



# MERGER WATCH

The International Association of  
Machinists and Aerospace Workers

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[www.goiam.org/mergers](http://www.goiam.org/mergers)

## *Northwest/Delta: What's Next?*

Now that the Department of Justice has approved the merger and the corporate papers have been signed, what happens to both carriers' workers?

Superficial changes – new employee numbers, new signage, management changes – have already begun or will be underway soon. For the time being, however, important issues will remain unchanged. IAM members' collective bargaining agreements, including wage guarantees, seniority protection, secure benefits, stable defined benefit pension plans, job security language and grievance procedures remain in full force and effect. Delta workers' employment terms will continue to be at the whim of Delta management.

There is no specific timeline for when union representation issues for the combined group will be resolved. The process, however, is well established. Once a Union files an application requesting a determination of single carrier status, the National Mediation Board (NMB) will investigate and determine whether the combined carriers constitute a single transportation system. Some of the criteria the NMB uses in determining single carrier status are the combination of published schedules, standardized uniforms and aircraft markings, centralized labor relations and management, overlapping ownership and a single Board of Directors. This process could take several months or longer. It is likely that the pilots will file relatively quickly. However, a single transportation system determination must be made for each craft or class. Therefore, this process will happen repeatedly at different times for different job classifications.

After the IAM files its applications and the NMB rules that the merged carriers are a single transportation system, the NMB will give the parties 14 days to make a showing of interest to order an election. Before the NMB will order an election the IAM must provide a showing of interest from at least 35% of the combined classification for which we are filing. The 35% threshold can be met through adding signed election authorization cards from Delta employees with our current membership at Northwest.

When the election takes place, 50%+1 of the combined classification must vote for the election to be valid. Each craft or class has separate elections, and they are not required to take place at the same time.

Seniority integration will not be resolved until after union representation is decided. IAM policy states that seniority will be integrated by an employee's date of hire into the classification, regardless of which airline they worked for pre-merger. Under federal law, without a collective bargaining agreement Delta may try to integrate seniority several ways, including methods that eliminate decades of earned seniority, and still argue it is "fair and equitable."

Preparations for the merger began many months ago, but it is now moving into its final stages. Visit the District 143 website, [www.iam143.org](http://www.iam143.org), for the latest news on the merger.