

# Around the Industry

## Flight attendant hirings

American paced the other major carriers in hiring flight attendants in 1988, adding 2,990 to its payroll, according to Future Aviation Professionals of America (FAPA). Other airlines that hired more than 1,000 flight attendants during 1988 include: USAir Group subsidiaries USAir and Piedmont, which together added 1,662; Delta 1,426; Pan Am 1,339; and TWA 1,185. Total hiring by all carriers climbed to about 13,700 for the year, nearly one-fourth more than the 11,148 in 1987.

## Eastern's Unions

Eastern and its unions were headed back to the bargaining table at press time and federal mediators appeared ready to make one final push for a settlement before allowing a strike (*The Washington Post*, December 29, 1988).

The two sides remain far apart on key economic issues—Eastern is demanding a cut of \$150 million a year in IAM wages and benefits, the union is seeking increases of \$50 million. Eastern wants IAM wages to be cut by 28 percent, matching cuts taken by the airline's other unions in 1986.

## McKinney & Silver and Braniff

Braniff announced that McKinney & Silver, which will continue to be Piedmont's agency through March 1989, has been appointed its agency of record. In announcing the selection of the Raleigh, NC-based agency, a Braniff official stated that the carrier's advertising budget would exceed the \$15 million budgeted for this year, but he did not indicate by how much.



Separately, Braniff plans to purchase 23 B737 aircraft from American for delivery in 1989 (*Aviation Daily*, December 27, 1988). The aircraft will be purchased by Braniff stockholder COR Leasing and then leased back to Braniff. The aircraft will be a mixture of B737-200s and -300s.

## Freight growth continues

U.S. domestic air freight, which in 1988 grew 20 percent and more in some markets, over an equally strong 1987, is expected to keep up a similar pace in 1989, according to industry leaders (*Aviation Daily*, January 4, 1989). "I should say this year should be comparable to 1988," said Paul Hyman, director-air cargo services for the Air Transport Association.

## In the aftermath

Bomb hoaxes—increased in the wake of the Pan Am disaster last month—are unnerving passengers and airline personnel (*USA Today*, January 4, 1989). There were six to ten threats a day after the Pan Am B747 was destroyed over Scotland. The previous average: two bomb hoaxes a day against aircraft or airports in the U.S., according to the latest FAA figures available. There were 215 bomb hoaxes against U.S. carriers from January through June of last year, and 78 threats against airports.

## Piedmont and USAir have a 'service edge' over competition

Authors of a recently published book, *The Service Edge — 101 Companies That Profit From Customer Care*, have many good words for the quality service Piedmont and USAir give to their customers.

Ron Zemke and Dick Schaaf, co-authors, assert that while the effect of the merger of the two airlines may take years to assess, "it's worth noting that Piedmont brought to the corporate altar a well-earned reputation as an innovative and concerned provider of customer service."

And, they add: "USAir is no slouch on the service side either, and initially has shown every indication that it will incorporate Piedmont's quality-oriented culture into its own strong customer service philosophy without inflicting major disruptions on its passengers or employees. We hope so. Air travelers have a lot to gain from the marriage of Piedmont's customer-centered focus and USAir's strong operating standards."

Although a section on USAir/Piedmont in the new book's chapter on air travel was written from the perspective that the merger has already taken place, most all other statements regarding the airline were up front, accurate, and complimentary.

The authors included Delta, America and USAir Group's Piedmont Airlines as the three best examples of service quality for U.S. carriers. They state that "all three are better than the competition... and seem to be head and shoulders above the competition in making a genuine effort... to improve service quality. ✍

---

## In memoriam

Paul J. Poulos, senior reservations agent-DCA, died October 20, 1988. He had been with the company since March 29, 1982.