

July Update

July 30, 2010

Dear fellow Members of Local 4094,

Two extremely emotional issues have been the focus of much of the Local's attention over the last short while.

Calgary Meeting

As many of you are aware, Director of Scheduling, Michael Nicholas, attended an open information meeting in Calgary in July. Component President Katherine Thompson was also in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a series of concerns ranging from quality of pairings generated by the new Optimizer to feelings of frustration amongst many crew members that crew from out of base were consistently being brought in to operate flights out of Calgary. Mr. Nicholas explained that the Company considered Calgary to be understaffed by approximately 144 crew. He further explained that this shortage often necessitated the bringing of crews from other bases to Calgary to operate flights departing YYC.

Only a few weeks after the meeting, the Company announced that they would be hiring 75 flight attendants, effective immediately in Calgary base. Since that time, our local has been increasingly receiving widely copied correspondence insisting that since "the squeaky wheel gets the oil" we should be actively lobbying to improve staffing levels in Vancouver. This is an understandable reaction. However, in order to properly evaluate this conclusion, it is important to understand the background.

Every quarter, the Union and management meet to discuss matters of mutual importance. These "UMHQ" meetings as they are known, are attended by the AC Component officers as well as the four Base Presidents. For the Company, Sue Welscheid, Stephen Knowles, Michael Nicholas, John Beveridge (Labour Relations) among others, typically attend. At a UMHQ meeting that I attended in November 2009, the Company was asked to confirm or dispel rumours of a base closure in Calgary. The Company was emphatic that all such rumours were without merit. They confirmed their commitment to the Calgary base and went on to say that the growth prospects for Calgary were very real as there were plans to expand service into the United States and add Narita as a destination. Although it took some months for the increase in flying at the base to materialize, our Calgary colleagues are now starting to see the benefits of the projected growth.

(1)

DAVID PACHECO – President / PAM SARKISSIAN – Secretary-Treasurer

VICE PRESIDENTS: HUGH CHETWYND - LORNA HOLMES - ALISON KJERTINGE - ANTONIUS LAM - CATHY MORIARTY
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As you can see, the conclusion that the Calgary meeting elicited the hiring, while understandable, is **false**. Moreover, as tempting as it is to want to lobby the Company for flying, nothing could be more divisive or acrimonious to our membership than to have bases fighting each other for work. We must assume that financial considerations will continue to determine how the company allocates its employees and flying.

Encouragingly, at the Calgary meeting Michael Nicholas did state that Vancouver base was understaffed by 71. According to the Company, language qualifications and other logistical considerations make it challenging to allocate the needed crew to Vancouver. We are confident that these obstacles can be overcome and that our local membership will soon see some relief after years of painful stagnation and reductions.

Along with the declared shortage in Vancouver, there are many other legitimate areas of concern amongst our membership that could be most effectively addressed by a Company representative. I am confident we will be able to soon arrange a Vancouver meeting with a Scheduling representative.

August BL Blocks

Unstacking is a concern at all bases, and we have previously seen isolated instances of high unstacking months in YVR (most recently in December 2008). The BL unstacking in August, however, has had a disproportionate effect on many members' blocks and we need to find out why. Blocking is a joint Union/Company function. CUPE and the Company are currently involved in the inquiry process with Navtech (the PBS provider) to determine: what occurred, the scope of the issue, and how to prevent future occurrences.

It is important to recognize that, while the BL shortage in Vancouver is real and contributes to the unstacking problem, this is an issue that at one time or another affects all language groups as well as unilinguals.

The PBS System is complex and the mechanics can be best explained in person. We encourage all of you to attend the Local Base Meeting on August 16, 11:00 - 14:00 at the Roundhouse Community Centre in Yaletown. Local PBS Committee members will be in attendance to answer your questions and discuss any findings from the inquiry.

In Solidarity,



David Pacheco - Base President - Local4094 (YVR)

(2)

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