



**ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS - CWA, AFL-CIO**

6250 N. River Road, Suite 4020, Rosemont, IL 60018

PHONE 847•292•7170 FAX 847•292•7180 website:www.unitedafa.org

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

This week the United Master Executive Council again met in special session to further review management's plan to reduce headcount by 1,950 Flight Attendants beginning in April 2014 and to prepare for all contingencies if management should take the draconian step of putting people out of work in violation of our Contract. It's clear that this planned headcount reduction is a product of management's long stated goal of increasing productivity and efficiency by having fewer Flight Attendants flying more hours.

This is not a new concept; in fact we fought against concessionary changes to our Contract in both the bankruptcy proceedings and in the Section 6 negotiations that began in 2009. We fought against it for two reasons: 1) Flight Attendants consistently identified the protection and enhancement of work rules as a top priority in all of our negotiations and 2) we knew that the productivity changes that management was seeking would lead to significant headcount reductions with severe consequences for our community of Flight Attendants.

During previous negotiations we demonstrated on numerous occasions that the productivity and efficiency changes that management was seeking would be devastating to our community of Flight Attendants. Especially, since in the negotiations that began in 2009 we were on the cusp of corporate decisions to ground the 737 fleet and to further reduce staffing onboard United aircraft. By way of background, you will recall that on April 6, 2009, United management served us with notice of their intent to seek modifications to our then current Collective Bargaining Agreement. Their broad set proposals were designed to support United's objectives of eliminating jobs and were detailed in a letter that in relevant part sought to achieve "critical productivity improvements" and other contractual modifications. We presented United's proposals to you and identified key areas of concerns with their approach, namely that the productivity and efficiency that management was seeking came at a steep price. The jobs of our fellow flying partners and the working conditions we fought to achieve and protect over the course of our careers.

Nevertheless, we remained undaunted and guided by you - we continued to move forward negotiating to achieve the priorities determined important to you and proposed to expedite the negotiations utilizing a novel approach modeled on the National Mediations Board's Expedited Mediation process. As you will recall, that approach yielded a new Contract and an important agreement memorialized on page 305 of our current Collective Bargaining Agreement. Simply, that agreement was the linch pin to reaching a new Contract since we would not agree to any productivity improvements for management until, and unless, there was an express commitment on the part of management to provide protection against involuntary furlough. In return, management received productivity changes to the Contract. Including the modifications to our work rules that have a headcount impact such as:

- 8 1/2 in 24
- 35 in 7
- Vacation accrual
- Elimination of the quarterly system
- Higher minimums
- Higher line average
- Elimination of monthly flying maximums

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**INFLIGHT SAFETY PROFESSIONALS**

Now, United management is attempting to achieve an increase in Flight Attendants productivity by putting people out of work. While this approach is typical of many corporations, making people work more and putting people out of work in an effort to boost the bottom line, it's contrary to the agreement not to involuntarily furlough any Flight Attendant as a result of productivity improvements. However, in light of the recent corporate history and results that have been less than stellar, current management is emboldened to again try to manage the airline on the backs of the frontline workers.

Last month, United executives held an Investor Day touting that United has been transformed and a working together culture has taken root at our Company. In short, management presented another plan that focuses on increased efficiency and productivity to cover for their short comings in the merger. On Investor Day, management presented to investors a plan to implement an additional \$2 billion in annual cost savings by 2017 with a focus on fuel consumption, maintenance, sourcing, distribution and *productivity*. In fact, \$500 million of the total being allocated to productivity. Notably assigning a 15 – 20 percent improvement in labor productivity.

A successful company does not put people out of work. Especially when there is an express commitment not to do so. To be clear, we are fully committed to vigorously and aggressively defend all Members and the United Master Executive Council has authorized me to take any and all actions necessary to prevent United management from putting any United Flight Attendant on involuntary furlough. To that end, we have embarked on a multifaceted plan of action that includes ongoing discussions with management as well as contingency planning for potential legal and grievance preparations.

The coming weeks, will be difficult, but by standing together we move forward with the confidence and determination that have been the hallmarks of our community facing adversity.

In Solidarity,

  
Greg Davidowitch, President  
United Master Executive Council