

up for discussion

Have a question about Piedmont? This column, "up for discussion," gives you an opportunity to ask questions about your Company.

All questions must be signed and include your name, title, and location. Your name will be withheld from publication and will not be revealed when your question is sent to the proper department for an answer. Unsigned questions will be automatically discarded.

When related questions are received, they will be consolidated and answered as one question. As many questions and answers as space allows will appear each month in "up for discussion."

Send your questions to Piedmonitor Editor, H440, or One Piedmont Plaza, Winston-Salem, NC 27156-1000.

Q. Will sweaters or sweater vests ever be considered for the supervisor's uniform? It would be helpful in our northern cities! Thanks for your consideration.

A. Including a sweater and sweater vest for our supervisory personnel has been discussed; however, we have decided not to make additions to the uniform at this time. We will continue to evaluate this situation.

Bob Reed
staff vice president-stations

Q. I would like to voice opinion to the fact of nonrevenue first-class upgrades. This idea is wrong in the sense of charging employees \$15 or more to fly when the coach section is full. . .It's justifiable to charge for first class when both Y and F are available, but why should we have to pay for a situation over which we have no control and one that may not even include meal service!

A. While it has been Piedmont senior management's choice that our employees not pay a service charge for space available travel in the past, the introduction of systemwide first class made this cost prohibitive. We should remember that Piedmont is the only one of comparable-sized carriers that does not charge employees to fly on-line even in coach, making our privilege the best in the industry. At times, having first class has given us that available seat that might have been sold if it were a lower priced coach seat and would not have been available, even if we wanted to pay a charge.

Our first-class service was designed to be superior to any other domestic carrier, and we receive daily comments from passengers, upholding this as fact. To accomplish this service is quite demanding on crews. We risk lowering this excellent service each time we add another person needing service. We can't simply put non-revs in first class with no service if available, then we downgrade our passengers' view of first class and they wonder why you're sitting in first class but being ignored. We might not enjoy paying to get a seat, but it's certainly a minimal fee for the privilege of being able to fly almost any time we want.

Faye Scott McIntyre
manager-pass bureau

Q. Why doesn't Piedmont offer buddy passes or discounted rates, similar to Henson's policies, for friends of employees?

Q. Demographics in this country indicate that more and more people are choosing the single lifestyle or, if involved in a relationship, are choosing to live without the sanction of marriage. In addition, the Company is hiring large numbers of young people who are years away from considering marriage. We also have a significant number of employees who are alone because of death or divorce. My question is this—Has the Company considered revising the past benefits offered to employees to include the so-called "Buddy Plan" that is in effect at some of the other carriers? It does not seem equitable that two employees, one single, one married and with family, receive what seem to be identical pass benefits but which are in fact heavily in favor of the married employee. Are our pass privileges a bonus designed to sanction marriage or are they something earned by an employee for doing a job well?

A. Piedmont's pass program has always been considered a privilege intended for the benefit of the employee and his or her immediate household family. Use of passes familiarizes employees with the services we sell. To expand categories for eligibility would increase the number of individuals competing for available seats to such an extent that our own ability to use these privileges would be greatly reduced. The tax laws also now make it impossible to grant passes to other categories without putting tax liability on the employee and Company—administratively impossible for our large employee population. The best we could even offer is a 75 percent space available reduced rate. With advance planning of trips, others can utilize the many special discounted fares and travel cheaper than ID75.

Our pass privileges as they now exist continue to be the best over all program for all carriers of comparable size.

Faye Scott McIntyre
manager-pass bureau

Q. I would like to know why only employees and family member are eligible for trips that might be won during the United Way campaign or door prizes at the annual Christmas party? Why aren't single employees able to take someone outside the airline or family? Several single employees were not willing to participate as much in the United Way campaign for that reason.

A. Incentives offered in drawings during the United Way campaign may include individuals other than employees and family members depending upon the individual hotel, cruise, tour, etc. However, incentives do conform to our pass policy, and Piedmont's pass policy includes travel for employees, spouses, and dependent children only. Please see the preceding question and answer for further explanation of our pass privileges.

