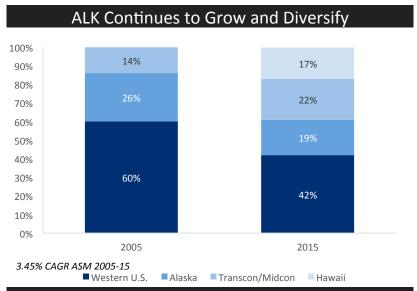


Improving the company through customer satisfaction

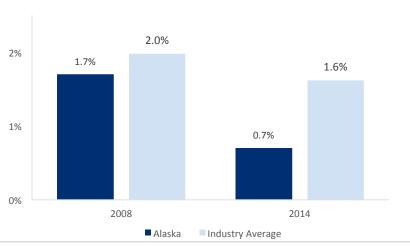
















# **Investment Thesis**

Attractive valuation upside & further growth opportunities



## **Investment thesis**

Good company, great investment



- Best Operator in the Industry
- Strongest operating margin in the industry, undertaking new initiatives to further improve
  - Upside potential from ancillary revenue: introduction of preferred seating, retrofit program and mileage plan
- ALK outperforms the industry in terms of PASM, aircraft utilization and ancillary revenue growth
  - Ancillary revenue growth serves as protection against oil price volatility and ALK is well positioned against peers

2

Less Vulnerable
To Market
Downturns

- Alaska's fleet is one of the youngest in the industry, which results in material increases in fuel efficiency
  - On average, legacy carriers have the oldest fleets as well as lowest fuel efficiency, which results in material cost disadvantages
- ALK's aggregate fleet fuel efficiency is expected to increase by about 10.5% in the next two years, which will result in approximately \$57M in annual cost savings on \$605M in profit
  - ALK's optimal fuel efficiency will result in reduced fluctuations in EPS and EBIT in 2015-2016 bear and bull oil price expectation

- Poised For
  Significant FCF
  Generation &
  Returning
  Capital
- Alaska Air is rolling out a revenue plan, rather than a mileage plan, in 2015, which is the only frequent flying program that rewards clients based on all spending
- ALK is increasing their share buyback and dividend distribution plan at an accelerating pace
  - In 2014 alone, ALK returned more capital than the cumulative return between 2007-2012
- ALK's fleet is one of the least weighted towards leasing as a percent of total fleet
  - Studies have shown that airlines that own a higher percent of their fleet generate higher FCF yield

4

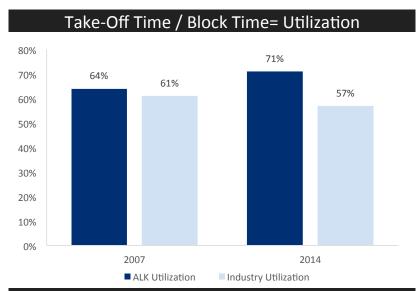
**Valuation** 

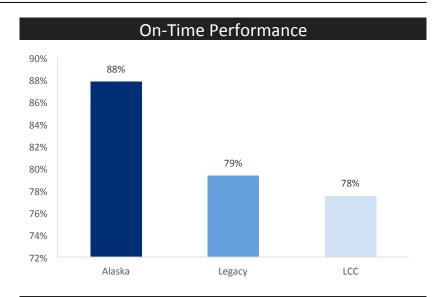
- Multiple Re-Rate as ALK Becomes a LCC
  - Investors have placed ALK in the Legacy Carrier bucket, which does not depict the actual cost & revenue structure of the firm and a multiple re-rate will generate significant share appreciation
- ALK warrants premium compared to the industry based off the P / E and EV / EBITDAR multiples
  - 2015 P / E and EV / EBITDAR for ALK is 16.5x and 5.4x respectively, while the industry is trading at 23.9x and 14.1x
- DCF model yields a base case value of \$81.59, which represents 26.5% upside potential



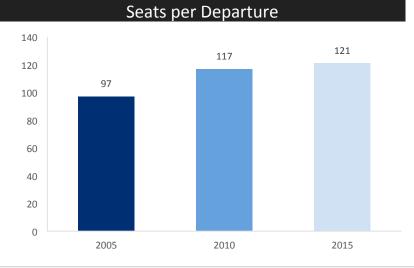
# **Best Operator in the Industry**Alaska outperforms in terms of fleet utilization and profitability













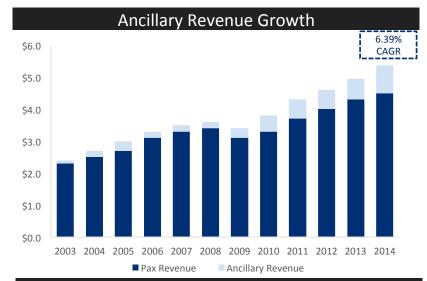




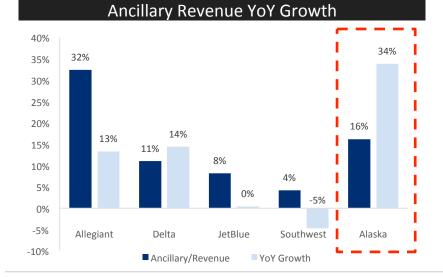
Revenues grew by 8.4% in 2014 and 4.4% of it came from ancillary revenues

