



**Northwest Airlines**

**Association of Flight Attendants-CWA** *Master Executive Council*

HOTLINE 01 MAY 2009

## **MINNESOTA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE UPDATE – CHANGE IS ON ITS WAY!**

This past week the Minnesota State House approved legislation (HF1404 - Voluntary Leave Limited Eligibility for Benefits) presented by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL) on behalf of our MSP based flight attendants. There was only one dissension by Rep. Sarah Anderson (R).

As you recall MSP based flight attendants who participated in company sponsored SLIP leaves in the past have been denied unemployment insurance benefits due to a state statute that denies benefits to employees taking a voluntary leave. Your [Government Affairs](#) committee has been working diligently for the past two years with state lawmakers from both the Minnesota House and Senate on this issue. We persisted and succeeded in educating Minnesota lawmakers of the importance of this issue for our MSP based flight attendants as well as for the state of Minnesota. After listening to us they agreed to introduce legislation that would change this statute. The resulting bill will change the state statute and allow individuals taking SLIP leaves in lieu of more permanent layoffs to receive unemployment insurance benefits. In March the Minnesota State Senate recommended to pass the companion bill, (SF1143).

What does this mean? Our legislation is now part of a larger Omnibus Economic Development and Housing Appropriations bill, (SF2081) which was approved by the Senate. In the House side, as of this date more discussion is planned on the bill, followed by markup and a vote to move it forward for the governor's signature. Once the governor signs the Omnibus bill, our piece of legislation will also become law. Although it is too soon to declare a victory, we are very close to a resolution for our MSP based flight attendants. This change in Minnesota law is a testament to the persistence and focus of our union and our Government Affairs Committee and proof on just how much can be accomplished when we are represented by a union that works on our behalf. Kudos to everyone that worked on this issue for our MSP members and special thanks to Rene Foss, NYC Government Affairs Committee Chair and MN resident and Camilla Wolkerstorfer, MSP Government Affairs Committee Chair. -- Submitted by Albert Garcia, MEC Government Affairs Chair

## **SWINE FLU/H1N1 UPDATE!**

On Thursday, the World Health Organization (WHO) raised its alert level to Phase 5, the next-to-highest level in the worldwide warning system. It is important to understand that the WHO is not addressing the severity of the virus itself but (rather) the scope of

person-to-person transmission. To date, 17 U.S. states have confirmed cases with new cases reported on four continents.

AFA-CWA has been proactive in advocating for increased measures to be taken by the CDC, FAA and individual air carriers in protecting Flight Attendants who must work in and around potentially infected passengers. NWA AFA MEC President Janette Rook sent a letter to Julie Showers on Thursday reiterating the need for such measures and formally requesting NW's cooperation in implementing specific steps to limit the spread of disease among Flight Attendants as well as our customers. Click [HERE](#) read this letter in its entirety.

Further, AFA International's Air Safety, Health Security Department has updated its webpage, providing timely and useful information on the swine flu virus and additional resources to assist with keeping our Members updated on this very fluid situation. Visit <http://ashsd.afacwa.org/> to learn more.

We will continue to keep you updated on NW's response to the recommended measures to protect our health and reduce the risk of disease transmission. Please keep your MEC Air Safety, Health & Security Committee informed of your concerns - and report any and all incidents of persons with flu-like symptoms. Continue to follow the CDC's personal protection guidance, in addition to the following:

- Use disposable food service gloves to pick up trash and service items. Do not touch items that have come in contact with bodily fluids, including utensils and cups, without gloves.
- Be certain to wash your hands thoroughly throughout the day and use alcohol based hand sanitizers routinely. Be mindful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Encourage passengers not to place any tissues on the tray table or in the seat back pocket; direct them to use the air sick bags
- If a passenger is exhibiting flu-like symptoms, assume it is swine flu and take all necessary precautions regarding hand washing, use of gloves and masks as required. Remember it may be necessary to isolate the passenger depending upon the circumstances.
- Always keep flight deck informed of passengers with flu-like symptom their status throughout the flight.

"Use disposable food service gloves to pick up trash and service items. Do not touch items that have come in contact with bodily fluids, including utensils and cups, without gloves"

- ALWAYS TAKE ALL NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT YOURSELF. Stay informed and fly safely.

