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Your Voice at Thomas Cook

6th May 2013

JOB LOSS UPDATE



It's been a few weeks since our last Consultation Update and Newsletter and therefore we wanted to take the opportunity to re-assure you that we are still hard at work on this important – and for a great many, a very worrying subject.

Since our last newsletter, Mitigation / Consultation meetings have taken place on 2nd, 12th, and 25th of April. A further meeting is planned for May 15th and as previously advised, these meetings will continue throughout the summer with the joint aim of mitigating all proposed compulsory job losses. Those present at these meetings are the usual line-up of experienced representatives, Unite Full Time Officer, senior Company managers and members of the TCX HR team.

Unfortunately, the reason for our silence of late is based on the fact that, despite meetings continuing to take place, very little has changed on the overall job loss figures since we last updated you. The Company have continued to keep us abreast of potential changes to the situation for Winter '13/'14 – including Ministry of Defence (MoD) work and the LPA contract. Unfortunately, we have been informed that neither of these is a confirmed contract and until they become so, they will not mitigate any of the potential compulsory redundancies. We also await a presentation from the GM: Crew Planning on the impact of the additional A330 on the winter flying programme and establishment. It has already been made very clear to us that whilst “less aircraft mean less people” the opposite is apparently not

necessarily the case.

That said, we await further information on all of the above. We remain hopeful of some positive news before



the end of May.

Your reps were very disappointed when the Company informed us that from April 1, they will no longer take and publish full notes from these Consultation / Mitigation meetings. We believe that the published notes from the meetings that have been taking place since October 2012 provide you with an important level of transparency over what is being discussed by us in your name. They have allowed you to follow what is being discussed and where necessary, make your own contributions via your reps. The notes have been an accurate record of when meetings happened, what was said – and if applicable what was and wasn't agreed between Thomas Cook and Unite. They have helped prevent myths and rumours developing – something which we all know help no-one and often cause a great deal of worry. It is interesting to note that in absence of published notes and updates for the last few weeks a number of incorrect rumours have begun circulating. Please try to avoid this as it only causes unnecessary worry for those affected. When we asked why the Company would no longer provide a note-taker and publish the meeting notes on Xplorer we were informed “*the formal consultation is now concluded*” and that the notes were “*too time consuming*”. Your reps will attempt to make and publish our own notes from these important meetings. If you would like Thomas Cook to continue to publish notes from these meetings, please email your RCCM and let them know your thoughts.

Finally, please be aware that VR remains open and if you are interested in leaving the Company voluntarily on October 31 this year, please discuss this with your RCCM and / or Unite representative.



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PROPOSED PEOPLE POLICY CHANGES:

You may be aware that your reps are in another round of talks which involve the review that the Company announced back in March of many of its HR policies. Two key areas which will affect cabin crew are the Redundancy and the Maternity and Adoption Policies. A pay freeze was also announced at the same time – which in real terms, with inflation accounted for, you are now earning less than in previous years.

Details of the proposed changes to all policies can be found on Xplorer under 'HR / UK&I Business Proposals / Pay & People Policies'. Unite have given our initial feedback to the HR Director – which is essentially that if the pilots can be exempted from these changes, then so should the cabin crew who have a lot less to sacrifice as a trade-off for remaining on old Ts and Cs. We have also insisted that the Company abandon the dates for the implementation of their proposals.

UNION WIN! THE CURRENT POLICIES ARE BACK ON XPLOER:

Ever since the HR policies moved off Xplorer in early 2011, Unite have been campaigning for better access to them for cabin crew. It was quite apparent to your reps that their new home on Tom-tom was totally inappropriate for cabin crew – who struggle to get access to this website which many have described as 'not very user friendly'. Quite simply, without access to your rights – you may not know what they are!!

After a number of discussions about this (and a survey of our members), Thomas Cook have agreed to return the main policies to Xplorer – where you can now find them (see HR / Policies). If you can't find a particular policy here, contact your RCCM who should be able to email it to you – or alternatively, provide you with a hard copy.

COST CUT / P.I.P. MEETINGS:

At the last meeting we were advised that Christoph Debus (Group Head of Air Travel) had declined our request for him to attend a PIP meeting so that we could put our concerns in relation to minimum crew directly to him. There are a whole number of issues relating to minimum crew that we would like to discuss directly with the decision-maker and we would also like to bring along an expert from Unite who advises on such issues. We will update you further in our next newsletter.