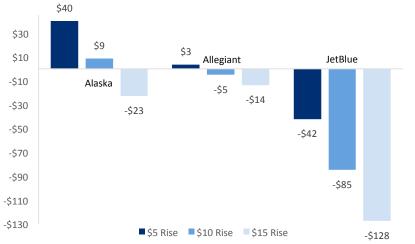
#### Three Initiatives

- ALK modified the affinity card agreement with Bank of America, through which Alaska sells miles to BAC
  - Resulted in an increase in the mileage plan revenue by \$17M, representing a 4.2% increase
- Adding six seats to B737's via the seat retrofit program
  - These seats are now fitted on all 60 B737-900ER's and is expected to generate \$25M per year
- Preferred seating plan, expected to be rolled out in Q1/Q2 of 2015, is an innovative way to add higher profit margin seats, providing more leg room at a slight premium
  - Management expects premium seating to generate 0.72% benefit to profit in 2015



#### **Ancillary Protects Against Oil Volatility**

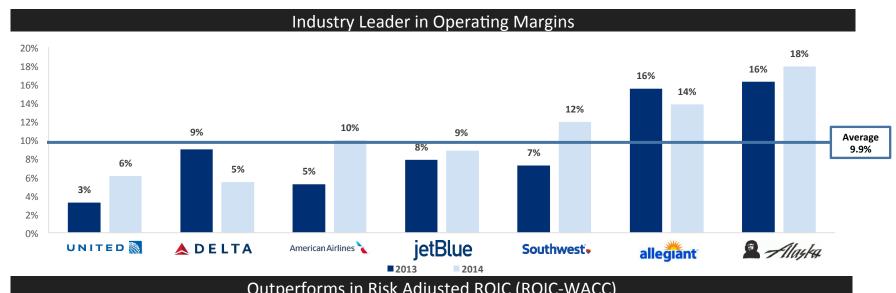


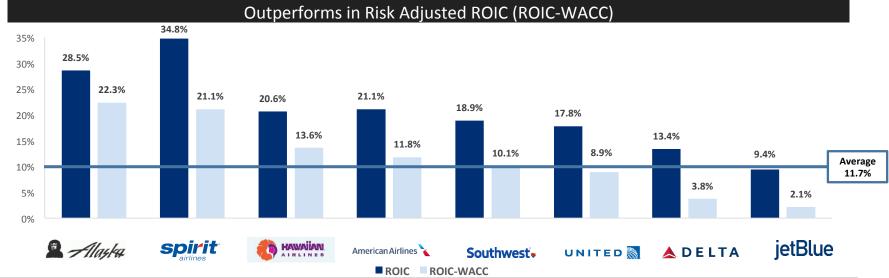








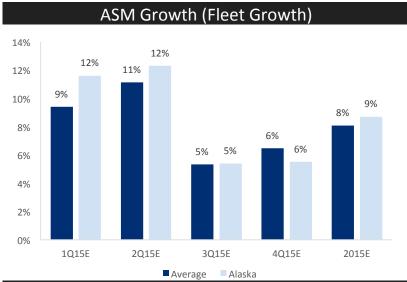


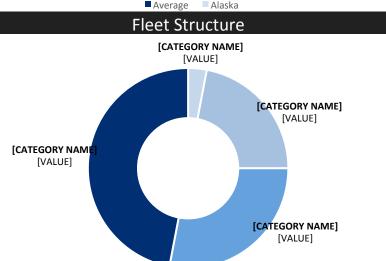


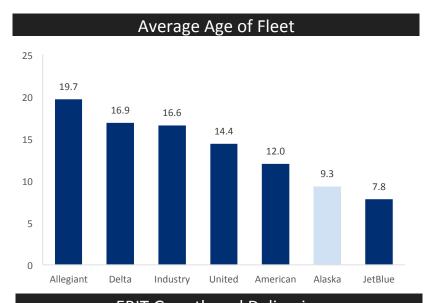


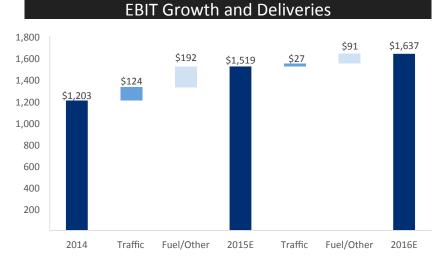
# A Prudent Operator in a Risky Industry ALK is focusing on optimizing fleet efficiency and growth







