

**JCNC UNITE REPRESENTATIVES**

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16<sup>th</sup> May 2014

To: Maggie Kennedy

*(Delivered by email)*

Dear Maggie,

**Re: Removal of B1 Manual**

Please find below confirmation of the issues which were discussed with the company at the meeting of the 13th May 2014 regarding the removal of the paper version of the B1 Manual from our Unite cabin crew members.

**BACKGROUND**

We received an e-mail on the 9th January 2014 informing us that the company was going to proceed with the B1 manual on-line as of the 27th January, and requesting feedback by the 17th January. This was the first time the company intention had been made known. We responded by requesting that the implementation date be removed until a meeting could be convened in order to properly discuss the concerns and issues around this far reaching decision. Ten days' notice prior to such a huge change to the cabin crews' working practices, alongside the practical and safety implications was not reasonable. We received no response from the company and we emailed again on the 18th January to ask if any thought had been given to our request, and restated our issues and concerns. We again received no response. We emailed a third time on the 23rd January to request a response and a meeting date. We were informed on the 24th January that it was still the company's intention to proceed with the B1 Manual on-line as of the 27th January, in spite of no meeting having been convened. At this point due to the seriousness of the matter, and with implementation date just three days away we also included Head of Training and Director of Group Airline Safety, Compliance & Security in the communications. We expressed our deep concern and disquiet that there had been no responsible discussion around the potential safety implications of how the company had proceeded with the process. In addition, it was highlighted that consultation had taken place with the flight crew and appropriate measures put in place. This was in stark contrast to the approach taken with the cabin crew where no consultation had taken place with Unite around the transition and change to working practices. We again requested that the implementation date be deferred until discussions had taken place. We received no formal response, and a memo was issued to the crew laying out the change to B1 Manual access as of the 27th January 2014.

## MEETING 13TH MAY 2014

Firstly we need to express our disappointment and concern that this was the first formal meeting date despite the many requests from Unite since January, and especially in light of what is such a serious subject matter. The issues raised at the meeting are as follows:

- The company proceeded with changes to how they require our members to work, without any consultation. We view the imposed change as a change to our members' working practices and therefore their terms and conditions. This contractual change is therefore a negotiation item and not information only.
- The company have removed the tools (personal copy of the B1 Manual) which they require our members to have in order to fulfil their contractual and regulatory role. Essentially the cost saving made by the company has been passed on as a cost to our members.
- No provision has been made to enable our members to continue to fulfil their contractual role. Our members are not contractually obliged to be in possession of an iPhone, tablet, iPad, home computer or similar device, or internet access in order to be able access regulatory required material.
- Many of our members do not have computers, or are not computer literate. No consideration has been given to this, and the implications to the detrimental impact on an individual's knowledge level, and therefore the level of safety within the airline operation. Examples were provided at the meeting which included concerns that crew would only be confident once a year when recurrent SEP takes place.
- The speed of change, along with conflicting information and information overload at the same time as removing the paper B1 Manual has the potential to impact on flight safety, and it is our duty to make Thomas Cook formally aware of this.
- The number of aircraft type and variations mean that crew need to be able to access safety information at home for their day to day flying role. This has been taken away from them. Thomas Cook has a complicated operational model, and this again has the potential to impact on flight safety. At some bases crew operate on four aircraft types with potentially several variations for each.
- Consultation took place with the flight crew, and there was a transition period, which we view as not just best practise but essential within the safety critical environment we work. Alternative provision was made; individuals were supplied with Electronic Working Devices in order to be able to carry out their required role and duties: Booking Leave, Manuals, Regulatory requirements, E-Learning, ASR, (CSR) Webchats, Personal Fatigue monitoring and reporting, Voyage report, (Flight Report) Xplorer, Communications, Rosters, Trainers' reports. There is nothing in this list which cabin crew do not need to access or use (we have a different name for a couple of items but nothing more.) There is yet again clear inequality/discrimination by the company in both process and provision.

## **CONCLUSION**

The company have imposed a contractual change with no consultation alongside the expectation that our members will bear a cost previously carried by the company. We have made the company aware, since January that there are safety implications in the way they have proceeded with this process, and this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

It is our view that cost saving cannot override the company's contractual responsibility and their obligation to ensure that our members have access to information, both company and regulatory, in order to fulfil their role and maintain the safe transport of our customers. In order to reduce the risk we put forward that crew do not fly on so many different aircraft types and the B1 paper Manual be reissued immediately, or EWDs are supplied to the crew alongside a training program. It is also essential that there is fair, equal and consistent treatment for employee groups. It was acknowledged by the company at the meeting that things could have been done better. Since the initial email on the 9th January we view that we behaved responsibly, and did all that we could to forewarn the company. Meetings were also requested around all the learning strands, which if progressed would have potentially helped to avoid this situation. Once again we must ask that a resolution is found by the company as a matter of urgency.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Browne  
**Chairman – JCNC Committee**