-

## **NBA CHARTER PROBLEMS**

On Friday, April 24th, MEC Grievance Chairperson Greg Riffle, Negotiations Committee representative Bruce Retrum, and LEC93 President and MEC Charter Liason Shawn Fivecoat met with NWA Crew Scheduling representatives Brian Moreau and Jiva Ahrens to discuss the on-going problems associated with the bidding and operation of the NBA playoff charter assignments. Because the details of the program were not communicated adequately or far enough in advance, many flight attendants were misinformed about the details of the "KC" days, as well as how the "T4" days were to work, and the pay details. As a result, many flight attendants who were made to unnecessarily sit available from 9-5 on either a "KC" day, or a "T4" day, found out later via their paycheck that they were not going to be paid 4:15 for those days.

As a result of the meeting with AFA, the Company has promised to implement the following steps to remedy these problems:

1. An audit of all flight attendant's lines who participated in the NBA/NHL playoff Charter trips program will be conducted. If it is discovered that the flight attendant sat and was available for either a "KC" day, or "T4" day, but wasn't utilized, and wasn't paid, then a 4:15 credit will be given to them for those days. The Company agreed that there was no obligation to be time available on a "KC" day, and that the "T4" days could only be assigned at the flight attendant's request. In the future, if a flight attendant chooses a day to be a "T4" day, and is not utilized, there will be no pay associated with that day.
2. A clearer and more detailed communication piece will be sent to all flight attendants participating in the NBA/NHL playoff program that will specifically address how trips are to be assigned, and also to address how the "KC" and T4" code days are to be treated, and what impact they will have on your monthly pay.
3. A new Duty Manager, Kristen Nicholas, has been assigned to oversee the Charter Program. She will be fully briefed on the program by Brian Moreau, along with all other Duty Managers. In the future, if you have questions about the program you should first direct them to [kristen.nicholas@nwa.com](mailto:kristen.nicholas@nwa.com) . If the issue is time sensitive, contact the acting Duty Manager for that day. Please be assured that we will continue to closely monitor the on-going assignments of the NBA playoff charter trips. If the Crew Scheduling department fails to implement the agreed changes and remedies in a timely manner, we stand ready to file an MEC Grievance in order to pursue further remedies for you. Also, please continue to contact your local AFA representative if you continue to experience problems with this program. -- Submitted by MEC Grievance Chairperson Gregg Rifle.

## **NMB UPDATE: PUCHALA STILL MUST BE CONFIRMED BY SENATE**

On March 13th, the Obama administration chose Linda Puchala as its nominee to the National Mediation Board (NMB). The AFA-CWA applauded the choice and released the following statement, "We are very pleased with White House's choice and believe

Linda's consensus-building skills and commitment to the collective bargaining process will be a valuable addition to the agency which is so critical to labor relations in the aviation and railway industries," stated Patricia Friend, AFA-CWA International President.

We know and understand that many of you are anxious for the confirmation of Linda Puchala to the National Mediation Board (NMB) and wanted to give you an update on the process. The Committee is presently reviewing all of the background information sent to them by the administration. Once this process is complete the committee will bring the confirmation to a vote to the Senate floor. This takes time as there are many other appointments to many other slots within the Obama administration also being considered. In the meantime we ask that you be patient with the process and allow it to move forward unencumbered. Rest assured that your union is monitoring the process and will let you know of any developments.

## ***RESERVE DAILY RELEASE GRIEVANCE SETTLEMENT***

AFA and the Company have recently settled a grievance filed by DTW Council 94 Representative Daniel Grey regarding the assignment of Reserve Daily Releases (RX in Crew Access). The grievance charged the Company with the misapplication of the RX code. The RX code does not recognize a conflict with a flying assignment previously placed on your line. Therefore, unless you specifically cancel your request after you've received a daily release that would create a conflict with a previously existing trip your release will still be awarded.

Recognizing that some flight attendants were unnecessarily losing 4:15 from their reserve guarantee, the grievance was filed. As a result of the grievance, the Company agreed to implement changes in how the reserve daily release is implemented. If a Daily Release is awarded on a day where you finish a trip at base, and your flying and/or rest finish on that day at 1201 or later, you will now have the option to cancel that release at the time of notification. This means that, when you are notified that the RX has been awarded, you will need to contact crew scheduling and cancel the RX, if that is your preference.

This also applies to reserves whose extended duty rest at base would wholly cover the RX. If you are on extended duty rest, and are not notified of your RX award until after you return to base, you will still be able to request a cancellation of your RX award. Of course, there are some instances where you may wish to keep the release in place, and you will still have the option to do that. However, the option to cancel your RX award will not apply to reserves whose flying and/or rest conclude before 1200 on the day of the RX award, or if you are on a 1400-1400 on-call period, or if you have been given an AM-PM award.

