



11-05

April 1, 2011

Rumor Control

Rumors are nothing new within our industry and profession. They come and they go, and most of the ones that are really “out there” can be dismissed out of hand with a little critical analysis. But every once in a while, we hear recurring rumors centering around a particular topic that just won’t go away, and *Touch & Gos* seems like an appropriate avenue to address these types of rumors. To that end, here’s one of our favorites.

Dear Touch & Go guys,

I recently had two different jumpseaters on my jumpseat who were spreading some pretty disturbing rumors, which I’d like you to address. The first is that due to some past court settlement, Delta can’t buy new airplanes without the approval of one or more connection carrier MECs. He went on to explain that the Delta MEC made a deal with Delta’s connection carrier MECs, which requires their approval of any scope related negotiations in our contract. Now I’ve been around here for a while, and this does not sound right. Did I miss a memo?

The other rumor was from a guy who said that the world will end on December 21, 2012 at 11:11 p.m. Universal Time. I have heard something about this, and I even saw it on the internet, so I am concerned. My specific question is this. If I have a pairing on my line during or after this apocalypse, will I be pay protected?

*Thanks,
A Concerned Delta Captain*

Dear Concerned,

Thanks for your enquiry. We appreciate that you took the time to ask for answers rather than just spread rumors. You presented us with two recurring rumors that we’re happy to address. One is based on an interpretation of certain historical records. The other is just plain whacky.

The rumor based on an interpretation of certain historical records is that the world will end at 11:11 p.m. on December 21, 2012. This rumor centers on the end of the Mayan "Long Count" calendar marking the end of a 5,126-year era. According to its proponents, on the winter solstice in 2012, the sun will be aligned with the center of the Milky Way for the first time in about 26,000 years. The energy that typically streams to Earth from the center of the Milky Way will be disrupted, and the world will end.

While we can’t comment with certainty as to the veracity of this rumor (time will tell), we would like to provide our perspective. Our PWA amendable date is December 31, 2012, only ten days after the end of the Mayan calendar. Your MEC is proceeding with the assumption that life will go on even *after* the Mayan calendar ends. As you have probably read in a whole litany of communications over the past several months, your MEC continues to prepare for negotiations. The Strategic Planning Committee, with assistance from ALPA’s Economic and Financial Analysis Department, continues its work on behalf of the MEC and the Delta pilots. The Negotiating Committee is heavily involved in crafting a contract comparison between our contract and those of other pilot groups and is working with the Communications Committee to craft a comprehensive

web-based contract survey. Pilot-to-Pilot continues to grow, and in general, the MEC and its extended committee structure continue the day to day work. These are all strong indicators that your MEC is planning for the case where the Mayans were probably mistaken.

If it turns out we are wrong, you can expect a *Contract Awareness Bulletin*, which will address the trip guarantee question you raised as well as a host of other post-apocalyptic issues as they relate to the PWA.

This brings us to the second rumor—the whacky one. We’ve heard this rumor in various forms, but the short answer is that the rumor is flat out false.

ALPA previously settled a lawsuit commonly referred to as the “Ford/Cooksey lawsuit.” As part of this settlement, changes were made to the ALPA Administrative Manual as approved by the court, designed to strengthen ALPA’s ability to negotiate scope. In accordance with Section 40 of the ALPA Administrative Manual, among other provisions, “prior to commencement of any bargaining for any ALPA pilot group within a mainline/express system, the applicable Negotiating Committee will meet with the Negotiating Committees of other ALPA pilot groups in the mainline/express system to review opening scope proposals and how they advance ALPA’s scope goals and guidelines.” These discussions may or may not result in a consensus point of view. If no consensus is reached, the Scope Subcommittee of ALPA’s Collective Bargaining Committee can *recommend* changes following consultation with the Negotiating Committees involved. No consensus is required, however, to proceed with negotiations, and any recommendations of the Scope Subcommittee are recommendations, not mandates. Also note that the procedures apply to *all* the carriers in the system, not just the mainline carrier.

The bottom line is that while we currently enjoy a strong professional working relationship with our Connection Carrier MECs, neither our Negotiating Committee nor a Connection Carrier Negotiating Committee requires the approval of, nor will they *seek* the approval of, any other MEC to proceed with negotiations affecting the scope provisions of the respective collective bargaining agreements. Bottom line: Any allegations to the contrary are simply false.

Thanks again for writing and allowing us to address these rumors. Please let us know if you hear any other rumors of concern. We, along with your council reps and P2P volunteers, will be more than happy to address them.

Sincerely,
Your Touch & Go Guys



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