CREW REST SURVEY

You may recall last year that many of you completed a survey on Crew Breaks on the A330. We recognise that this is potentially an issue on all aircraft types – especially in view of the Director of Customer Delivery and Sales' (CD&S) proposals to move us to minimum crew. You indicated to us that short haul flights on the A330 are of a particular concern as we are essentially already working on minimum crew on every flight (due to the allocation of a crew member to the LDL).

The issue was first looked into during S12 by an RCCM who subsequently left the business at the end of S12. It was

then passed to the senior management in Manchester for review which is where the subject sat for the winter period with no action taken before being passed back to the RCCMs at LGW to look into earlier this month.

To date, nothing of substance has been done to address the serious concerns about crew welfare in last year's survey. The good news is that a new RCCM has now begun working on the issue. You are entitled to take a break on all flights - ten minutes sitting on a gash bag is not a break! Please email your base rep if you do not achieve sufficient breaks on any given flight.

Finally, we will also continue to push the important subject of a crew rest curtain being provided for the back centre row of seats (as per LTCX A330s) and when not full, for this area of the aircraft to be left free for crew to take controlled rest and / or breaks as per the B1 manual. This matter will remain at national level until resolved. The next meeting where this will be discussed is planned to take place on June 13th.



*Left: Anyone for tennis?
This issue keeps getting
batted from one team to
another - sadly with no
resolution in sight...*

DISABILITY IN FOCUS: THE EQUALITIES ACT (2010)

With the decision made by Thomas Cook to use sickness as the main selection criteria in the current round of redundancies, it brought to light how many of our crew may have a disability (in employment law terms) and have no awareness of the protections to which they are entitled under current equalities legislation. The actual definition under the Equalities Act (2010) is:

“Someone who has a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The law says that employees (and prospective employees) cannot be disadvantaged as a direct or indirect result of any disability that they have. This would include the use of sickness that results from their disability in any redundancy selection scoring process. It also means that employers have a duty to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to help the employee continue to work in their role. There are heavy penalties for any employer who fails in this duty to its workforce.

Serious long term conditions such as Cancer, HIV and MS are covered from the point of diagnosis (you don’t have to have any symptoms). Often conditions such as the above are not obvious to others – but are just as serious as more visually apparent conditions. The term ‘Disability’ can include a number of conditions which affect our cabin crew members including diabetes, certain chronic skin conditions and problems following car accidents (this is by no means an exhaustive list).

The reps have supported several members recently who have serious long terms conditions – but are terrified of how their colleagues will react if they were to disclose their condition to others. Whilst it is the absolute right of an individual to keep their condition private should they wish, we shouldn’t create an environment at work where individuals feel that their condition is stigmatised. HIV is one such example where throwaway comments are sometimes made that are very negative, are not based on current medical evidence and are very hurtful to those who have the condition. Not only could this lead to disciplinary action being taken against those making the comments but also it creates a working environment which is not friendly and supportive. With this in mind, please try and think before you make comments which could be deemed offensive to others. Remember – many disabilities possessed by your colleagues are not going to be obvious!

If you think you have a disability, you may be entitled to more support from Thomas Cook than you are currently getting. Please speak to our Union Equalities Rep (Matt Irish) – who can offer confidential support on making sure you are fully supported in the workplace. By declaring that you have a disability to your employer, you are actually MORE protected than keeping it hidden / undeclared.

For more information on the Equalities Act (2010) and how it is there to support those with disabilities, please go to: <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

Adult Learner’s Week: 18th—24th May

Adult Learner’s Week (ALW) is Europe’s largest celebration of Adult Learning, so take part now by visiting www.alw.org.uk. Use the online events diary to find out what’s going on near you, then dip your toes into a range of exciting new subjects. It may be a taster course in Digital Photography, or the chance to snap up a go at Spanish cookery. What’s amazing is how one thing leads to another.

Don’t take our word for it - you can also read stories regarding the power of learning from other people just like you. As they say, from tiny acorns.....

Part of ALW is ‘Learning at Work’ Day, and your Union Learning Reps (ULRs) are looking at ways to make learning more accessible to us all, recognising the unique nature of our working day.

With any suggestions about this, or a Learning Story to share, please get in touch. The ULRs are waiting. Continuing support for those deemed ‘at risk’, Unite also offers a free redundancy course (visit www.learnwithunite.org under the member support tab) as well as its own job site, Unite4Jobs— www.unite4jobs.co.uk



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