For further details, including the full text of the grievance settlement, please refer to the following link in Section 7 of the contract on the MEC website.

[RESERVE\\_DAILY\\_RELEASE SETTLEMENT\\_Letter\\_3-18-09](#)

## CABIN RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS

New identification badges will soon be issued. The Cabin Reciprocal program (aka: Reciprocal Jump Seat program) will continue with the issuance of our new Delta badges. When our purple contract was ratified it contained new language about securing these reciprocal agreements with other airlines. Immediately Northwest AFA-CWA representatives began working to create language and implement procedures we felt would make it easier for our members to maximize its benefits from [Letter 29 – Jump Seat Reciprocity](#).

Today we are happy to report there are 22 different airlines with which we have cabin reciprocal agreements, which will make commuting a better experience for our members. We will continue exploring new agreements and/or enhancing existing agreements. This benefit, along with other items contained in it, was possible because of requirements in our contractual language. Special thanks to Suzanne Balzer, Director of Contract Compliance, who was instrumental in the implementation and was our departmental advocate involved in acceptance of the program parameters. She, along with her colleague at Delta, ensured our contract language was recognized. -- Submitted by LEC President Council 91 NYC Joshua Zivick.

## **NWA-AFA MASTER EXECUTIVE COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT VACANCY**

Janette Rook has been elected Master Executive Council President and this creates a vacancy for the MEC Vice President. The election for MEC Vice President will take place at the next MEC meeting in Atlanta on May 12-13, 2009. If you are interested in being considered for MEC Vice President, please send a letter of interest with a resume to Karen Chapdelaine, Association of Flight Attendants, Master Executive Council, 8011 34th Avenue South, Suite 220, Bloomington, MN 55425, or email to [kchapdelaine@nwaafa.org](mailto:kchapdelaine@nwaafa.org). For a complete description of the duties of MEC Vice President, please refer to the AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws Article VII, 2(b). Please submit your letters of interest and resumes in a timely manner. If you have additional questions, please contact your Local Council office or the NWA-MEC office at (952) 241-4100. As of today there are no applicants.

## IN REVIEW – MORE INDUSTRY NEWS A WEEK

Recession Keeps Older Flight Attendants Circling: NPR 4/26/09 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=103502327&ft=1&f=1006&sc=emaf>

Delta issues preview of CEO's pay package: Atlanta Journal Constitution 4/29/09 [http://www.ajc.com/business/content/business/delta/stories/2009/04/29/delta\\_ceo\\_compensation.html](http://www.ajc.com/business/content/business/delta/stories/2009/04/29/delta_ceo_compensation.html)

Delta Execs Seek To Preempt Critics: Minneapolis Star Tribune 4/30/09 <http://www.startribune.com/business/44028252.html>

**AROUND THE SYSTEM - BRING A COLLEAGUE. GET MOTIVATED. GET INVOLVED.**

The [MEC meeting schedule](#) and the [Local Meeting schedule](#) are found under the “Events” tab at [www.nwaafa.org](#). Delta Flight Attendants will be invited to local union meetings throughout the country in the coming year, and there will be mixers and trainings planned and posted at [www.deltaafa.org](#) as well.

### ***GOT MERGER QUESTIONS? GET ANSWERS!***

You are always welcome to contact your AFA-CWA Local officers, whose contact information is found at [nwaafa.org](#). Another way to get accurate answers to merger questions is to email [Questions@nwaafa.org](mailto:Questions@nwaafa.org). A variety of information sources are available to our members, including the quarterly MEC newsletter all call, local union bulletin boards, the recorded weekly Hotline message, and of course our websites. Visit [www.nwaafa.org](#) and [www.deltaafa.org](#) for information, as well as to sign up for e-news and to view archived MEC Hotlines and campaign information.

### ***STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUTUBE AND FACEBOOK***

Join World Class Delta Flight Attendants at [Facebook](#) to learn and discuss all the latest issues with your peers. Sign up to view [YouTube](#) videos to educate and inspire flight attendants about the endless possibilities at the world's premier airline.

### ***DON'T FORGET TO WEAR YOUR UNION PIN!***



Click [HERE](#) or visit [www.afanet.org](#) for information about AFA-CWA union structure and the history of the AFA-CWA. Dues & Member Q&A can be viewed here: <http://nwaafa.org/resources/dues/>.