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Your Voice at Thomas Cook (National Branch NW/1072)

29th Sept 2011

Consultation Begins

You will by now be aware that the entire cabin crew workforce at Thomas Cook has been placed into a 90 days consultation period which began on September 6th 2011.

Your reps were involved from the start of the process – and at the time of publication, formal consultation meetings have taken place on September 6th, 8th, 21st and 28th. You will already have received communications from Unite about these meetings – but if you have not, they can be found at www.tcxunite.com.

A communication from our meeting on September 28th is on its way to you. This latest letter stating our position as a united committee can be found on page 4.

If you have not received any letters of this kind – please make sure Unite has your up to date contact details. You can update these by contacting Anne-Marie Bramall on 0161 848 0909.

As a result of Thomas Cook's proposals – we have to date, held four open meetings in order to consult with our members. These took place on September 15th at LGW, September 21st and 28th in MAN and GLA on September 26th. These meetings proved lively and

successful with a number of excellent suggestions and comments being made by those who attended. Turnout exceeded all of our expectations, with all attendees saying how much more reassured and confident they felt. Every question and comment was noted – and will be taken forward with TCX at the appropriate time.

We understand that not everyone can attend such meetings – due to lifestyle and work limitations – so we welcome any calls / emails as well. You can email any of our reps – or use the email address consultation@tcxunite.com. Due to the success of these initial meetings, more meetings with you – our members – will be held in the coming days and weeks.

Remember the lessons of the past – when we remain united – we stay strong. Keep this in mind in the coming days and months and get your friends to join. A printable membership form (and freepost address) can be found at www.tcxunite.com.

Like us / follow us as 'TCXUnite' on Facebook or Twitter— get the news as it happens when it happens!



HOLIDAY PAY: EU Victory for crew!

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has ruled in a case (Williams and others vs. British Airways) that *“Employers should ensure that workers on annual leave are paid amounts that are “intrinsic” to the tasks that they are required to carry out.”* This clearly has implications moving forwards for how holiday pay for Thomas Cook cabin crew (and pilots) is paid. This is a ‘hot off the press’ issue and we will keep you posted how this progresses over the coming days and weeks.



Join Unite at our branch website: www.tcxunite.com

UNION WATCH: LPA—Nightmare or dream trip?!?

By now those of you that have been selected to take part in the LPA contract have been notified. Your union were notified by Thomas Cook four days before the memo to crew was issued. The pilot and the engineering unions were all given considerably more time to discuss the terms on offer.

Nevertheless Unite offered the view to Thomas Cook that it has serious concerns regarding the non standard commission rate which is being paid. We would always view 12% as contractual. We also expressed serious concerns over the deviation from non-standard TCX accommodation, plus the non payment of ABAs. Other practical questions remain unanswered to date – for example – will A330 trained crew retain their A330 qualification upon return?

Thomas Cook chose to disregard all of our concerns and indeed failed to answer a number of questions / concerns that we raised. They also failed to negotiate with us on any of the key Ts and Cs. This is contrary to our recognition agreement with them.

Regardless of the Company view that the contract was on a volunteer basis, your union should be involved at the point these commercial decisions are being made

– not after. Had Unite been consulted with regarding this contract at the appropriate time, and if no crew had volunteered to accept the downgraded terms and conditions, then we would have been presented with similar terms to those of the pilots (who remained united and refused to operate under the offered terms).

If no one had volunteered for this, TCX would have been compelled to tour crew members through LPA in a similar way to any other away-from-base trip (this is what is happening with the flight crew).

Not only would this have given a lot more crew the opportunity to benefit from visiting LPA– but we would also have been paid standard ABAs and 12% commission, and sent a very strong message to the Company. As it stands those crew who are operating the LPA contract may well find themselves suffering a loss of earnings.

Pictured right—Las Palmas—winter paradise or prison island?



NEW FULL TIME OFFICER

As we begin the 90 day consultation process, an internal restructure of Unite Full Time Officers has given us the privilege of working with Mick Whitley, who will be our new Full Time Officer. Mick has worked within the car industry for many years – and also has extensive experience of civil aviation – having worked in and around Manchester Airport earlier in his career. Prior to Unite’s formation, Mick worked for the Transport and General Workers union – so we are very lucky to have such experience to draw upon. Mick has already shown us that he has a straight talking, no nonsense approach towards the Company – which given the issues facing our members, is very reassuring. Mick can be contacted directly through the Unite offices in Salford (0161 848 0909). Please always try and speak with one of the reps in the first instance. Welcome on board Mick – we’re proud and pleased to have you on the team!

Your National Branch Thomas Cook Shop Stewards and Unite Officials

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* Dougie Kirk and Nichola Faiers also have H&S responsibilities

NEW Lead Officer

Mick Whitley

☎ 0161 848 0909

Meet YOUR Reps

Each month we will try and introduce you to each and every one of your team of Unite reps. This month we spoke to Nichola Faiers—from Stansted Base.....

