

NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message March 20, 2009

MEC HOTLINE: (888) 3-NWA-AFA or www.nwaafa.org

PURPLE RIBBON CAMPAIGN: Pro-Delta, Pro-AFA www.deltaafa.org

ASHS CHANGES THAT WE MUST KNOW

With a strong recommendation and the long-term advocacy of our MEC Air Safety Health and Security Committee, the Company this week finally came out with meaningful guidance regarding employee exposure to glycol (de-icing fluid). We applaud the Company and our NWA-AFA MEC ASHS Committee for this long overdue policy since we continue to have incidents of crew members being sprayed with glycol, especially on the DC9 aircraft. When the de-icing chemical is ingested into the mouth, lungs, and eyes, it can be very harmful and flight attendants should be on the lookout for symptoms such as nausea, headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, respiratory complication, and impaired balance. In addition, all contaminated clothing should be removed as soon as possible and be professionally cleaned. Flight attendants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the procedures outlined in the March 18 memo, as well as contacting your local [ASHS committee](#) members to ensure these procedures are understood thoroughly, and for additional MSDS hotline information. In addition to the glycol issue, the ASHS committee is currently working to convince the Company to include the Hazard Hotline number for our members to be able to obtain timely and accurate information when exposed to any and all types of chemicals at Northwest.

On a different note, Northwest, under the Delta family, no longer pays for tests for crew members who have been exposed to tuberculosis. The Company is basing this decision on new Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization guidelines that state that a passenger with TB is not considered to be a health risk to crew members regardless of the length of flight time because we do not have close personal contact with them. However, passengers seated within three rows of a passenger with TB will be notified and encouraged to get tested. NWA will only provide a courtesy notification to crew members. However, a recent news report shows that the CDC is attempting to contact passengers who may have been exposed to TB during a recent Northwest flight from Frankfurt to Detroit, in order to tell them to get tested as a cautionary measure. See the Chicago Sun-Times report [HERE](#). Our MEC President and the ASHS Committee have voiced their concerns on numerous occasions regarding the Company's policy on this issue and how it affects our members' long-term health and well being. We will continue to advocate in that regard. Interestingly, Delta does not even provide their crew members with a courtesy notification of such exposure.

WHY IS DELTA PUSHING FOR INTEGRATION?

We often hear through [outside media](#) and internal company memoranda that unless we integrate pre-merger Northwest and pre-merger Delta work groups, *Delta won't be able to immediately benefit from the estimated two billion dollars in cost savings it expects from the merger.* What kind of cost savings? Perhaps savings from outsourcing jobs, employee wage cuts, elimination of health-care benefits, or further cancellation of pensions benefits? We also hear that *waiting comes with costs.* However, common sense and merger histories tell us that rushing into an integration that combines workforces can cause bitterness and division among employees, especially since the new Delta does not plan to fly together until 2010 when a Single Operating Certificate is attained from the FAA. Could part of the cost caused by waiting be due to additional top dollars spent on retaining high priced "Labor Consultants" who are experts in busting unions and know

how to use overt tactics to get workers to vote NO on unionization, thus preventing future legally binding, wage and benefit increases? Or is the cost that comes from waiting due to money spent on token gifts and temporary employee-friendly policy changes that can influence workers to vote against union representation?

The respected labor law firm of [Baptiste and Wilder, P.C.](#) once again offers a brilliant analysis of Delta's spin regarding the merger with Northwest. In its [Railway Labor Blog](#), Baptiste and Wilder, P.C. points out the latest convoluted rhetoric about how Delta is using corporate media and pro-management consultants cast as airline industry "observers" to sell the idea that a union election would occur solely for the benefit of union dues and not the real issue of airline workers having democracy at their workplace and an enforceable contract that pays a living wage and has future job security. This blog also directs readers to a more informative article on USA Today http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/travel/2009-03-09-airline-merger-northwest-delta_N.htm that shows just why Delta should take their time merging the two great airlines.

WHEN WILL WE VOTE FOR OUR UNION?

