

NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message August 14, 2009

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

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

AFA PROTECTS U.S. FLIGHT ATTENDANT JOBS – CABOTAGE

Protecting jobs and our work has always been the top priority of AFA-CWA. In this challenging environment, we have been especially vigilant on the issue of cabotage which basically allows foreign carriers to carry passengers on domestic U.S. routes. Early this year, we enlisted the assistance of the Transportation Trades Department to engage the new Obama Administration team on a troubling discovery that Air Canada was providing charter service for a U.S.-based hockey team and just last week learned from our leaders at Miami International Airline that Air Canada had secured a contract to transport a U.S.-based professional basketball team.

Aviation union leaders have voiced strong opposition to allowing Air Canada to continue in what we considered a clear violation of our cabotage laws. We could not allow Air Canada to essentially establish their charters as practice and set a course for potentially more instances of cabotage. We will continue our vigilance when our cabotage laws, and most importantly our jobs, are threatened.

Our vigilance has resulted in action by the DOT Assistant General Counsel for International law – to view the letter click [HERE](#).

DELTA HIRES HIGH PRICED 3RD PARTY LAW FIRM

Please visit the MEC website at www.nwaafa.org for documents submitted so far to the NMB, by the law firm of [Paul Hastings](#) for Delta Air Lines, and from AFA, regarding our application for single carrier determination for the purposes of flight attendant representation.

The law firm of [Paul Hastings](#) and the attorney [Jack Gallagher](#) in particular - have been hired by management to represent Delta Air Lines for our upcoming union representation election and NMB process. Mr. Gallagher is reportedly an expert in slashing contracts in bankruptcy, creating non-union subsidiaries, and just good old fashioned union busting. It's an outrage that in these times of job cuts and company losses, our management team would choose to hire an expensive outside law firm, simply for the purposes of union busting. How many jobs could be saved and benefits improved if the money for this firm went unspent? Union contracts give us bargaining power and Delta executives clearly acknowledge that value by fighting so hard to block our right to a contract in the future.

Despite the flood of cash executives choose to spend, we are buoyed by increasing support at both Northwest and Delta. The chance for collective bargaining rights at the new Delta is actually quite simple to achieve for individual flight attendants. We can and will protect our career by working together. Take a

second to put on your union pin and an AFA bag tag and have conversations with fellow flight attendants, spend a few minutes on the phone or internet to vote in our upcoming representation election, and that will ensure that we have the chance to negotiate our own legally binding contract. Our pilots, meteorologists and executives have decided they want a contract at Delta, and they know there is nothing anti-company or substandard about a legally binding contract - its just good business sense. We are [Pro-Delta and Pro-AFA](#). -- MEC President Janette Rook

IAM FILES FOR REPRESENTATIONAL ELECTION

The International Association of Machinists (IAM) has filed an application with the National Mediation Board (NMB) for three classifications within their union (ESE, Flight Simulator Technicians and Plant Protection). The NMB will now begin the process of determining whether a single carrier exists for each of these classifications.

Although we may have different job responsibilities and belong to different unions, our struggle is the same; we are all fighting to maintain a voice in our future, a seat at the negotiations table, and preserve our right to collective bargaining. Please show your solidarity and support to our IAM brothers and sisters as we all march forward with a common purpose. Click [HERE](#) to read IAM President Steve Gordon's letter.

LONG AQ TRAINING DAYS – KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

We are receiving reports of long AQ training days, from both NW and DL flight attendants, as well as our union Special Assignment Flight Attendants (SAFAs). [Section 11 – Training](#) of our contract provides two 15 minute breaks and at least 40 minutes for lunch, and provides additional pay if the a classroom training day exceeds 8 hours (exclusive of meal periods and breaks) on an actual basis. If a training day exceeds 8 hours, NW flight attendants are paid on a minute for minute basis at our applicable hourly rate. Anything over 2 hours results in pay for a second day of training, however at no time should classroom training exceed 10 hours (exclusive of breaks), unless mutually agreed by the Company and the affected flight attendant. Unfortunately, our DL colleagues do not have the same pay and protections and are at times reportedly experiencing longer days and/or earlier report times.

Special Assignment Flight Attendants (SAFAs) are also working long hours, with an added insult by Delta management - pre-merger Delta SAFAs were recently given a slight raise and Delta representatives in ATL reportedly informed pre-merger NW SAFAs to “*go to your union*” if you want a raise at NW. This is yet another divisive tactic, designed to drive a wedge. The company has long had the power to increase the credit for each SAFA day, but currently pays our training SAFAs a lower credit per day than other SAFA positions. AFA has requested that the company review the credit that the Company has assigned training SAFAs. While these voluntary positions are contractually capped at 110

per month for a full month of SAFA assignments, the Company has it within its power at any time to change the credit of each SAFA day, thus allowing more days off for our SAFAs. That would allow more flexibility for those SAFAs who need to supplement their income by picking up a trip, or allow more rest due to a grueling training pace. – Submitted by MEC President Janette Rook

CREWPASS GAINING MOMENTUM

CrewPASS (Flight Crew Personnel Advanced Screening System), which allows flight deck and cabin crewmembers expedited access through security checkpoints and into sterile areas of U.S. airports, is gaining further momentum after the TSA announced their plans to expand the program in the next 6 to 9 months, using biometrics to verify crew identities. With crewmembers using CrewPASS and out of security lines, passenger screening times will be decreased and TSA officers will be able to spend more time looking for people with mal intent instead of inspecting crews.