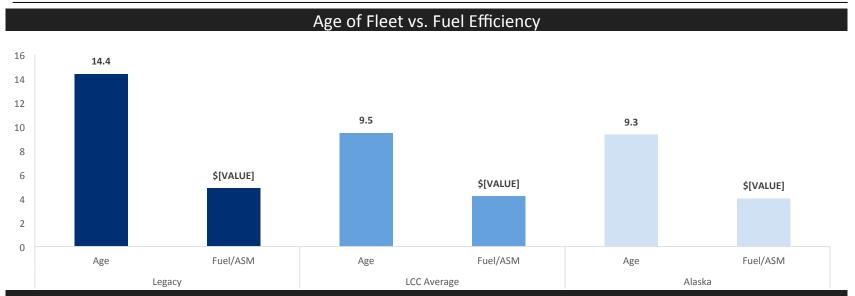




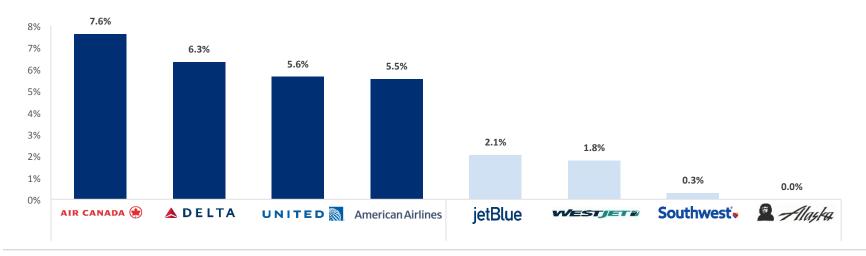


# A Prudent Operator in a Risky Industry Old fleets results in material cost disadvantages





## Incremental Fuel Cost as a Percent of Revenue

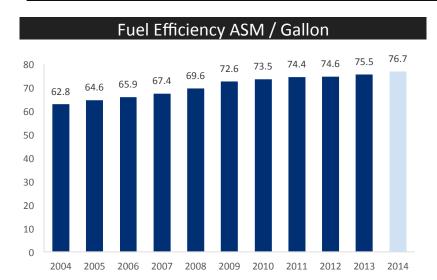




# A Prudent Operator in a Risky Industry

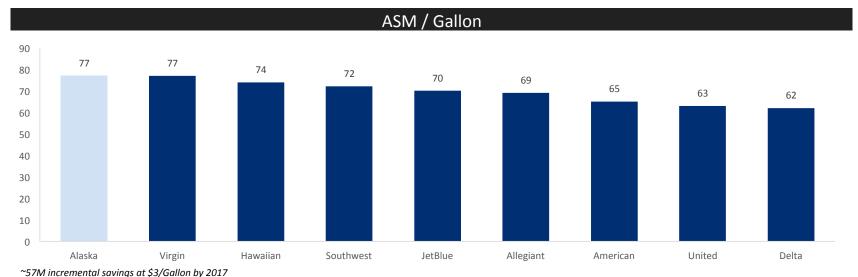
Fuel efficiency leads to significant cost savings





## Fuel Efficiency Affect on Profit Margin

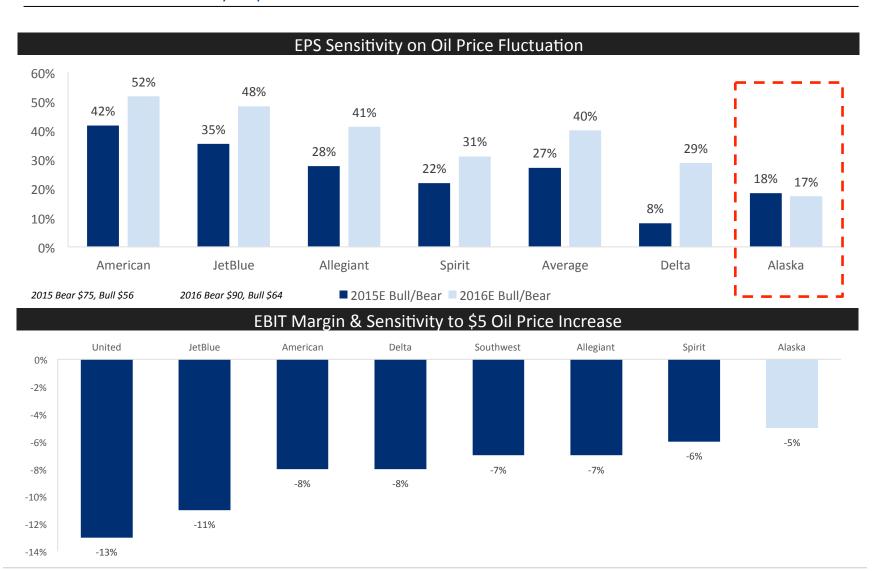
- A 1% increase in fuel efficiency yields ~27M in savings annually on 605M in profits
  - Over the period analyzed, fuel efficiency increased by 1.8% annually, yielding total savings of ~300M
- In 2017, fuel efficiency is expected to increase by 5.1% annually, which is expected to generate ~28M in annual savings
  - This is expected to improve net profit margins by 3.5% in 2015





