

## Managing The Peaks and Valleys

This week senior workers on the MSP Ramp will be given the opportunity to take a layoff for the month of May in lieu of laying off a junior employee. The ramp is temporarily overstaffed according to Delta and headcount must be brought down.

The airline industry has these kinds of seasonal fluctuations. To manage these peaks and valleys, the IAM and Northwest Airlines negotiated the Special Leave Incentive Program or SLIP Leave. A SLIP Leave allows senior workers to voluntarily take a layoff with unemployment compensation. Additionally, workers on SLIP Leave continue to have medical insurance. They continue to accrue vacation, sick and OJI time. They accrue pension credits and seniority. They keep their flight benefits. Junior workers get to stay on the job and keep all their benefits. It is a win for all workers in the station.

This stands in stark contrast to the approach Delta has for managing seasonal downturns. Delta simply sends Ready Reserve workers home when their bid is over or they reach 999 hours. This group of disposable workers gets no seniority toward a pay progression. They have no clear and defined path to get a full time or permanent position. They get no medical benefits, no vacation, no OJI, no sick pay, no long term disability – nothing but an hourly wage.

Delta commends themselves for the fact that they don't lay off their employees. But this is not actually true. They simply use Ready Reserves to absorb the shock of seasonal downturns. Is this the best way to deal with the cyclical nature of our industry – on the backs of the most junior employees? We

think using SLIP Leaves is the better way. It is guaranteed in our contract.

**Retiree Medical** – According to a Delta informational sheet dated 12/01/2009, the monthly rate for PMDL retiree medical insurance for the Gold HRA is \$624.47 for employee only. For PMNW - IAM retirees the rate for PPO Option B is \$195.83. This represents a savings of \$5743.68 in one year for IAM represented retirees.

For employee and spouse the Gold HRA retiree rate is \$1248.94 per month. The retiree rate for PPO Option B for employee and spouse is \$422.74. This is a savings of \$9904.40 per year for an IAM retiree and spouse. Ed Bastian stated publicly at a 2009 Town Hall Meeting in MSP that Delta will not continue to subsidize retiree medical if the IAM loses.

**Not Quite The Truth** – Deltanet trumpeted the first combined shift bid (PMDL and PMNW) for above wing employees in MEM. “Now that the new shift bid is in place, the teams will be able to work side by side at the same gates, on the same flights.” Timothy Stout, the department manager for MEM said, “Our employees were more than ready to participate in their first combined shift bid.”

The bids did occur on the same day; however, they were separate bids with separate seniority lists. PMDL and PMNW ticket agents had already been working flights together with the agreement of the IAM Shop Committee in MEM. The Shop Committee agreed to go ahead with the PMNW bid after the Company committed that no shifts, weekends or partial weekends would be lost for either group.

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