

## Hotel Updates



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Summer is in full swing, but unfortunately, your committee is not. During the summer months, coordinating with our management, and even the hotels, in order to complete site inspections is always more difficult. For example, we normally have a quarterly meeting with the Travel Services Department, Operations, Crew Support, and AFA. We have yet to be able to schedule a meeting this year. Our meeting does seem to rate a lower priority with the Travel Services Department than other meetings. This situation normally is not a problem for us, as we do talk with the department on a regular basis. The meeting is just an opportunity for us to get everyone in the same room.

In my last article, I didn't have a chance to discuss a couple of hotel changes that we made very quickly. On June 1, we changed our Denver long overnight hotel to the Comfort Inn downtown. The Comfort Inn is attached to the Brown Hotel, and is only a couple of blocks walk from the Holiday Inn. We are now on the other side of the shopping mall in town. This hotel was our second choice after the Holiday Inn. The reason for the change was that we were always having a hard time securing a contract with the Holiday Inn. When we had completed the inspections of Denver about a year and a half ago, we were still waiting for the hotel to reply, make comments, or come up with their own contract for the crew business. The Holiday Inn seemed to be taking care of United first, and then back-filling with our crews the rooms that United didn't pick up. In addition to relocating our crews every now and again, the hotel would change the rate on us, stating: "Well, we don't have a contract with you, so we can do this." Liking the hotel is one thing, but not being treated with some respect

is another. The Comfort Inn should do a better job of dealing with us, but we did get off to a rocky start. The first week we were there, the hotel relocated our crews due to a citywide convention. Since our management didn't tell me about this problem or the renovation when we discussed the change, I felt that we were blindsided. I have received a few comments on this hotel. Most crews like the location, but were taken back by the renovation and a couple of air conditioning problems. These issues should be winding down now, and the hotel will be back on track.

In a related matter, the van company in Denver is causing additional problems. Remember, we are contracting with this company to provide a seat and belt for each passenger. If there is not a seat for everyone, we recommend that you take a taxi and submit an expense form to your chief pilot. If our management will not take action on their own, let them pay more money out. You know that the Company will then take swift action. This recommendation applies not only to Denver, but also to any city and any van. Remember, our Contract states that on overnights exceeding 10:30, transportation must be available within 20 minutes of being ready. On overnights less than 10:30, transportation must be available within 10 minutes. After that time, you can take alternate transportation. If the hotel will not pay for the cab, then submit an expense form to the chief pilot. Many of our overnights are short enough that we don't need to be waiting for transportation. If we don't start enforcing this provision, no one else will.

Another quick change occurred in Wilmington, N.C. We left the Sheraton Four Points and returned to the Hilton we used to use about nine years ago. This change will improve the hotel and location for our overnights. The

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area around the Hilton has built up a bit more since we were last there, and the Sheraton still seemed like a HO JOs.

We have also paid a visit to SFO to review the current hotels and scout for more hotels to add to the list. If we can find enough rooms, we might drop one of our current hotels. However, our demand for rooms continues to increase, and we might need every hotel we can find. We will also visit the Tampa area, as the short overnight contract is coming up for renewal. With our recent large demand for rooms here, we might need a third hotel to handle the volume. We are also hoping to set an inspection schedule for the early part of August to include Indianapolis, Kansas City, Phoenix, and Los Angeles. All of these cities need some work.

In thinking about Indianapolis, the Quality Inn South (now Ramada) has got to go. We on the committee could use some more feedback on the airport Ramada, which is now under renovation to become a Radisson around the end of the year. Personally, I like the ability to walk to the hotel, but the noise from the FedEx operation at night might be too much, no matter what section of the hotel we are in. The airport hotel has said they will try to keep us in the tower rooms now and during the renovation. I would like our next contract to be only

for the tower rooms. We need some feedback as to whether it's quiet enough in the tower to consider staying at the airport hotel in the long run. The hotel renovation is supposed to be quite extensive, and includes new windows. While the windows should help a bit in sound-proofing the rooms, this improvement might not be enough. Please take the time to let your committee know your thoughts as to whether you can get enough rest in the tower rooms, or if the FedEx operation is just too noisy.

As many of you know the quiet room in the Pittsburgh crew lounge is being converted to briefing rooms for the London flight. The chief pilot's office indicated that we should get the room back, but can't give us a firm answer as they are now working out the details. We will keep a watch on this situation, as I know many crewmembers do use the room on the duty breaks during trips.

That's it for this month. Please continue to fill out the 310 forms. They help your committee, and we hope they are starting to have an effect with our management.

*Thanks and have a good overnight!*



### *Disapproval List*

**CLE Ramada**—We had a meeting with management about changing this hotel. We hope to be out of this hotel within one month.

**IND short**—During our meeting, we discussed the Ramada Conference Center (formerly Quality Inn South). The airport and downtown hotels have room for our crews. We want out of the Ramada ASAP, and will review the airport hotel in a month or so.

**MYR Landmark**—This hotel moves from the Watch to the Disapproval list. During the summer season, the hotel is very noisy. We are trying to get the Hampton at Broadway at the beach to take the crews, and have called some other hotels to try and find someplace quieter than the Landmark.

### *Watch List*

**ABE long**—The hotel is under a renovation, but I'm not really sure where else we could go in this city. We'll see how the renovation goes, and will start to look for options.

**CHS long**—We use the same hotel as the short overnight, and that's the main problem. We're trying to find a solution to all of the problems, instead of trading one set of problems for another.

**LAX Culver City**—Both hotels in Culver City are OK for short overnights. For overnights exceeding 17 hours, the area around the hotels lacks things to do. Our numbers have gone way up this summer, and PVI doesn't have enough room for our needs. This city is very high on the list to be inspected.

**SFO (the overflow hotels)**—The problem is much worse in SFO than in LAX, with our numbers going up and room availability way down. I didn't realize we were having as much of a problem as we are. Hopefully, our trip to SFO will yield some results.

The 310 count for the month was 67 . . . a little light, but I'm writing this early due to my schedule for the month. Ten reports addressed crew meals, three addressed old hotels, and two provided good comments.