# A Prudent Operator in a Risky Industry ALK is affected the least by oil price fluctuations

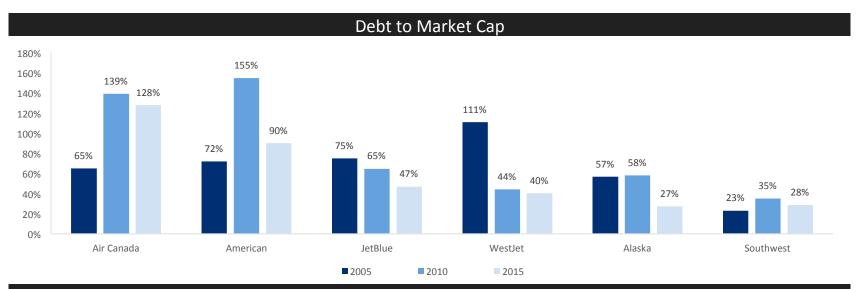




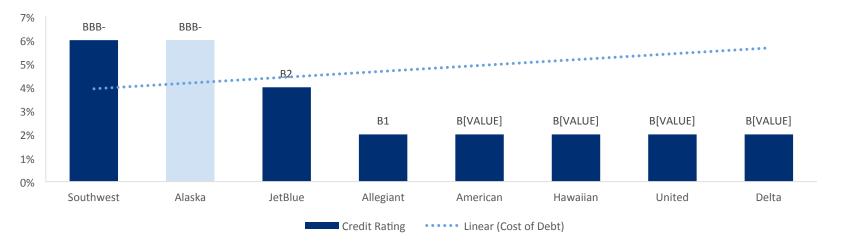


# A Prudent Operator in a Risky Industry ALK is less levered than peers





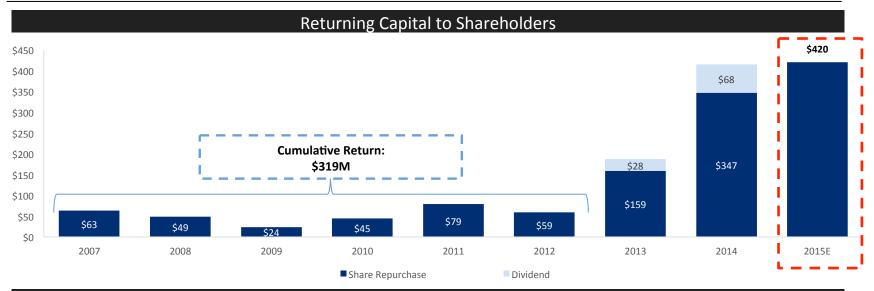


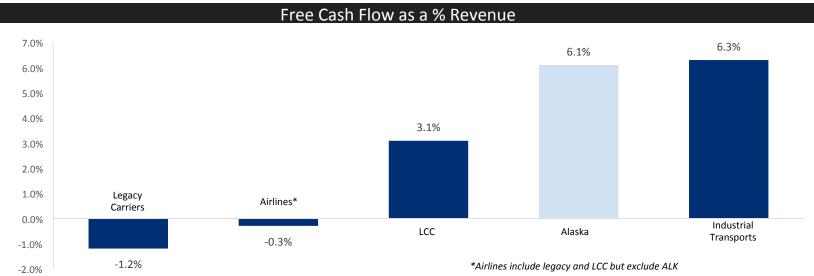




# Poised for Free Cash Flow Generation & Returning Capital Expanding Share Repurchase and Dividend Plan Aggressively



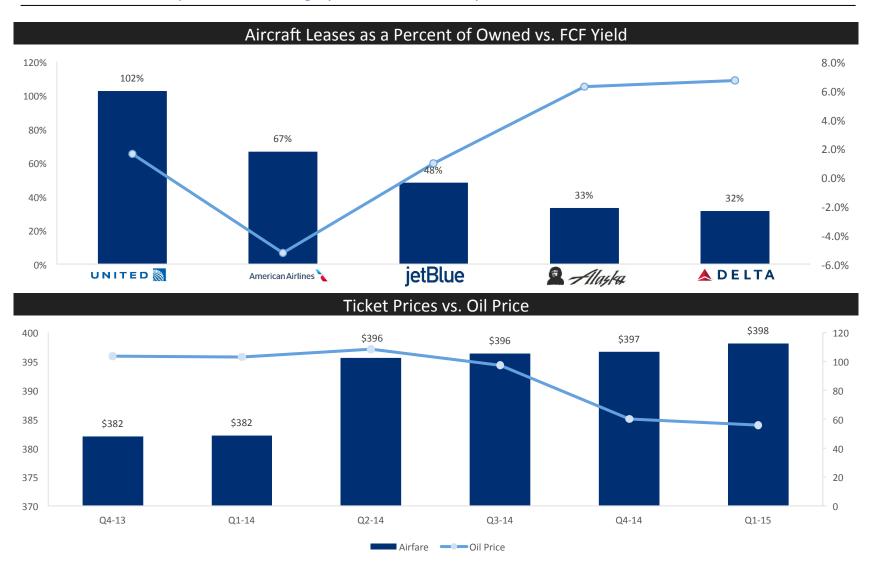






# Poised for Free Cash Flow Generation & Returning Capital ALK leases less than peers which is highly correlated to FCF yield

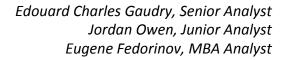








# **Valuation**

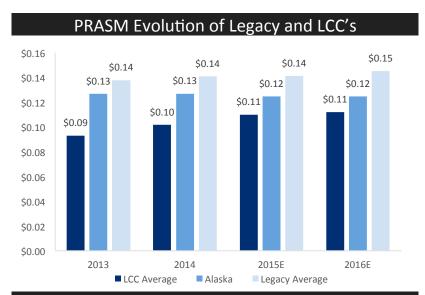


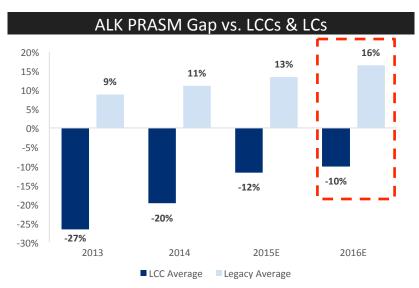


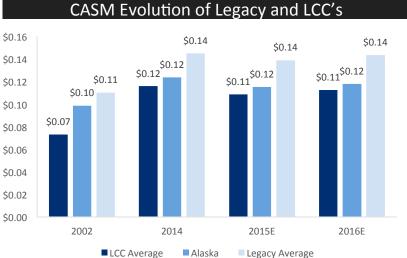
## Market Re-Rate as ALK Becomes a LCC

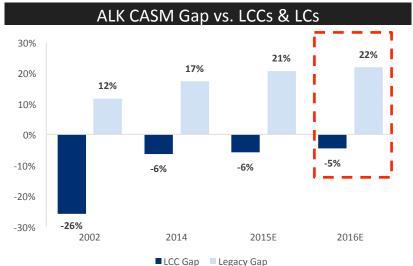
Operating metrics converging towards LCC averages













# 4

# Market Re-Rate as ALK Becomes a LCC





				P/	/E	EV/E	BITDAR					Load	Fuel /	
Company	Ticker	Mkt Cap	Beta	2015	2016E	<u>2015</u>	2016E	ROA	ROE	ROIC	NPM	Factor	Sales	PRASM