Jewell Gentry
1987 United Way Chair

Q. I believe that Piedmont is a first-rate and also a very top-rated airline. But at times when flying other carriers and listening to many top executives who fly other carriers, I feel that there is one area where we are lacking which would bring more comfort to our passengers as well as produce more money for Piedmont, and that area is headsets. All major carriers have this on their flights. I do realize that these are all probably very costly expenditures, but I do feel that at least stereo headsets are a necessity these days, no matter how long or short the flight is. I have been asked this question by our passengers numerous times.

A. Piedmont currently offers stereo headsets on five B737-300LR, six B727-200LR, and all B767-200ER flights. These aircraft serve our hub cities and operate Piedmont's longer haul flights. It is on these longer flights that we offer this service. The major carriers (DL, EA, AL, PA, UA, AA, CO, NW, TWA) offer headsets on their long-haul flights, and UA seems to be the leader in offering them on the most flights. Cost is a major factor that probably keeps the industry from expanding the usage of these headsets. To equip an aircraft, it costs approximately \$350 per set, plus headset cost, plus another \$30,000 per aircraft for the system. At this time, we do not plan to expand the service to other flights.

Dan Brock
senior vice president-marketing

around Piedmont

Our fleet, as of December 8, will include a total of 180 aircraft, including three 767-200s, 34 727-200s, 35 737-300s, 62 737-200s, 25 F28-4000s, and 20 F28-1000s. A fourth 767-200 is scheduled to arrive December 22.

By year end, Piedmont will have inaugurated service to eight new destinations in 1987: Seattle, London, Birmingham, Columbus, Indianapolis, Nassau, Phoenix, and San Diego. On December 8, we will serve 95 airports (122 cities) in 30 states plus the District of Columbia, two Canadian provinces, London, and Nassau.

The new concourse at SYR will be ready on December 1. SYR's Presidential Suite, which is scheduled to open on December 4, will bring the total number of Suites on our system to 16.

"Casablanca" and "42nd Street" are the movies slated to show on our 767-200 flights in December. In addition, two short films—"Dick Van Dyke" and "Wackie World of Sports"—will be presented on the London flights.

Piedmont recently won a "Clean Sweep" Award at RDU in recognition of exemplary efforts by employees to control debris on the aircraft ramps. The award is given quarterly by the Airport Authority.

USAir has announced plans to build a \$3.5 million facility to house its central reservations office in Syracuse. Construction of the new 26,000-square-foot building will begin in April and is scheduled for completion by year end. The center will be located adjacent to Syracuse's Hancock International Airport. There are currently 420 USAir reservations personnel located in Syracuse.

PSA will begin seasonal service to Palm Springs from San Francisco on December 23. The service will continue through April 30.

PSA and Bank of America have signed a marketing agreement that allows Bank of America credit card holders to receive free PSA Instantickets for charges or cash advances. The agreement, which became effective October 1, calls for card holders to receive one bonus point for every \$4 in charges or advances. A round-trip Instanticket is awarded for 4,000 bonus points.

During October, Piedmont, USAir, and PSA combined handled a total of 6,179,930 reservations calls. Piedmont answered 43.5 percent of the calls, USAir, 37.5 percent, and PSA, 19 percent. For the first 10 months of 1987, the three airlines together handled 64,698,824. In 1988, it is projected that the three airlines combined will handle 95 to 100 million reservations calls.

Winston Cup driver Rusty Wallace is the latest NASCAR driver to buy an aircraft from Piedmont. Wallace purchased a Beechcraft Barron B-55 recently from Piedmont Beechcraft salesman Danny Culler.

A carry-on baggage program developed by Piedmont has been approved by the FAA and is now the model for the industry.

Last August at a meeting with other carriers in Washington, D.C., Piedmont was recommended to write a model carry-on baggage program which would guide airlines in developing their new programs which must be in place by January 1, 1988. Piedmont representatives from passenger procedures, ground operations, operations planning, flight operations, and inflight services met to put together a workable program which was presented to Piedmont's regional FAA inspector for approval. Once the program was tentatively approved, Piedmont sent it to the Air Transport Association who derived from it a model program to present to the FAA.

The FAA has now advised its field staff that carry-on baggage programs submitted by airlines which are modeled on this example may be approved.

