

IAM

August 8, 2008
Alaska Airlines
08-08

Air Transport District 143

FOCUS

Federal Arbitrator Rules Alaska Airlines Violated Machinists Union Contract

A federal arbitrator has ruled that Alaska Airlines violated its collective bargaining agreement with Air Transport District 143 when it laid off 500 Seattle baggage handlers and other ramp workers in May 2005.

This ruling is a huge victory for the IAMAW, Air Transport District 143, and all the hard working airline employees we represent. The ruling sends a message to the airlines that they must respect their workers and their union contracts.

The ruling comes more than three years after Alaska Airlines subcontracted its entire ground handling operation to Menzies Aviation. IAM-represented ramp employees who showed up to work on May 13, 2005 had their security badges deactivated by Alaska and were told they no longer had jobs.

Since outsourcing the work to Menzies, Alaska Airlines has endured negative press reports involving lost and mishandled bags, flight delays, safety problems, and increased customer complaints.

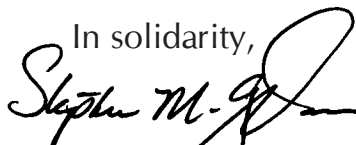
The federal arbitrator who decided the case considered the parties' contract language, which permitted Alaska Airlines to subcontract the ground handling work only if it was cheaper than keeping the work in house.

The federal arbitrator directed Alaska and District 143 to work together to determine the appropriate remedy for the contract breach, but will take the matter up again if Alaska and District 143 are unable to agree on a solution.

Only because of our strong Union and the opportunity of a grievance resolution process could we prevail in protecting jobs; without such a process, all is for nothing.



08-017

In solidarity,

Stephen M. Gordon

President/Directing General Chair

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