						<u> </u>								
Legacy Carriers		\$Bn				<u> </u>								
United Continental	UAL	26.7	0.76	19.0x	6.4x	NA	4.5x	3.1%	42.1%	18.1%	0.3%	81.7%	30.0%	\$0.13
Hawaiian Air	НА	1.1	0.92	13.9x	7.9x	4.3x	3.5x	2.9%	18.0%	13.1%	1.9%	82.2%	29.3%	\$0.12
Delta Air	DAL	39.1	0.95	25.6x	8.3x	11.3x	4.6x	1.2%	6.4%	9.7%	-7.4%	82.8%	28.9%	\$0.14
American Airlines	AAL	38.8	0.89	10.9x	6.4x	6.1x	5.1x	6.7%	NA	19.2%	5.9%	80.1%	29.5%	\$0.14
Average			0.88	17.4x	7.2x	7.2x	4.4x	3.5%	22.2%	15.0%	0.2%	81.7%	29.4%	\$0.13
						<u> </u>								
Low Cost Carriers		\$Bn				<u>: :</u>								
Southwestern Airlines	LUV	31.3	0.94	22.9x	12.4x	30.2x	5.9x	5.7%	16.1%	11.8%	4.1%	82.0%	28.4%	\$0.14
JetBlue	JBLU	6.1	1.23	25.4x	10.8x	6.4x	4.9x	5.3%	17.2%	6.0%	6.1%	82.1%	32.9%	\$0.12
Spirit Airlines	SAVE	5.8	1.01	26.1x	13.5x	8.4x	6.6x	16.2%	25.4%	22.2%	11.8%	84.8%	31.7%	\$0.06
Allegiant Travel	ALGT	3.4	0.71	21.4x	16.3x	11.5x	7.7x	8.0%	25.8%	12.4%	1.7%	85.1%	34.1%	\$0.13
Selected Comp Average			0.97	23.9x	13.3x	8.8x	6.3x	8.8%	21.1%	13.1%	5.9%	83.5%	31.8%	\$0.11
						: :								
Alaska Air	ALK	9.0	0.92	16.5x	10.6x	5.4x	5.1x	10.1%	29.1%	17.0%	11.3%	83.4%	26.8%	\$0.12
						'								

