

Health & Safety Report

July 2014

**YTD 2014 Days due to Lost Time Injuries**: 723 days

**YTD 2014 Lost Time Injuries:** 55

**Non-Lost Time Injuries 2014 (MINOR) as reported by AC in graphs:** 192

**Top Three Causes:** Catering Equipment 34, Aircraft Part 23, Turbulence 13

**Top Three Types:** Sprain/Strain 46, Bruises 35, Cut/Puncture 23, Burns 23

**Air Canada and Transport Canada prevent CUPE from attending crucial evacuation tests for passenger safety
Ottawa, Ontario** – Air Canada and Transport Canada collaborated in preventing a CUPE health and safety representative from attending crucial passenger evacuation tests held recently. Air Canada is seeking an exemption to operate with a ratio of one flight attendant for every 50 passenger seats instead of the current regulatory ratio of one flight attendant for every 40 passengers.
The Air Canada Component of CUPE asked the company for a representative to be present during the evacuation tests. Air Canada refused. The same request was made to Transport Canada and to Federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt. CUPE never received an answer.
As the union representing Air Canada flight attendants, CUPE needed to be present to verify that the mandatory tests were conducted properly. Last year, CUPE was present during testing for procedures at Sunwing and denounced Transport Canada for manipulating the tests.
In November 2013, Sunwing tested the reduced flight attendant ratio, and the first three passenger evacuation attempts were not accomplished in the required minimum time. The drill comprised of opening the exits in 15 seconds or less. Transport Canada’s Inspector, Luc Mayne, then decided that a mandatory oral safety instruction to passengers during evacuations need not be given, allowing the fourth test to pass. Josh Walsh, a health and safety representative for CUPE, who was present, shared his concerns with Inspector Mayne about the last minute modification to the standard procedure. Inspector Mayne simply replied: “I know what I’m doing.’’ The exemption allowing one flight attendant to 50 passenger seats has been in effect on Sunwing’s flights since Dec. 1, 2013.

The **TP 12295 - Flight Attendant Manual Standard** on the Transport Canada website outlines the mandatory requirements of a manual for flight crew.  Under section 2A.19 (see below) the ABP command is a requirement of the Emergency Evacuation Commands.  **2A.19 Emergency Evacuation Commands - Applications**

* General commands - land; inadvertent water contact; and ditching
* Blocked/jammed exit commands
* ABP commands

In light of Transport Canada’s manipulation of the testing procedures at Sunwing, and the dangers that might result for the passengers, CUPE asked the Federal Court to suspend Sunwing’s exemption from the current rule of one flight attendant to 40 passengers. Because of the secrecy surrounding the tests held at Air Canada, CUPE may also contest the legality of the process.

On July 08, 2014 Chief Operating Officer Klaus Goersch informed that on June 9th 2014, Transport Canada granted an exemption to Air Canada from section 705.104 of the Canadian Aviation Regulations allowing one flight attendant per 50 passengers. Klaus confirmed we will be operating under the granted exemption later this year, once Air Canada finalized the compliance to the exemption with Transport Canada. In his letter Klaus openly acknowledged the union had expressed some concern that it was not asked to participate in the evacuation exercises that took place over the last few weeks.  Klaus responded by highlighting the participation of fully qualified Air Canada flight attendant colleagues in the exercises which were performed in full compliance with Canada Labour Code regulations under the oversight of Transport Canada in a manner which respects applicable laws. Klaus went on to add that in the event Air Canada considers any modifications to existing procedures, they would certainly advise CUPE and listen to any input we may have in accordance with article 21.01.03.03.

**Turbulence (GLOBE Message posted June 9th 2014)**

Did you know that in 2013 we had over 100 reported turbulence events that resulted in injuries to crew members? As we are approaching the busy holiday summer season we incur more frequent injuries due to Turbulence. We have selected this topic as a reminder to In-flight cabin crew regarding Safety measures to be adhered to. Cabin crew injuries occur at a higher rate as their duties require them to be standing and moving about in the passenger cabin and/or galleys, unseated and therefore not always secure with their seatbelt during flight. Cruise is the predominant phase associated with turbulence-related injuries. However, cabin crew members also sustain injury during climb, descent and approach. Based on the level of turbulence, the cabin crew should be aware of the appropriate actions to be taken with regards to service duties and passenger service. Service may continue during light turbulence; however the service of all hot beverages must stop. During a turbulence encounter above light, it is important to secure the cabin and galley when conditions permit. However, the most appropriate first response by cabin crew may be to protect oneself from injury. Cabin crew can increase risk and compromise their personal safety by attempting to adhere to routine procedures normally performed on all flights, rather than responding in accordance with the level and intensity of turbulence.

Cabin crew should always secure themselves, sit down and fasten their seat belt immediately when turbulence levels are a risk to personal safety.

**In Solidarity, your Health & Safety Team**

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