

CUPE LOCAL 4092

Membership Meeting – September 26th, 2011

Health & Safety Report

L2 Jumpseat on the EMB - recent Decision and Company Transmittal

The Company recently distributed a transmittal in response to the Direction that was issued on June 30th establishing that a danger exists for the flight attendant seated at the L2 position on the Embraer aircraft under certain conditions. The Union has clearly expressed to Transport Canada that in its view, the padding installed on the L2 door is insufficient to remove the danger of injuries and that without addressing the jumpseat seatbelt harness, the danger still exists. This issue continues to evolve and we will keep you updated on any new developments.

In the interim, please remember that, as per the Canada Labour Code, you can still file a health and safety concern (ACF32) on this issue if you feel that your health and safety could be compromised, or you may personally choose to exercise your right to refuse dangerous work if you believe there is a danger while at work. Transport Canada has informed Air Canada that the current fix does not prevent employees from submitting complaints or exercising their right to refuse on this issue.

You will find information about **how to file a health and safety concern** on the Air Canada Component website:

Committees > Health and Safety > Health and Safety Forms > Health & Safety-In Touch Volume 1, issue 2

You will find information about **your right to refuse dangerous work** on the Air Canada Component website:

Committees > Health and Safety > Health and Safety Forms > Health & Safety-In Touch Volume 1, issue 1

Embraer Arming/Disarming Injuries

At the last Local meeting, we reported that we had recently met with the Air Canada ergonomist to have her assess a hook-type tool that we would like to propose as a means of injury prevention until such time as Air Canada and Embraer find a way to fix the arming/disarming levers and stop the ongoing injuries. Unfortunately, we have had an additional 10 injuries since we met with the ergonomist on May 26th, 2011. We have received no updates from Air Canada and no target date as to when the ergonomist will complete her assessment of the "tool".

We have had ongoing injuries from this door since the aircraft arrived in 2005. If you feel that you are likely to get injured, please do NOT use the door and advise the flight deck of the situation. There are procedures in place for them to follow which will ensure that we are not injured. Please let us know if you encounter any problems with pilot's not being aware of the procedure to follow if you fear injury and are not able to arm or disarm your door.

Join the campaign! If you are concerned about this issue, please follow the steps above and fill out a **health & safety concern** and let the company know that a solution must be found. Keep in mind that

should you be put in a position where you feel you are being put at risk of injury, you also always have the right to refuse unsafe work (details referenced above.)

Lost Time Injuries – Air Canada Investigations

If you are off work due to an injury that occurs at work, it is a legal requirement for Air Canada do an “investigation” to determine the root cause of the injury and to try to put corrective measures in place to avoid a reoccurrence. An investigation report must then be drawn up and submitted to Transport Canada for all lost time work injuries.

If you are booked off due to an injury at work, you will get a call at home from a manager to investigate your injury. (NOTE this is different than the call you get from a supervisor or AC claims department). CUPE Health & Safety (or “employee reps” as we are also referred to) are supposed to be conferenced on this call as well. If we are not present, please ask if the purpose of the call is to “investigate” your injury. If it is, ask to have us conferenced in for the investigation.

Be sure to let the manager know the root cause of your injury and anything that you think could be done to prevent future injuries.

YYZ Ice – Solid blocks of Ice

The issue with the ice out of YYZ being boarded as one huge, block of ice has been a longstanding issue. Unfortunately, it took a broken finger injury to resolve it, even though there were previous injuries and the concern had been proactively reported to the company on many occasions prior to the broken finger.

We have been advised that a solution has been found at Gate Gourmet in YYZ. We have inspected many flights and found that the ice now appears to be acceptable – it is breaking easily into ice cubes and is no longer one, solid piece of ice.

Please let us know if you are having any new problems onboard with ice that is catered out of YYZ.

Continuous Duty Day/Fatigue - Update

The complaint that we filed with Transport Canada in August of 2010 is finally being investigated. Transport Canada has been in touch for various documents – pairings, schedules, etc. – for their investigation. We have no further updates at this time but will let you know the outcome as soon as it is available.

In the meantime, please keep reporting your concerns to management and copy your CUPE Health & Safety reps. In addition, if you have had any specific concerns or problems with the “rest” areas provided in airports with layovers of less than 5 hours, it is important for us to know about this.

AC’s Position on Fatigue

Did you know.....?

Air Canada's position when it comes to fatigue is that if you are too fatigued to work (for example, due to several continuous night time duty days in a row or noisy construction at a hotel preventing you from getting adequate rest), you should be booking off. This includes mid-cycle book offs once you notice that you are at a point where you are too fatigued to continue your day. If you find yourself in this situation, please ensure, for your own protection and the protection of passengers and your fellow crew, that you do book off and get the rest you need to be able to perform your duties in the event of an onboard emergency. In the event that you do not book off and something were to happen due to lack of attention/impairment by fatigue, (e.g. blown slide) you would be accountable for not having booked off when you are too fatigued to operate at 100%.

Studies on Cabin Air Quality

While the company is publicizing a UK study on Air Quality (via Globe and posted in Communication Centers), the Union would like to remind you that a number of legitimate studies are currently being conducted on this issue, as well as the existence of numerous other reports. In order to get a broader picture of the Air Quality and contaminated air issue you may wish to consult the following links: www.ohrca.org and **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** (scroll to the bottom – Downloads – Tips to prevent exposure to oil fumes).

