

# UNITED



**August 2013**

LABOR RELATIONS UPDATE

EDITION NO. 3

**Dear flight attendant,**

**United's negotiating team met with the AFA joint negotiating committee (JNC) in Denver on July 8-12.**

**We were encouraged by some of the exchanges and the productive discussions that resulted in a tentative agreement on alcohol and drug testing—for a total of three tentative agreements to date.**

**We anticipated moving more swiftly towards a joint agreement, but we understand the challenges that stand in the way.**

**Negotiations will continue in San Francisco on August 5-9.**

*United Labor Relations*

**While we agree with AFA that doing the contract right is more important than doing it fast, we disagree with AFA when it comes to their comments on the interests and motives of management.**

**So, let's set the record straight openly, honestly and directly:**

“Long negotiation periods can benefit management, because the longer the time before accepting improvements in the Contract, the longer they get to go without paying for those improvements.”

– AFA JNC Update, July 26

**United has no interest in extending or delaying the negotiation or implementation of a joint collective agreement. Without a single contract, we face the costs and complexity of managing three different agreements and separate workforces and systems. Achieving a competitive joint agreement helps make United a great place to work and a sustainably profitable company. The longer we go without it, the longer it takes all of us to realize the full benefits of the merger.**

“Management hopes that they can stall us into agreeing to settle for less.” – AFA JNC Update, July 26

**United hasn't stalled during negotiations, and we certainly don't believe that stalling benefits anyone. We've been timely, reasonable and responsive to every single AFA proposal. We've provided information whenever requested. When the Union offers a responsible suggestion or proposal, we respond in kind.**

“If our goal was simply to end negotiations as quickly as possible, we could have a new contract by tomorrow. But it would be on management’s terms, not our own. And frankly, that’s just unacceptable... [O]ur collective voice is calling for a contract that sets the bar higher, one that improves our benefits and protections. It calls for us to not settle for anything but the best.”

– AFA JNC Update, July 26

**The obligation to bargain in good faith does not allow either party to dictate terms or declare it won’t “settle for” anything but its own terms. Reaching agreement means finding common ground—through compromise—on solutions that address the interests of United, the Union and flight attendants.**

**“Management’s terms” are no different from what United and AFA have already agreed: “to work in good faith to fully explore relevant issues and find solutions satisfactory to all parties that are fair, sustainable and competitive.”**

“Understanding that negotiations take time, our negotiations are no exception. Part of the perception that management hopes to foster is that they’re taking longer than necessary or longer than they really are.” – AFA JNC Update, July 26

**We’re not into fostering perceptions; we’re simply communicating facts. How long the negotiations are taking is a matter of fact, not spin, and you deserve to know the facts.**

“We want to make [a new agreement] happen as quickly as possible—however it takes two to tango. We are prepared to meet with management more frequently, but they do not want to.”

– AFA JNC Update, July 12

**The amount of time actually spent in negotiations is not the issue. The issue is what happens when we’re at the bargaining table.**

**We can’t make progress if the proposals offered aren’t designed to solve real problems or the Union negotiating committee lacks authority or desire to engage in a truly collaborative process and reach agreements that are fair to flight attendants and United.**

**The fact remains that reaching tentative agreements on three relatively non-controversial topics (Missing, Interned and Prisoner of War; Jury and Witness Duty; Alcohol and Drug Testing) after 37 days over eight months of negotiations is not where we should be.**

**We should have already finished with most or all non-economic issues and moved into serious discussions of scheduling, compensation and benefits. Those issues are likely to take a lot of time and require concentrated effort. We are ready, willing and able to move forward towards a final agreement.**

*Thanks for all your hard work.*



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