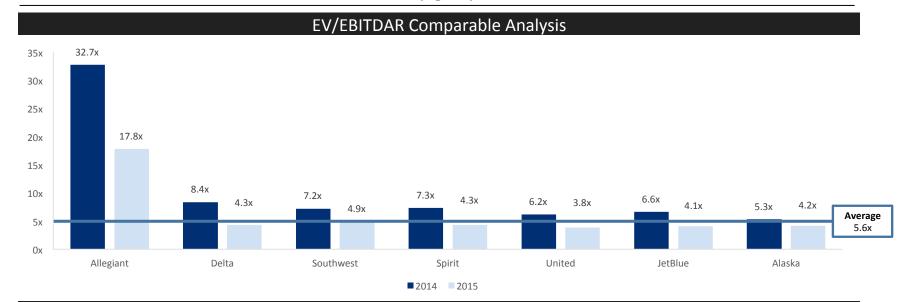
Multiple re-rate would suggest EV / NTM EBITDAR multiple accretion from **5.4x** to **~8.0x** as Alaska Air is considered as a Low Cost Carrier.

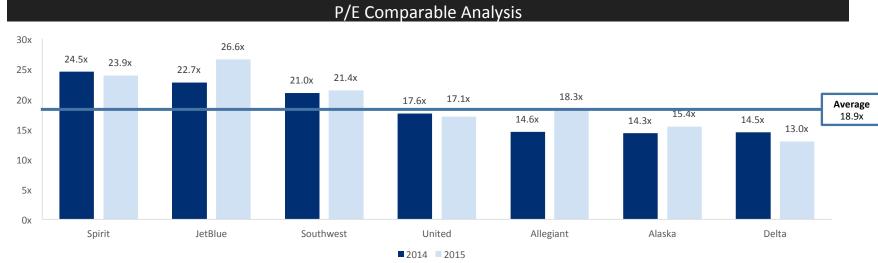


# Valuation



Alaska Air is undervalued based on the selected comp group







## **DCF Output and Operating Assumptions**





#### Bear

#### Revenue

Underperforms the market by 2% in 2015 and rises to 3% industry growth in 2021

#### **Operating costs**

Outperforms the industry by **7.3%** in 2015 and drops to a **2.5%** outperformance in 2021

Terminal EBITDA Multiple
4.0x EBITDA

Price Target: \$56.94 Downside: -11.0%



#### Base

#### Revenue

Constant **3%** industry growth throughout

#### **Operating costs**

Outperforms by **7.9%** in 2015 and falls to **6.7%** outperformance in 2021E

Terminal EBITDA Multiple 6.0x EBITDA

Price Target: \$79.42 Upside: 24.1%



#### Bull

#### Revenue

Outperforms the market by **5%** in 2015 and drops steadily to **3%** market performance by 2021

#### **Operating costs**

Maintains **8.1**% outperformance throughout

Terminal EBITDA Multiple 8.0x EBITDA

Price Target: \$100.38 Upside: 56.8%









Price target of \$79.42 represents 24.1% upside based on the Base Case of our DCF.







## **Sensitivity Tables**

<b>Current Pri</b>	ce: \$64.5				WACC			
		4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%
ple	4.0x	6.4%	2.9%	-0.4%	-3.5%	-6.4%	-9.1%	-11.6%
품	4.5x	12.4%	8.5%	4.9%	1.5%	-1.7%	-4.7%	-7.5%
EBITDA Multiple	5.0x	18.4%	14.2%	10.2%	6.5%	3.0%	-0.2%	-3.3%
ΤDΑ	5.5x	24.4%	19.8%	15.5%	11.5%	7.7%	4.2%	0.9%
EBI.	6.0x	30.4%	25.5%	20.8%	16.5%	12.4%	8.6%	5.0%
	6.5x	36.4%	31.1%	26.1%	21.5%	17.1%	13.0%	9.2%
Terminal	7.0x	42.4%	36.7%	31.4%	26.4%	21.8%	17.4%	13.4%
Te	7.5x	48.4%	42.4%	36.7%	31.4%	26.5%	21.9%	17.5%
	8.0x	54.4%	48.0%	42.0%	36.4%	31.2%	26.3%	21.7%

After analyzing the terminal EBITDA multiple sensitivity tables, we realized ALK is undervalued in most cases





