

## **NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message January 16, 2009**

### ***LOA 35 UPDATE***

On January 6, AFA sent an email to NWA's legal counsel proposing dates for the arbitration along with a demand for a response by January 9. If the Company refused to agree to arbitration by that date, then AFA would take the appropriate legal action to compel arbitration of Sideletter 35. The Company did respond by January 9, agreeing to move forward with scheduling the arbitration. An arbitrator was agreed upon and now a specific date is being determined in conjunction with the arbitrator.—Update Provided by AFA Legal

### ***PBS SUPPORT TEAM MEETING REPORT***

On January 12 the contractual PBS Support Team meeting took place. Flight attendants, union representatives, and management representatives from most bases flew to MSP and spent the day discussing PBS programming, flight attendant issues, and possible solutions that would improve bidding satisfaction. Our suggestions may entail a significant expense and extensive programming, but sometimes changes can be accomplished for little or no cost and could positively impact the bid run. The Company is willing to discuss all ideas and cost them out so we can see if our suggestions are possible.

All throughout negotiations and the PBS implementation, union representatives and the Company adjusted contractual language and programming to allow for better bidding satisfaction. This Team is the next step in that process. One of the most recent tweaks -- the company has overbuilt the Reserve blocks slightly and added a requirement for each day to improve Reserve outcomes and to better preserve seniority. It appears to have helped in the test runs. As more bids are released, we will be able to see how this impacts Reserve results.

Following discussion, tests will be run in the next week or so for these suggested tweaks: 1. Change the Line Range; 2. Change/Remove Target Penalty; 3. Increase/Decrease Target Size; and 4. Run with Open Time Residual.

Additional suggestions/action items: 1. the PBS Call Center will be fully staffed with 6 FA's during bidding window and resolution and Company is looking at staggering hours for longer coverage; 2. Explore the possibility of opening generic bidding before patterns are loaded; 3. PBS "stations" at all bases for information; 4. Posters with contacts and tips for bidding rooms; 5. Decrease emails and increase other types of communication venues such as targeted seminars; and 6. More specific information given in resolution responses.

Please stay engaged in this process and be sure to send programming suggestions to your Local union representatives. Your Master Executive Council would like to thank all flight attendant and union volunteers, as well as company representatives, for their continued hard work on this important matter. Our next

formal meeting will take place May 6, 2009. -- Submitted by MEC Vice President Janette Rook

### ***PBS QUICK BIDDING TIPS***

A PBS quick bidding tip sheet was submitted to our union by our LAX Council 98 delegates during the PBS support team meeting on January 12. We thank our LEC 98 contingent for making this tool available to our members. This tip sheet not only can act as a quick guide for reference, but it can be especially helpful to those members who may be coming back from SLIP or other personal leave and may be out of practice with the current PBS bidding system. Please go to [Scheduling section](#) under the Committees tab on our MEC website or click [HERE](#) to download this great information.

### ***AN EAP MESSAGE ON US AIRWAYS FLIGHT 1549***

After a critical airline incident or accident, crew members may go through a wide range of responses. Such reactions can be experienced not only by the crew members who were involved in the event, but also by those who witnessed or heard about it, or were involved with those immediately affected. If you or someone you know would like to confidentially share your feelings or reactions to the news of US Airways Flight 1549, please give your AFA-EAP committee representatives a call. You can locate contact information at: [www.nwaafa.org](http://www.nwaafa.org), [www.afanet.org](http://www.afanet.org), or call 1-800-424-2406.—Submitted by MEC Employee Assistance Program Committee

### ***CALL TO ACTION!***

We did it before and we can do it again! Last year we asked all of you to send letters to your elected officials asking them to co-sponsor our FMLA bill. Your response was tremendous and as a result our FMLA bill garnered bi-partisan support and helped us get the message out making it easy for us to pass the bill. We are now asking that you once again sign your name to letters asking Congress to urge the Obama administration to appoint a new and worker-friendly National Mediation Board (NMB) as soon as possible. With a newly appointed and worker-friendly NMB we can ensure that our representational election is conducted fairly. No other work group knows better how much the NMB can influence our collective future. They thwarted our efforts to negotiate a fair contract by not allowing us to be released from mediation, forcing us to accept a concessionary agreement. Now we are faced with an even bigger threat - The threat of losing over 60 years of collective bargaining rights. Please go to [www.nwaafa.org/committees/govaffairs](http://www.nwaafa.org/committees/govaffairs) and click on the link on the right for the NMB HOUSE letter and the NMB SENATE letter. Both letters are in PDF format and may be printed. Letters may also be obtained from your local. Sign the letters and place your address with the zip code at the bottom. To find your elected officials go to [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org). You may drop off the letters at any union mail box or mail them to AFA-CWA, 8011 34th Avenue, Suite 220, Bloomington, MN 55425. Of course you may also send them directly to your

elected officials in Washington D.C.—Submitted by MEC Government Affairs Chair Albert Garcia

***SAFETY ALERT! FAA ACTS ON MINIMUM CREW VIOLATIONS***

MEC Air Safety, Health & Security Committee has been alerted to the fact that the FAA is taking a hard line on “minimum crew violations” as a result of a steady rise in 2008 of passengers being left on board. NWA is responding to the FAA's call for action with a plan which includes the FAA being present (either in person or via conference call) at FA Manager meetings on such incidents. We have been assured that AFA representation can be present at such meetings. NWA is planning a follow-up communication, outlining the ramifications of a minimum crew violation - and how to ensure it does not occur.

Let's do our part to prevent these violations by briefing on the procedures in place to ensure passengers do not remain on board before minimum crew deplanes the aircraft, including the checking of all lavatories and seat rows. Be alert and do your part!—Submitted by MEC Air Safety Health & Security Chair Jeanne Elliott

***BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE TO SUPPORT APPLICATION AGAINST PROP 8***

An injury to one is an injury to all. Believing that taking away the civil rights of one group takes the rights away from all of us, our NWA-AFA local Councils 97, 98, and 99 have joined with the AFL-CIO and dozens of other labor unions in support of a petitioner's challenge now before the California Supreme Court in an effort to overturn California's controversial Proposition 8, which won a narrow victory this past November outlawing gay marriage.

Why is this of interest to AFA? One intrinsic value shared by labor unions is the belief that we need to come together to achieve common goals that benefit the majority. Civil rights not only protect minority members of a group, but also include worker's rights and the right to organize. Grassroots and collective efforts are powerful agents for change. Specifically, by working together in solidarity we will force Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act and have it signed into law by the incoming President. The late Senator Paul Wellstone from Minnesota once said, “When we all do better, we ALL do better.” The Employee Free Choice Act will help us ALL do better. To view the full [Amicus Brief](#) and [Council 98's](#) letter to co-sponsor, please go to the MEC website or [HERE](#).

***TREND TO UNIONISM – LYNX AVIATION JOINS AFA CWA***

Following the victory of Ryan International flight attendants, 63% of our fellow colleagues at Lynx Aviation voted this week to join AFA to obtain collective bargaining representation. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Council 77, our newest union brothers and sisters, to our AFA-CWA family. Lynx Aviation is a regional carrier for Frontier Airlines based in Denver, Colorado.

Though Lynx has only been in operation for less than one year, they have flight attendants formerly of other carriers who understand the union difference, having enjoyed the benefits of a binding contract during uncertain economic times. Lynx Aviation flight attendants should be especially proud of their accomplishment because they overcame obstacles posed by NMB's archaic rule that required over fifty percent of a work group to participate in order for a representation election to be valid. They also defeated union-busting efforts by Ford and Harrison, a law firm hired by management to prevent the flight attendants from organizing.