

AAA Corporate Travel Newsletter

January 22, 2010

Airport CEO: Name your price, Delta

The chief executive of the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport is determined to end Delta's cutbacks and improve service at the airport this year, even going as far as seeing what kind of payments Delta Air Lines would require to restore certain flights.

"If it takes money to restore service, give us a number," airport CEO John Mok told a Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce audience today. "We asked them a couple months ago, but we haven't heard back." It wouldn't be unprecedented. Airports in Pittsburgh and Portland have paid carriers to restore and maintain highly coveted service.

Delta has cut service about a third from its peak daily departures, and it continues to be moving toward a strategy building up its hubs in Atlanta, Detroit and New York to the detriment of its once thriving Cincinnati hub.

"We don't know where Delta is headed," Mok said. "Only Delta knows that. We hope to find some stability with their flight schedule this year ... the basement, if you will. One thing is clear: We will not return to mega-hub status we had 'back in the day.'"

Mok's appearance was aimed at appealing to Greater Cincinnati residents to use the Cincinnati airport, despite Delta's about-face, as a way of helping to maintain and restore Delta's service and attract new service.

"Every dollar we earn from your patronage is a dollar less we have to charge the airlines," Mok said.

Mok said when the economy rebounds, he's confident service at the airport will improve because current flight service is not adequate to meet certain demand.

"When this economy turns around and demand returns, Delta may respond," Mok said. "But if they don't, we will work with any carrier that is interested."

Cincinnati.bizjournals.com, January 19, 2010

One carry-on item allowed for flights to the United States

Passengers travelling to the United States now permitted to bring one carry-on bag, with some small exceptions.

Changes to carry-on luggage restrictions were announced on Wednesday by Canada's Transport Minister John Baird. Effective, January 20, passengers travelling to the United States (including Puerto Rico) are permitted to bring one carry-on bag, with some small exceptions. All items brought on the aircraft such as reading material, personal electronics, medications must be stored in the passenger's single carry-on bag.

This new measure replaces the temporary restrictions on carry-on bags introduced as a result of the December 25th 2009 security incident. The new rule modifies restrictions in place for flights to the United States only and does not have an impact on passengers travelling within Canada or to an international destination.

TTI Travel, January 20, 2010

American Airlines announces changes to checked bag charges American's Top Customers Not Affected by Changes

American Airlines said Monday it will change its checked bag charges, effective with tickets purchased on or after Feb. 1, 2010. The charges apply to travel within the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands on American Airlines, American Eagle and AmericanConnection flights.

American's checked bag charges will change to \$25 for the first checked bag and \$35 for the second checked bag, payable at the airport on day of travel.

As before, American's top customers are exempt from these checked bag charges. Among the exemptions are American's elite AAdvantage® members, full-fare customers, confirmed passengers in the First or Business Class cabin, those traveling on military fares, and other travelers booked on the same record locator as the premium customer.

American said about 25 percent of its domestic customers pay checked bag charges, with other customers either exempt from the charge or choosing to not check a bag while abiding by American's normal carry-on policies.

American.com, January 18, 2010

Air France tells obese fliers to buy second seat, will refund if flight isn't full

Air France promises to reimburse obese fliers it asks to buy doublewide seating if the plane isn't full, a company spokesman said Wednesday.

The company, which has long offered obese passengers the option of buying an adjoining seat at a discount, said that passengers would be fully reimbursed for the second fare in 90% of cases.

A company spokesman couldn't provide figures on the number of passengers concerned by the measure, but said "It's a problem that the company faces."

Obese passengers who don't reserve a second seat may not be allowed to board, at the captain's discretion and if there is not an unoccupied adjoining seat.

"It's a question of security," spokesman Nicolas Petteau said.

The airline denied reports in the French press that it would oblige obese passengers to buy a second seat. The policy will come into force starting in April.

Three years ago Air France was sued by a 353-pound passenger who the airline obliged to buy a second seat for a full New Delhi-Paris flight. Air France was ordered to pay \$11,423 in damages and to reimburse the cost of the second seat.

Other airlines with similar policies on obese passengers include Southwest, JetBlue and American Airlines.

USAToday.com, January 21, 2010

Ryanair continues to contemplate additional fees

Whatever irritation other airlines may inflict on passengers, there is nothing like Ryanair's Michael O'Leary: the head of the controversial airline is said to be bringing back the pay toilet concept.

Reports are that the airline will begin charging for bathroom use to destinations of one hour or less.

"Ryanair stated it is currently in talks with Boeing to retrofit its B737 aircraft with one coin-operated toilet, with the other two toilets to be removed to provide room for an additional six seats," says the Irish Times.

Ryanair spokesman Stephen McNamara mentioned that the airline was in talks with Boeing about refitting 50 of its 737-series aircraft with a single coin-operated toilet.



There was no health-and-safety issue, he said, although the change would need approval, as Ryanair's fleet is already fitted with its maximum permissible number of seats.

"One toilet will discourage overdependence. There is nothing in the rule book to say that an aircraft has to have any toilets at all, which sounds strange, but we believe three toilets are excessive," he was quoted as saying.

McNamara insists the infamous 'pee fee' is now firmly back on the airline's agenda. He said:

"The funny thing about Michael (Michael O'Leary) is that he'll say these things as an off-the-cuff remark, and then he'll start to think about it more and more, and he'll start doing the sums."

TravelMole.com, January 21, 2010