## Alaska Air's Destination Map



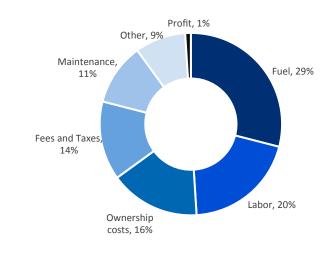
#### Multiple De-Rating

- RASM is expected to weaken in the next year as well as capacity growth expressed as ASM growth
- Capacity growth in North America over the next year is expected to outpace demand growth
  - This may lead to a situation where airlines are forced to cut prices and lower already slim margins
  - Lower demand also leads to lower revenue, expressed as RASM
- This fear has caused airline stocks to trade at lower 2015 multiples, however it seems to be priced in

## Ebola, Seriously....

- Infectious diseases such as Ebola may cut airline traffic, expressed as global RPM's, as fear reduces demand for air travel
  - As discussed in our industry review, a 3% decrease in global RPM's led to airline stocks plummeting by over 50%
- On the positive side, ALK is affected the least by Ebola because of the ALK has minimal exposure to Africa

#### Airline Cost Breakdown





# Recommendation

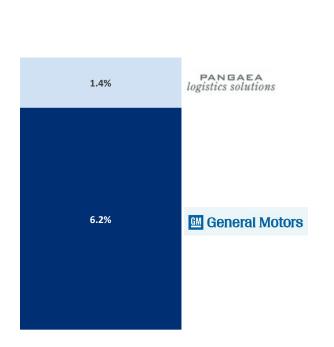


The Industrials Team recommends a **BUY**, and initiating a 3% position at a price of \$64.00 / share.

# **Industrials Sector Allocation**







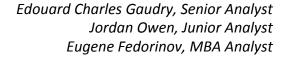


The Industrials Team suggests DCM enters a 3% buy position





# **Appendix**





# Revenue Assumptions Bear, Base, Bull



<u>Revenues</u>										
<u>Bull</u>										
Segment Revenue Growth	<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> A	<u>2014</u> A	2015E	<b>2016</b> E	2017E	2018E	2019E	2020E	2021E
ALK	5%	8%	2%	5.0%	5.0%	4.5%	3.5%	2.5%	1.5%	0.0%
Industry Growth	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Total	7.9%	10.8%	4.8%	8.0%	8.0%	7.5%	6.5%	5.5%	4.5%	3.0%

**Terminal Multiple** 8.0x

<u>Base</u>										
Segment Revenue Growth	<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> A	2014A	<u>2015</u> E	<u>2016</u> E	<u>2017</u> E	2018E	<u>2019</u> E	2020E	<u>2021</u> E
ALK	5%	8%	2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Industry Growth	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Total	7.9%	10.8%	4.8%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

**Terminal Multiple** 6.0x

<u>Bear</u>										
Segment Revenue Growth	<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> A	<u>2014</u> A	2015E	<u>2016</u> E	<u>2017</u> E	2018E	<b>2019</b> E	2020E	<u>2021</u> E
ALK	5%	8%	2%	-2.0%	-1.5%	-1.5%	-1.0%	-1.0%	-0.5%	0.0%
Industry Growth	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Total	7.9%	10.8%	4.8%	1.0%	1.5%	1.5%	2.0%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%

Terminal Multiple 4.0x

# Cost Assumptions Bear, Base, Bull



Costs											
<u>Bull</u>											
		<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> E	<u>2014</u> E	<u>2015</u> E	<u>2016</u> E	<u>2017</u> E	<u>2018</u> E	<u>2019</u> E	<u>2020</u> E	2021E
Funance	on an IV of Payers										
Expense	es as % of Revenue:	07.00/	0.4.00/	04.60/	0.4.20/	00.20/	02.00/	00 50/	00.00/	00.20/	00.00/
	Industry Average	87.0%	84.0%	81.6%	84.2%	83.2%	83.0%	83.5%	83.2%	83.2%	83.3%
	ALK Performance	-7.8%	-6.0%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%	-8.1%
	Total	79.2%	77.9%	73.5%	76.1%	75.1%	74.9%	75.4%	75.1%	75.1%	75.2%
Base											
		<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> E	<u>2014</u> E	<u>2015</u> E	<u>2016</u> E	<u>2017</u> E	<u>2018</u> E	<u>2019</u> E	<u>2020</u> E	2021E
Expense	es as % of Revenue:										
	Industry Average	87.0%	84.0%	81.6%	84.2%	83.2%	83.0%	83.5%	83.2%	83.2%	83.3%
	ALK Performance	-7.8%	-6.0%	-8.1%	-7.9%	-7.7%	-7.5%	-7.3%	-7.1%	-6.9%	-6.7%
	Total	79.2%	77.9%	73.5%	76.3%	75.5%	75.5%	76.2%	76.1%	76.3%	76.6%
<u>Bear</u>		2012A	2013E	2014E	2015E	2016E	2017E	2018E	2019E	2020E	2021E
		<u>2012</u> A	<u>2013</u> E	2014	2013	<u>2010</u> E	<u>2017</u> E	<u>2016</u> E	<u>2019</u> E	2020E	20216
Expense	es as % of Revenue:										
	Industry Average	87.0%	84.0%	81.6%	84.2%	83.2%	83.0%	83.5%	83.2%	83.2%	83.3%
	ALK Performance	-7.8%	-6.0%	-8.1%	-7.3%	-6.5%	-5.7%	-4.9%	-4.1%	-3.3%	-2.5%
	Total	79.2%	77.9%	73.5%	76.9%	76.7%	77.3%	78.6%	79.1%	79.9%	80.8%

