



The Update Message from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers representing Flight Attendants in the 2339 Local Lodges

Friday, June 25, 2010

Proposed merger launches a long journey for District and Membership

By President and Directing General Chairperson - Tom Higginbotham

The announcement of a merger between Continental Airlines and United Airlines marks the beginning of a long journey for our union and for the employees of both airlines. Along the way, we will need to answer many questions.

Who will represent the workers?

IAM District Lodge 142 currently represents approximately 9,000 flight attendants employed at Continental Airlines, while United's approximately 12,500 flight attendants are represented by the Association of Flight Attendants. Ultimately, the flight attendants at both carriers will be asked to decide who will represent a unified work force, in accordance with procedures established by the National Mediation Board.

IAM flight attendants will continue working under the terms of their Continental contract until all of the flight attendants are represented by a single union and until that union negotiates an agreement with the new carrier. We are currently in negotiations with Continental to improve on what is already the leading contract in the industry. The current IAM/Continental agreement surpasses the AFA/United agreement in wages, retirement security, scheduling flexibility and quality of life issues.

A different set of issues confronts our IAM sisters and brothers at District Lodge 141, which represents ramp workers, customer service representatives, food service workers, security guards and other employees at United. At Continental the customer service representatives, food service workers and security guards are non-union and do not have a contract. The ramp workers are IBT but have not negotiated a contract. The IAM is the logical and obvious choice of representation for the combined work forces, and District Lodge 142 stands in solidarity with District 141 in the all-important effort to make that happen.

How will seniority be determined in the merged airline?

Continental and United both insist they don't expect major reductions in front line personnel as a result of the merger, but job security, which includes respect for seniority, remains a fundamental concern for the IAM. At a meeting with Continental and United management in May, I insisted that seniority integration be fair and equitable for all flight attendants.

Joining me in this demand were IAM Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr., District Lodge 141 President Rich Delaney and staff from the IAM's transportation, legal and strategic resources department.

The IAM recognizes that sometimes issues arise that require more consideration than a simple dovetailing. ***The IAM will create seniority integration committees made up of representatives from both pre-merger airlines to resolve seniority disputes when they arise.*** If agreements cannot be reached, the issues will be submitted to a neutral arbitrator for resolution.

What kind of pension system will emerge?

Our union is determined not to allow pensions to become a casualty of this merger. In our meeting with the carriers' management, we pressed for details about how the two airlines intend to integrate their pensions. The carriers did not have an answer when we asked if all employees would have defined-benefit pension plans following a merger.

Read the full article: <http://www.iamdl142.org/fa/Observer/2010/142Spring2010.pdf>

Federal Court Upholds Union-Friendly Rule on Representation Elections

June 25, 2010 - The National Mediation Board won a court battle Friday over its new rules that make it easier for railroad and airline unions to win representation elections. U.S. District Judge Paul L. Friedman ruled Friday against the Air Transport Association, which had challenged the new rules and wanted an injunction to halt them. The new rules require that a union get "aye" votes from a majority of the employees voting to win the right to represent a class of employees. The old rules, in place for 75 years, had required unions to get "aye" votes from a majority of those eligible to vote. Any employee who didn't vote was counted as a "no" vote. "We are disappointed with the Court's ruling and believe the National Mediation Board does not have the authority to impose this new rule," the Air Transport Association said in a statement. "We will thoroughly study the decision to determine what, if any steps ATA will take, including exercising our right to appeal the ruling." However, unions applauded Judge Friedman's decision.

Read the Full Article: <http://aviationblog.dallasnews.com/archives/2010/06/federal-court-upholds-union-fr.html>

ExpressJet Flight Attendants:

The union has received an increased number of complaints regarding the awarding of trips to reserve flight attendants in all bases. Please review your Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), Section 5.T.6., for parameters. If you believe you are being incorrectly assigned, please print out schedules, pool displays, and FIFO lists and bring them to your union representative for assistance.

The ExpressJet Contract Proposal Sorting Committee will meet in Kansas City on June 28 and 29, 2010 to sort your proposals, prior to negotiations.

As a reminder, an ExpressJet flight attendant's duty day may be scheduled or rescheduled to 13.5 hours or less. Please review **CBA** Section 5.B.7., for duty limitations.

Flight attendants are responsible only for tidy clean of the aircraft per the IFM. You are never required to cross seatbelts, clean galley carts or mop floors.

UAX flight attendants:

- Inflight requests that you please ask for a new customer service kit whenever you need soap/hand sanitizer as these items are not supplied by the commissary and are included in the customer service kit.
- The company has advised that it is working with catering to change out the blue bins each time the aircraft transits ORD to minimize the problem of water leaking onto the galley floor

We would like to encourage all members to attend your Local Lodge business meeting. Each Local Lodge must have a quorum to conduct business. The following is a schedule for upcoming meetings:

Cleveland: Thursday, July 8, 2010, 1:00 p.m. at 669 North Rocky River Drive

Newark: Tuesday, July 13, 2010, 3:00 p.m. at the Renaissance Newark Airport Hotel

Houston: Tuesday, July 20, 2010, 1:00 p.m. at Houston Airport Marriott Hotel

Guam: Wednesday, July 21, 2010, 4:00 p.m. at the Airport Conference Room