The DAL/NWA AFA National Steering Committee affirms to engage with each and every one of our flying partners to build a world-class mobilization campaign to bring an industry-leading, globe-leading contract at the new Delta Air Lines for all flight attendants. We will survey flight attendants on priorities they desire in our goal for an industry-leading contract and provide accurate and thoughtful information to our flying partners, increasing our education of the following:

1. Our current ranking among U.S. legacy carriers as two of the lowest "flight attendant unit costs."
2. Delta pilots just obtained an industry-leading contract, which provided substantial pay raises, job security, and a secure future.
3. Delta executives have received "premier" compensation; flight attendants deserve the same.
4. Because flight attendants are the most important component to the Inflight success of our airline, our compensation and benefits must be commensurate with building a "premier global airline."

Please read our resolution regarding our campaign and our schedule here:

http://deltaafa.org/images/Front%20Page/Resolution_PDF.pdf or visit www.deltaafa.org for more information. Delta AFA -- Opportunity, Unity, Respect.

WORKERS MUST UNITE AS UNITED PROPOSES PILOT OUTSOURCING

As United Airlines prepares its contract talks with their pilots, the airline has announced a joint venture between the Chicago-based airline and the Ireland-based carrier Aer Lingus to use non-union crews on new flights starting 2010 between Washington Dulles and Madrid. Read the report [HERE](#). This joint venture was made possible by the Open Skies Trade Agreement, which was established in 2008 with the support of the Bush administration.

Under this proposal, United will be providing the market resources offered by its second largest hub while Aer Lingus will lend three new Airbus 330 aircrafts and recruit new non-union pilots. If this joint venture proves to be successful, not only may the other major U.S. airlines follow suit and outsource their own trans-Atlantic flights, but United may explore additional partnerships with other European carriers in its global alliances.

“We will continue to look for opportunities to profitably expand our international network.” This statement by United Airlines spokeswoman Jean Medina reiterates the corporate mantra of profits before people. Corporations must act responsibly and consider the well-being of workers even if it affects profits. If not, no worker will be spared and there will be an endless race to the bottom as companies cut infrastructure and services to save money at the expense of employees. This newly announced joint venture between United Airlines and Aer Lingus serves to remind us that regardless of our airline position or our union affiliation, we should stand shoulder to shoulder in support of one another as we try to regain job security, buying power, and health and pension benefits that have nearly vanished over the past twenty years. No work group should be lured into the old corporate game of divide and conquer where one work group works with management in order to bring down another work group in hopes of gaining protection. Hopefully, our new Delta colleagues will stand with us as we collectively fight to secure a beneficial future for workers in this company.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: First Amendment Rights by BOS FA Emily Kaempfer

As we get closer to the union vote for Delta and Northwest flight attendants, the more heartbroken I become. I am now realizing that American citizens are choosing to give up their rights. Why would anyone give up his or her First Amendment rights in this country? Why would anyone want a corporation to be their voice? As a Northwest flight attendant, I would not want Doug Steenland to uphold my First Amendment rights. As a New Delta flight attendant, I do not want Richard Anderson to champion my right to free speech.

As an American citizen, I keep telling my coworkers: do not give up your First Amendment rights. Keep your voice. Keep the union. What is even more distressing is watching the Constitution of these United States being overlooked. Over 200 years ago, our Founding Fathers protested against taxation without representation. As an American entity, the union can fairly say to all New Delta employees the union is taxation *with* representation and it *is* fair. Yes, the New Delta flight attendants can get due process with or without a union. But at what cost? On the east coast, attorneys can charge up to \$800 an hour or \$500 a question. Hiring a labor attorney does not guarantee that a flight attendant will get due process or their day in court. With a union, I know I have legal representation and I will get due process.

As a Boston flight attendant, the end of this month is a major turning point for our inflight. We are changing to our new uniforms and moving to our New Delta location. I am grateful that I can make this transition as an AFA union member.