# **Valuation**





		<u>2015E</u>	2016E	2017E	2018E	2019E	2020E	2021E	<u>TV</u>
Yr			0.50	1.50	2.50	3.50	4.50	5.50	6.50
PV Factor		1.00	1.03	1.10	1.17	1.24	1.32	1.41	1.50
PV of FCF		147.25	168.21	260.20	328.03	318.20	284.84	269.77	5,557.35
% of EV		2.0%	2.3%	3.5%	4.5%	4.3%	3.9%	<i>3.7</i> %	75.8%
Operating EV	\$7,333.85							_	

#### **Bridge To Adjusted EV**

Excess Cash & Marketable Securities	1217
Illiquid Investments	4299
Adjusted EV	\$12,849.85

#### **Bridge to Equity**

Implied Upside	23.1%
(As of 03/26/2015)	
Current Share Price	\$64.50
Implied Value per Share	\$79.42
Share Outstanding (M)	130.14
Equity Value	\$10,336.25
Minority Interest	\$0.00
Employee Options	\$0.00
Pensions	\$133.00
Financial Lease	\$1,577.60
Total Debt	\$803.00



# **Valuation**

# Base case terminal multiple method



		<u>2015E</u>	2016E	<u>2017E</u>	<u>2018E</u>	2019E	2020E	<u>2021E</u>
Yr			0.50	1.50	2.50	3.50	4.50	5.50
PV Factor		1.00	1.03	1.10	1.17	1.24	1.32	1.41
PV of FCF		147.25	168.21	260.20	328.03	318.20	284.84	269.77
% of EV		8.3%	9.5%	14.6%	18.5%	17.9%	16.0%	15.2%
Operating EV	\$1,776.50							

Operating EV	\$1,776.50
Terminal EBITDA	\$1,300.14
Terminal Multiple	6.0x
Terminal Discount Factor	1.50
PV Terminal EBITDA	\$5,202.34
Terminal EV	\$6,978.85

Cost of Equity	
Risk Free	2.2%
MRP	6.0%
Beta	0.92
Cost of Equity	8.0%
Terminal Growth	3.0%
Terminal EBITDA Multiple	6.0x

Cost of Debt	3.50%
Short Term Debt	117
Long Term Debt	686
Total Debt	803
Total Equity	2127
WACC	6.4%

## **Bridge To Adjusted EV**

Excess Cash & Marketable Secu	1217
Illiquid Investments	4299
Adjusted EV	\$12,494.85

#### **Bridge to Equity**

Total Debt	\$803.00
Financial Lease	\$1,577.60
Pensions	\$133.00
Employee Options	\$0.00
Minority Interest	\$0.00
<b>Equity Value</b>	\$9,981.25
Share Outstanding (M)	130.14
Implied Value per Share	\$76.69
Current Share Price	\$64.50
(As of 03/26/2015)	
Implied Upside	18.9%





## **Sensitivity Tables**

<b>Current Pr</b>	ice: \$64.5			WACC			
		4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%
듄	1.0%	11.1%	7.7%	4.6%	1.6%	-1.2%	-3.8%
Growth	1.5%	15.4%	11.9%	8.5%	5.3%	2.4%	-0.5%
	2.0%	20.5%	16.6%	13.0%	9.7%	6.5%	3.4%
ina	2.5%	26.4%	22.3%	18.4%	14.8%	11.3%	8.1%
Terminal	3.0%	33.6%	29.1%	24.9%	20.9%	17.1%	13.6%
Te	3.5%	42.4%	37.4%	32.8%	28.4%	24.3%	20.4%
	4.0%	53.3%	47.8%	42.6%	37.7%	33.1%	28.8%

Current Price: \$64.5				WAC	С		
0		4.5%	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.5%	7.0%
Scenario	Bear	-7.0%	-8.3%	-9.5%	-10.7%	-11.9%	-13.0%
cen	Base	31.3%	29.1%	27.0%	24.9%	22.9%	20.9%
S	Bull	67.0%	63.9%	60.9%	58.0%	55.2%	52.5%

After analyzing the Gordon growth sensitivity tables, we realized ALK is undervalued in most cases

