



AIR TRANSPORT



DISTRICT LODGE 142

400 N.E. 32nd STREET • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64116
816-452-6646 • FAX: 816-455-4793
iamdl142@swbell.net

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Contract 2010: A Brief History

During the summer of 2009, the IAM solicited contract proposals from the membership for the impending contract negotiations. We received an unprecedented number of over 20,000 Flight Attendant proposals. A proposal Screening Committee, comprised of elected Flight Attendant Local Lodge officers, met in Kansas City, MO to review each individual proposal. The screening committee compiled and presented a list of proposals to the Negotiating Committee. That list of Flight Attendant proposals was used to develop the IAM's opening contract proposal to be presented to Continental.

In September 2009, the Negotiating Committee spent a week at the IAM's Education and Technology Center in Southern Maryland to prepare for negotiations. The Committee was trained in negotiating tactics, the Railway Labor Act, reviewing data and evaluating proposals. The Committee reviewed past negotiations and developed a comprehensive strategic plan for these negotiations. An online Flight Attendant bargaining survey was developed to prioritize membership bargaining issues.

On October 16, 2009, the Union sent Continental the required notice expressing its intent to amend the current contract and commence negotiations in accordance with Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act. This notice meant the parties would have to meet within 60 days to exchange opening proposals.

The IAM Negotiating Committee met with the Continental on December 15, 2009 and presented the company a comprehensive proposal covering all sections of the agreement and items we intended to amend. Negotiation dates were scheduled for the next several months

Direct bargaining continued under the Railway Labor Act from January 2010 through May 3, 2010 when an announcement was made of the merger between Continental and United Airlines. This announcement immediately changed the landscape and complexion of negotiations. The Negotiating Committee's attention was properly turned to protecting the wages, pensions and job security of the membership. As many Continental Flight Attendants know, mergers are never easy, and protecting our membership is the IAM's first priority.

The Negotiating Committee reached out for further information and support from the attorneys, economists and other professional resources available to the Committee from the Grand Lodge. We had to develop a strategy to address Flight Attendant issues potentially impacted by the merger.

When the Union and company met in May for previously scheduled negotiations, the Negotiating Committee requested information on how the merger would impact Continental Flight Attendants and

what goals the company sought to achieve in the merger. Continental presented their timetable and stated they expected operational integration in 2012.

Negotiations continued during the month of June. In July 2010 a Merger Summit was convened at the IAM's Education & Technology Center. The Negotiating Committee, all elected Flight Attendant officers from IAM District 142, representatives from each Flight Attendant Local Lodge covering Continental, Continental Micronesia and ExpressJet were in attendance.

Discussions centered around how the Continental-United merger has the potential to define Flight Attendant wages and working conditions in the industry for years to come. Front and center were the immediate issues of job security, seniority integration, pass travel, pension benefits, and Union representation.

When Negotiations resumed in August 2010, the Negotiating Committee met for two weeks of discussions with the company – not only about our open contract, but also about the merger's effect on Flight Attendants. The Negotiating Committee then began laying the ground work to secure an agreement that would guarantee Flight Attendant job security and provide immediate wage increases.

In September 2010 the Union and company held numerous negotiating sessions in pursuit of those goals. The Negotiating Committee felt it would be in the best interest of the membership to lock in improvements in an interim agreement now and be in an even stronger position for the next round of negotiations, which will take place after representation issues are resolved, or in about 18 months, whichever is sooner.

Our mandate from the Flight Attendant group was clear: to continue to build upon one of the best contracts in the industry by improving your pay and flexibility, while protecting your job security and pension. We believe we have achieved these goals in a manner that builds a foundation for further improvements once we are part of the world's largest airline. The Negotiating Committee and Union officers will conduct informational meetings across the system and, as always, will be available in the crew rooms to answer questions concerning this tentative interim agreement. We thank you for your support during the past nine months of negotiations.

Fraternally yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Higginbotham". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Higginbotham

PRESIDENT & DIRECTING

GENERAL CHAIRMAN