Q. Why did you become a union rep?

A. The union has helped me a lot since I became a member, this is my way of giving back and helping crew.

Q. What has your biggest challenge been?

A. The 90 day consultation period we currently find ourselves in with the Company. I am very much looking forward to getting as involved as possible throughout this challenging time for our crew community.

Q. What's your high point been?

A. I have only been a union rep since March 2011 so becoming part of a great team of reps is definitely a high point. Being able to help the members and feeling appreciated is always good.

Q. What is your hope for the future of the cabin crew community?

A. A positive outcome for the crew at the end of the consultation period. I would love to see the ACM role saved and redundancies kept to an absolute minimum. I think we have a fantastic bunch of crew at Thomas Cook and it would be a shame to say goodbye to

anyone.

Q. Away from work, what do you like to spend your free time doing?

A. After doing a tandem skydive for the Thomas Cook Children's Charity in July, I decided to set myself a new challenge. I am now learning how to horse ride once a week...OLYMPICS 2012 here I come!!

Q. Born?

A. 28th January 1983, Chelmsford Essex (a 15 minute drive from 'The Only Way Is Essex'!!!).

Q. Favourite place in the world?

A. At home with my boyfriend, glass of vino and a bar of Cadbury's Fruit & Nut. Failing that a hot sunny country, a sun lounger, a beach and a cheeky Mojito!



Pictured Right:
Our TOWIE girl– Nichola Faiers
Unite Rep for STN

A New(ish) Team!



Your team of reps from NW 1072 commit to keeping our Branch members informed, fully involved in any decision making, and making ourselves available to you as and when needed.

Back in May a new combined workplace committee team were voted in by the national team of reps, following a full reps' election in Feb / March.

The Thomas Cook National Branch (NW/1072) Chair and Secretary remain in position. The Branch Chair is Martin Browne and the Branch Secretary is June Knox.

The 'interim' agreement that you were told about back in July has now been lifted and normal industrial relations have resumed. This means that all the issues which affect you and have been allowed to stagnate over the past four months are now going to be picked up and addressed. Your JCNC will meet with the Company on October 11th. We will update you following this meeting.

STRESS @ WORK!

By now you should have received your personal copy of our stress at work survey (with FREEPOST envelope). Please do take the time to answer this and return it as soon as possible. Our Health and Safety Vice Chair (Hayley Browne) will then collate the results and pass an anonymised version onto TCX. If you've not yet received one, please email hayleyunitehsrep@hotmail.co.uk and she'll get one right out to you.



Stress at Work - Did You Know...?

- * 53% of people have experienced stress at work during the last 12 months.
- * 57% of these say that stress has increased over the last 12 months.
- * 52% of these feel that it is damaging their health.

Source: Bradford College

We're on Facebook and Twitter as 'TCXUnite' - follow or like us on your smartphones and never miss another union update!



As per article on page 1: Latest letter from JCNC Reps to our members:-

28 September 2011



Dear Colleagues,

Unite the Union Redundancy Consultation Update (3) 28 September 2011

Today, 28 September, your JCNC negotiators met with the Airline Management. Following on from the previous meeting on 21 September, we were awaiting an enhanced voluntary severance package from the Company. The Company returned to the table with a formal proposal that was not enhanced from the current Company Scheme. They advised that they had spoken to the CEO, Mainstream UK and he has refused any enhancement to the Company Voluntary Severance package at this juncture.

Your Union negotiators informed the Company that they needed to contact the CEO urgently and ask him to reconsider his decision. The Full-Time Official told the Company that if the severance package was not enhanced, we would have no option but to seek the views of our members. The Company then asked the Trade Union what they would see as an enhanced package. Following a short adjournment your Trade Union side put forward the following proposal:

Three weeks minimum per year, encompassing all taxable elements of pay; and a £5,000 tax free lump sum payment.

We then continued through the Agenda, with the Company asking for our views on the reasons why we, the Trade Union would not support the removal of the ACM rank. A compelling case was put forward with arguments based on safety, service, career progression, earning potential and increased workload.

We reinforced our position that we are completely opposed to compulsory redundancies and the removal of the ACM rank. All other items on the agenda were related to compulsory redundancy; therefore, your negotiators informed the Company that they were unable to discuss these at this time.

The Company then asked that we adjourn for lunch so that they could make contact with the CEO regarding the Trade Union proposal. When they returned they advised that they had now become aware that other bargaining groups, within the Airline, had also put forward proposals regarding the proposed redundancies. Due to these further requests the Company said that they would send a communication to the CEO and come back to us as soon as possible with an answer.

The meeting was then adjourned, to be reconvened on Tuesday 4 October 2011, commencing 09.30 hours. We will give a further update following that meeting.

Yours in Unity

JCNC Reps