What is Delta's position on ensuring flight attendants are included in the test programs that are underway? In early July, [NWA AFA leadership requested their buy-in](#) to support the inclusion of flight attendants in the expanded test program, along with pilots. On August 3rd, Mr. Ken Hylander, DL Sr. Vice President of Corporate Safety and Security, advised that due to the current NW/DL 'integration' there is a significant demand for IT resources and the timeline for systems integration would be jeopardized if they participated in CrewPASS at this time. He went on to state that further along in the integration, Delta plans to reexamine the feasibility of the program "ensuring it is not only an enhancement to the crewmember experience, but that it also is a security enhancement whose benefits exceeds the costs."

AFA will continue our advocacy to ensure FAs are included in the expanded test program by the TSA and promote Delta's participation as a lead carrier in this effort. Click [HERE](#) to view the latest news on TSA's plans and, also, view Delta's response on CrewPASS, go to the [MEC Government Affairs Committee](#) page. -- MEC Government Affairs and Air Safety, Health & Security Committees

SURVIVING AIRCRAFT QUALIFICATION TRAINING

With 4 classes of AQ training either completed or underway, member feedback and that of MEC AFA ASHS Vice Chair Gary Helton, who audited the class, have provided several refinements to the program. We've been advised that some significant adjustments have already been made and that the company is reviewing our additional recommendations.

The main **focus of AQ** includes: proficiency checks on each aircraft exit, including arming/disarming procedures; visual verification checks, normal opening/closing procedures and emergency operation (along with commands). The best resources in **preparation for AQ** include: review of the CBT and individual aircraft modules just prior to class date, thorough review of the

"Resource Guide", review all door videos and commands (use the 'Emergency Preparation Checklist' and videos found in LMS), DL Onboard Manual (accessed via DeltaNet) and individual aircraft references and Base Learning Center communications. **Be alert to any changes** to that information as noted in recent manual revisions and/or 'Change Alerts'. When in class, take good notes and take advantage of the study period provided prior to each aircraft exam.

Lastly, it appears that our **Mac users' dilemma** in accessing the AQ CBT via LMS have been resolved as a result of AFA's persistence on behalf of our Members. Continue to keep your Officers and MEC ASHS Committee advised of any concerns or problems with the AQ program as we continue to advocate for necessary improvements to the program. --Submitted by AFA MEC ASHS Committee

WHY FMLA LEGISLATION?

As you are all aware we have been trying to correct the FMLA 1993 law to include flight crews in that law's definition of eligibility for over 2 years now. This past week we advised all of you that our legislation is at risk due to an anonymous block by a Senator, and we asked all of you to please contact your Senators urging them to co-sponsor our legislation s.1422. We feel it may be a good idea to reiterate why we are fighting so hard for FMLA.

Many of us have taken advantage of the FMLA policy here at NWA and some have questioned why we even need this legislation. Well the answer is simple. Our FMLA policy is just that a policy. It can be used as a bargaining chip at the negotiations table as long as we have a contract or worse changed arbitrarily without a contract. This is because the current law as interpreted by the courts does not include flight crews simply by virtue of the way that our work hours are calculated. We do not work 40-hour weeks and as such it is impossible or nearly impossible to reach the 60% (or 1250 hours in a 12 month period) as prescribed by the 1993 law.

As a matter of fact according to the law as written and interpreted, **Reserve flight attendants** rarely qualify, because hours on-call are not considered. When was the last time you heard of a Reserve flight attendant flying 125 actual hours a month for 12 months? When was the last time you flew 125 hours a month for 12 months? Well, that is what the law states we must work in order to qualify for FMLA benefits. The law simply does not take into account our unique work schedules. And that is what we are trying to change.

We've been lucky at NWA, as a result of a well negotiated item in our contract; our company's FMLA policy is actually very close to what the law states. But for those of us that are currently line holders and able to fly actual hours that qualify for FMLA, what if we were forced back on Reserve in the future? And what if we didn't have a contract or the opportunity to negotiate a fair FMLA policy?

This is why it is so important that we ensure that this legislation passes and becomes law. Its fair and its right. Call your Senator and ask them to support fairness for flight attendants. Ask them to co-sponsor and support s.1422. Visit <http://www.nwaafa.org/committees/govaffairs/> to get more information.—
Submitted by Albert Garcia, MEC Government Affairs Chair

ROUND-THE-CLOCK DONATION DRIVE – SAVE THE DATE MSP!

The Northwest MEC and Local 95 have announced they will team up with the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the Salvation Army for a 48-hour marathon charity event October 22-24 in the MSP Northwest/Delta employee parking lot. "**Operation Donation - Unite Today For A Better Tomorrow**" will support several charitable efforts in the community including a blood drive, food drive, coat drive, Toys for Tots, and more. "*We all need help at some point in our lives,*" said Northwest MEC President Janette Rook. "*In today's extraordinary economic times, we know donations don't always meet our community's needs. Please stop by the Operation Donation camp during the event to make a donation, volunteer or just visit. Please help us support our community.*"