

IAM

May 1, 2008
Alaska Airlines
08-07

Air Transport District 143 FOCUS

Alaska Airlines Home Agent Test Program Participants

District 143 continues to receive various communications regarding the recent announcement that the Home Agent Test Program will be canceled due to the inability to reach an agreement with Alaska Airlines management that would add permanency to a much desired test program.

First, by way of background, it is important for our entire membership, not just those who are currently participating, to understand how this program evolved and, most importantly, why District 143 has made the tough decision to exercise our right to terminate the Home Agent Test Program. Air Transport District 143 entered into a 90-day Home Agent Test Program (originally for BOIRR only) on January 9, 2007, which ultimately led to your Union agreeing to expand the test program beyond Boise to include all other Alaska Reservation offices. Additionally, after meeting with Company representatives, we decided shortly thereafter to extend the duration of the test so that Alaska Airlines could assess the pros and cons of such program.

The 90-day test program has now been in place for well over fourteen months. Throughout the last fourteen months, District 143 has held several face-to-face meetings with applicable Company officials in an attempt to bring permanency to this much desired program. However, these attempts were unsuccessful on both sides - labor and management. It is essential that this membership understand that this test program took place outside of Section 6 negotiations and was done so to allow Alaska Airlines the opportunity to evaluate a concept that would or would not be beneficial to their operational integrity.

District 143 clearly presented several issues within the Home Agent Test Program that were brought forward by participating members such as:

- * Company to pay for internet service provider
- * Company to maintain all Reservation offices within United States
- * Call adherence issues
- * Expanding current mileage radius
- * Elimination of Shop Stewards and establishment of Shop Committee
- * Elimination of Phoenix assigned seating

After careful review by the Company, they informed us that they would not agree to any of the items mentioned above. On January 30, 2008, District 143 sent the Company an additional letter stating that without three core items we would not be willing to extend the current test program. Approximately eight weeks later, District 143 met with company representatives in Seattle to discuss the test program with the full intention of reaching a permanent program. At the conclusion of our meeting, District 143 was advised by Steve Jarvis that he would get back to us with an answer within a few days.

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Mr. Jarvis responded to District 143 via letter dated April 22, 2008, wherein he acknowledged our intention to terminate the Home Agent Test program. In his letter, he was willing to offer a proposal for extending the program; however, the proposal fell short of our adjusted original proposal and, therefore, we were not in concurrence. Our requests were sound, reasonable requests that came from many participating members, your co-workers.

On April 2, 2008, during a meeting between District 143 and Company representatives, we made it very clear that without the ability to represent our membership beyond the walls of a reservation center, we could no longer support a Home Agent Test Program. The current steward language is inadequate as defined by the collective bargaining agreement for members working at home as it specifically states:

"The Union will be represented by two (2) properly designated stewards in each bid location at each point on the system on each shift. In the absence of the Shop Steward, a Union-appointed alternate may act in his/her place."

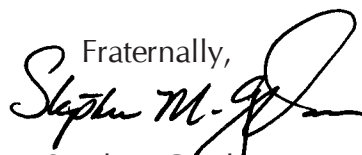
An egregious rumor that has been spread via email from Lane Kemper dated April 25, 2008, regarding the establishment of a Shop Committee is that these "elected individuals in each office, in addition to the shop stewards, who would be off the phone every day doing union business." It was clearly expressed that the Shop Committee would take the place of the current stewards at the last two meetings with the Company. These remarks are completely unfounded, and are nothing more than posturing by the Company.

Clearly, what has not been conveyed is the fact that District 143 has supported this program for well over fourteen months. Throughout we worked with the company on various issues such as finding ways to recruit and retain Spanish-speaking agents, extension of time limits for the test program and extended test program to all reservation locations. Unfortunately, our efforts have gone unnoticed in our attempts to reach a fair and equitable deal in which both parties achieve success.

Many of our members have sent, and continue to send, District 143 emails regarding the recent announcement to cancel the Home Agent Test Program expressing their concerns now that the decision has been made. However, District 143 received very minimal input, positive or negative, from the membership throughout the test program period for whatever reason. To those who did present suggestions to District 143, I can assure you that these suggestions were brought forward to the Company throughout our discussions.

I personally advised Steve Jarvis last week that since we are unable to reach an agreement on the core issues presented, District 143 would no longer support the Home Agent Test Program, thereby cancelling the program in accordance to our original signed agreement between both parties. Suddenly, the Company has called the original agreement "unilateral," yet never once mentioned their discontent with any portion of the agreement; only when we made proper notification that we would exercise our agreed upon right to cancel the Home Agent Test Program did this agreement become unilateral.

District 143 regrets that both parties were unable to reach an agreement that would bring permanency to this test program. We will stand by our denied requests, for these requests came from the membership; specifically, from members who are current participants in the test program that actually maintained contact with their union representatives at the District level. What we will not stand for is supporting a test program that is one-sided and absent of input from District 143, General Chairs, stewards, and our members.

Fraternally,


Stephen Gordon
President/Directing General Chair