Security "Tape" on Duty Free Units

We had received some injury reports from the security "tape" that is wrapped around the Duty Free trolleys and carriers. We had forwarded a recommendation to have this tape removed and have recently been advised that this tape will no longer be used. We have done some spot checks and have not found any security tape still being used. Please let us know (with flight, fin and date details) if you find that the security tape is still being used on the duty free units on your flights.

Tagging Small Service Equipment as U/S

Did you know.....?

That it is a requirement to tag all small U/S service equipment – such as ice scoops, bread baskets, water jugs, oven mitts, corkscrews, etc. - with as red US tag? If you cannot affix the seal to the item, you are supposed to use a piece of tape and attach the red US seal to the equipment with tape.

We have asked Air Canada to clarify this procedure for us in writing as we feel that it is currently not clear. Even managers themselves have been advising us to simply "throw out" these small US items in the past...

Moving forwards, please be sure to tag ALL US equipment with a US seal and forward us the seal number to us for tracking. Broken equipment must be fixed or removed from service to prevent injuries to fellow crew members.

Exercising your Right to Refuse Unsafe Work – Crew Scheduling

We have been advised of several recent cases where flight attendants have tried to exercise their right to refuse (RTR) unsafe work with crew scheduling and the process has not been followed by crew

scheduling. If you are reporting the RTR to crew scheduling, please make it very clear that you are refusing **unsafe** work and that you need to speak with a manager. The process is that the crew scheduler must then contact an in-flight manager. You should not continue on an RTR process with crew scheduling – it must be reported to an in-flight manager (or captain if “in operation”).

The cases that have been reported to us have been cases where crew members advised us that crew scheduling threatened them with discipline/unavailable for duty and intimidated the FA's into working when they felt unsafe. This is not acceptable. If you feel your health or safety is at risk and crew scheduling is not being supportive please;

1. Take notes with names, times and conversation that occurred.
2. Remain courteous with crew scheduling and ensure that they are clear that this is a refusal for **unsafe** work.
3. Do not discuss the issue further with crew scheduling.
4. Ask to be put in contact with a manager (crew scheduling has access to a manager 24/7)
5. Deal only with the manager(or captain if “in operation”) in RTR situations. Crew Scheduling should not be investigating RTR situations or threatening discipline for RTR's.

Please refer to your RTR charts at the back of SEP chapter 2 for flowcharts and additional information. Remember that it is against the law to discipline an employee for initiating an RTR.

Copies of your Injury Reports & Lost Reports

It has been reported to us recently on several occasions that management is giving you a hard time when you request a copy of your reports. If you would like a copy, please insist on a taking a copy for your records. Air Canada has confirmed to us that you are permitted to take copies of your own reports and we would encourage you to do so.

It has also been brought to our attention that there have been several “lost” injury reports of late – injury reports submitted to the company that are then misplaced. This is creating complications for crew members who in turn lost time from work due to the injury and file for a WSIB claim. Again, for your protection, please be sure to keep a copy of your report before you submit it.

Bridge Phones not working - YYZ

In case of emergency situations please note that the bridge phones at gates 120, 122, 139, 179 & 181 (YYZ) are currently not working. We have brought this to the attention of the GTAA and they are working on a fix, however, they have advised that it may take a while to resolve the problem. We have asked Air Canada for an S.O.P. during the interim in case of an emergency situation but have been advised that there are none in place. Please let us know if you encounter phones at other bridges in YYZ that are not working so that we can follow up.

Rumours – Injury Reports

We are addressing the rumour that if you fill out an injury report you MUST see a doctor. This is not the case. While you will get a call from management to review your report (if you did not already do so at the time of submission), you are not required to see a doctor because you filled out an injury report.

The requirement to see a doctor only applies if you are booked off due to the injury and are seeking WSIB coverage.

Recent Trends

Suitcases – As we are approaching the 5 year mark for our suitcases, we have had many crew members reporting that their suitcases are breaking. In many cases there is no replacement available and crew members are purchasing their own suitcases. In our minds this is not acceptable. Please let us know if you encounter this issue. You should not be departing on a pairing with a broken suitcase as there is potential for injury.

A reminder that the suitcases are still under warranty and attempts should be made to have your suitcase fixed whenever possible.

If you arrive at the airport and notice at that time your suitcase is broken, please go to the communication centre to see if they have a replacement for you. Be sure to advise them that you are concerned about injury and, if they do not have a replacement suitcase, ask what they recommend that you do to avoid injury.

Please report back to us. If you are injured, be sure to fill out an injury report.

Tongs/Ice Scoops - There have been several recent injuries due to both sharp tongs and sharp ice scoops. Please be sure to tag sharp items with a US seal to have them checked out. We will be reviewing different models of tongs when they are up for re-order early next year.

Change in CUPE Health & Safety Committee Members

Vittoria Primavera will be leaving the CUPE Health & Safety office at the end of September and moving upstairs to work as a V.P. in the CUPE local office. We would like to take this time to thank her for her hard work and dedication to health & safety over the last 5 years. She will be missed, however, she will be a great asset for the CUPE office and we wish her the very best.

At this time we would also like to welcome Sally Fouineteau back to the CUPE Health & Safety Committee after her maternity leave and some time back on the line. Sally is a wonderful addition to our team, bringing experience and knowledge with her. We look forwards to having Sally back in the CUPE Health & Safety office for October.

Thank you for taking the time to attend the CUPE Local 4092 Meeting. Please feel free to contact us should have any questions or concerns.

Your CUPE Local 4092 Health & Safety Committee

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