UPCOMING MEC MEETING AGENDA NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Our next Master Executive Council meeting will convene in Milwaukee on March 28 just before the Board of Directors Meeting. Any member in good standing is welcome and encouraged to attend both the MEC and the BOD meetings. The upcoming MEC meeting agenda can be viewed by going to our MEC website in the MEC Meetings page under the Events tab http://nwaafa.org/events/mec_meetings/. A complete list of agenda items for the BOD can also be viewed through a password-protected area of our MEC website <http://www.nwaafa.org/events/bod/>. Our local councils have held recent pre-BOD meetings so all members can participate in discussions on the advanced agenda items and provide input to

influence the future direction of our union. If you have additional comments or feedbacks, please don't hesitate to contact your [Local Council Presidents](#).

KNOW YOUR RESERVE RELEASES

[Section 7.G](#). Reserve On-Duty Releases outlines various release options available to reserves if/when it is made available by scheduling. Duty Release allows a reserve FA to be released during a portion, or remainder, of an on-duty period with no impact to his/her monthly guarantee.

A Daily Release allows the reserve FA to be released from an on-duty period(s) while a Pattern Release releases the FA from the entire pattern. A Block Release allows the FA to be released from reserve duties for a series of consecutive on-duty periods. All three options reduce the Flight Attendant's monthly reserve guarantee by four hours and fifteen minutes (4:15) for each duty period.

A reserve FA, who has not been assigned a pattern before 1500 base local time and is scheduled a guaranteed day(s) off immediately following the current duty period, may be released into his/her guaranteed off duty period without any monetary impact on the Flight Attendant's month-end projection.

An Early Release option (ER), may also be entered by the FA by either specifying a minimum projection and a specific release date, or by not specifying a minimum projection or a release date. When both the conditions of the minimum hour projection and the projected release date are met, the reserve FA will be released. Please note, all releases must be requested through CENTRY and shall be granted subject to the approval of Crew Scheduling. Once the FA is granted an Early Release, he/she can pick up additional trips through One-Way trades or through Regular Line Adjustments, but it may be difficult to pick up trips since there may not be too many available.

Month End Releases (RX) can be achieved at the request of the flight attendant if his/her monthly projection is greater than the Established Base Line Average (EBLA). Otherwise, the FA will serve the remainder of his/her duty period(s) unless his/her monthly projection is to be within 4:15 of the monthly maximum.

UNIFORM COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL UPDATE

The AFA Uniform committee has been advised by Delta that all but 40 Flight Attendants have been shipped at least one complete ensemble. Any Flight Attendant that has not received their initial uniform order should contact Lion and their base manager immediately. Optional items have begun to be filled and shipped. It is Lion's hope that the majority of garments in stock will be shipped prior to the rollout date. Delta has announced that as of March 30 uniform standards will be identical for both Delta Business Elite and NWA World Business Class. Items to be exchanged need to be returned to Lion before the new item will be shipped. Flight Attendants with alteration problems or concerns need to contact Lion and their base managers. Base Managers have been fully briefed by Delta on the appropriate actions to follow to assist the Flight Attendant with all alteration inquiries. Remember -- there are NO LIMITS for alterations to fit you properly in your uniform and if there is no alteration location in your area, please ask your manager for a business expense form for reimbursement for a tailor in your area. Additionally, all shipping costs should be paid or reimbursed by the company.

The union has notified Delta representatives and they are reviewing several new DL Style Guide

and Service Standards that conflict with or violate our contractual provisions, scheduled to begin March 30. Some of the contractual provisions that require attention by Delta include Union Insignia 19.6, Name Bar 19.6, the Summer Shirt option and the right to Jacket Removal 19.6. Delta agreed that until these issues and others are resolved, AFA Flight Attendants would be held to our contractual language over the Style Guide and would not be disciplined. Delta stated that they will be releasing an update prior to rollout to address these issues both with the Flight Attendants as well as Flight Attendant Managers. -- Submitted by MEC Uniform Committee

UNIFORM GRIEVANCE HAS BEEN FILED

In a recent bulletin to all flight attendants, DL/NW announced several changes to our existing uniform language which are meant to coincide with the introduction of the DL uniform to the pre-merger NW flight attendants on March 30, 2009. Some of these planned changes directly contradict existing contract language from our [Section 19](#) Uniform language. At this point, the two most important changes which were announced are: there is no summer shirt option for males or females and the combination name/wing bar cannot be removed once off the aircraft. Our contract is clear when it comes to the summer shirt option for men and women and our negotiated ability to leave our blazers at home during the hot summer months. Our contract is also clear that our name bars can be removed when we are off the aircraft. For reasons unknown, DL has chosen to completely ignore our summer shirt language and is instead implementing the DL uniform policy instead of honoring our current uniform language.

