



No progress, no talks

Negotiations with 'new' United stall

Rich Delaney October 18, 2010 — After a disappointing week of contract negotiations with United Airlines we have determined that no productive result would come from continuing to meet.

Therefore, we have decided not to meet this week, as originally scheduled, and allow both sides to reevaluate their positions on specific issues, and determine if resuming talks in the near future will produce the agreements we need to reach a comprehensive tentative agreement.

As we have reported in the past, progress between the parties has been incremental but steady. While the company has not agreed with all our proposals, positive discussions have been held that have led to several understandings that, in some cases, have modified the proposal but made it workable for both sides.

However, as we focus more directly on economic issues that type of progress is not being seen.

We have presented our proposals for improved wages, benefits, and pension and are currently waiting for the company's response. The company's verbal reactions to our proposals have made it clear they do not agree with us, which is not unexpected, but does not help to move the negotiations in the direction of settlement. Our proposals relating to increased flexibility for scheduling and vacation usage have pointed out deficiencies in station manpower management that the company either can't or won't fix in order to accommodate the changes we look for.

At this point, neither side is willing to change their positions so continuing to have the same discussion is not going to produce different results. We are very interested in returning to the bargaining table at any time that there is an indication of progress, but it is not in anyone's interest to meet just for the sake of meeting. We are hopeful that our previous schedule may be resumed quickly and the important issues of job security and wage and benefit improvements can be resolved.

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Voting in the Delta/Northwest representation election for Fleet Service Employees began late last week and will conclude November 18th.

As we have stated before, it is in every airline worker's best interest, regardless of the carrier they work for, that the employees of Delta vote to be represented by the IAM.

As we have become all too familiar with during our United negotiations, airlines do not truly want to compete with each other unless it is over labor costs. Each carrier wants to be the one that pays the least and provides the least in order to make the most. If Delta is able to establish wage rates and work rules without negotiating with their employees organized carriers like American, USAirways, and United will look to mirror those rates and all airline employees will lose.

Please encourage any family Members or friends that may be eligible to vote in this election to vote for the IAM.

Win

Late last week the National Mediation Board announced the results of the representation election held among the Flight Attendants of OpenSkies Airlines. The F/A's of the British Airways subsidiary, that operates in EWR and IAD, were looking for representation by the IAM. This is one of the first elections held under the newly established voting rules in which the decision is made based on the majority of votes cast – not on the old rule of having more than 50% of the group required to vote in order to hold a valid election. Two interesting points became evident with the announced results. First, and most important, the IAM was declared the winner with only a single vote cast against them. Second, when airlines no longer focus on getting people to not participate, we see a greater turnout rate – in this case over 75% - with most voters supporting the idea of Union representation. This is good news for future representation elections because it reinforces the Unions' belief that these new rules will level the playing field and employees will be able to determine their future with their own vote.