Our MEC Uniform Committee is attempting to address these issues both with NW and DL management. A conference call occurred earlier in the week where these items, along with other items, such as making the vest a basic item and not an optional item in light of the DL policy regarding uniform appearance in Business Class (Elite) as well as a break-away tie option for the men, were discussed at length.

There were no specific answers in regards to our concerns about the two most glaring examples of contract violations in regards to the summer shirt and name/wing bar issues. As such, it was determined that the best course of action was to file an MEC Grievance to protect our rights under the contract in regards to these two uniform items. Read the full Grievance here at [MEC Uniform Grievance Sec.19](#).

PBS UPDATES

Many of you have been reading the emails from the Company regarding the multiple PBS Updates. We are receiving feedback from flight attendants that you are still encountering many problems. Though this program was not negotiated by your current union we feel that in order to make changes the problems need to be reported and passed on to the Company. Per the contract, we currently have a PBS Support Team that meets with the Company. Several months ago we placed an online form for you to report problems with PBS. Once again we ask that you report all of your problems on the form found at <http://nwaafa.org/onlineforms/pbs/>. To better serve you we need your input. Together we can make the changes needed. The next PBS Support Team meeting is scheduled for May 6.

Per Letter of Agreement 15 Preferential Bidding System, Section 2.i. on Page A.32: *A PBS Support Team shall be established in order to provide oversight of the new system, once it is operational. The Team shall be a coordinated joint effort comprised of members of the Company, the Union and Flight Attendants. The members of this Team **shall** be limited to one (1)*

Management representative from each base, one (1) Union representative from each base and one (1) Flight Attendant representative from each base, plus one (1) additional Company and Union representative.

(1) The Support Team shall be responsible for:

(a) The review of PBS statistical data;

(b) The evaluation of recommendations regarding proposed changes to PBS;

(c) Working toward continuing process of improving results in order to optimize the bid results for Flight Attendants, while maintaining the objectives of the Company.

-- Submitted by MEC President Kevin Griffin

ONLINE REPORTING -- REQUIRED VERSUS REQUESTED

According to the reporting procedure outlined in our flight attendant manual Section 125, incidents and events that require timely follow-up or investigation by Inflight Safety are *requested* to be submitted within 24 hours of an event. Paper reporting will no longer be accepted by early 2009. Though online reporting is an efficient way to submit our Inflight incidents, many flight attendants have expressed concerns regarding the use of minimal layover time, cost from charges incurred from hotel business center computer, and other logistical challenges that prevents them from completing their incident reports in a timely manner. If a flight attendant is unable to submit a report within 24 hours and believes that the event requires timely attention, please contact your base staff.

HOTEL COMMITTEE WEBSITE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT YOU

A grievance was filed last week on behalf of the MEC Hotel Committee. As always, we appreciate and thank flight attendants who have reported hotel issues and we encourage your continual [reporting of hotel violations](#) by logging on to the [MEC Hotel Committee website](#). As the Company further aligns our flying, possible hotel changes are on the horizon. Please remember to always check your pattern in ACCESS as well as referencing the Hotel Committee Page for the latest hotel information.

EO AND ATL LIST POSTED ON MEC WEBSITE

A link to view the Early Out list can be found on the homepage of the [NWA-AFA website](#). To view an ATL satellite base transfer list go to <http://nwaafa.org/index.php/events/earlyout/>. Both lists are in password-protected areas of our MEC website. Please be sure to sign up first before attempting to view the lists. If you encounter registration issues, please contact our MEC Webmaster, Neal McMahan, at nmcmahom@nwaafa.org.