

Summer is over which for airline employees is always bittersweet. Along with the comments of “thank goodness they’re back in school” comes “where did the summer go” and “why are these airplanes still full?!”

Here is what we have been working on (diligently!) for the last several months:

Basically, it is the **3 Rs; reserve, rescheduling and reassignments**. Then you always have to add.....**the bidsheet**.

Let’s start with the **bidsheet**. We had the first ever, joint APFA ORD Council/AA ORD Flight Service/AA Allocations meeting. We invited all members of the ORD Council to attend the meeting so that all viewpoints could be heard. Dan Herring was the representative from Allocations. Dan wanted to hear what our concerns were and what we could do given the parameters of location, cost, and local preferences.

As an experiment, we asked Dan to input a 10/10 formula into the optimizer. That is the program that builds the bidsheets based on our contract, costs, etc. The 10/ 10 formula is 10 hours on duty followed by at least a 10 hour layover. Here’s the rub. ORD does have the highest percentage of short layovers. However, we also have the lowest percentage of days on. By pushing the layover, we create more sit time and more days on the bidsheet. In addition, the cost went up significantly. Hence, our dilemma.

ORD has, at this time, some inherent difficulties. Our base is shrinking; we have gone from a high of close to 3000 FAs down to around 1600 and ORD is not a moneymaker at this time. IOR is, hence, the expansion at IOR and reduction at ORD to a great deal of Eagle flying. Layovers are hard to build here due to many factors. We used to fly through ORD to a downline city and layover. Now, with Eagle taking a significant portion of our flying, we no longer can count on having those layovers.

8:59 flying time day: There are mixed sentiments here. ORD is the envy of every other base when it comes to our high time TAs and minimum days on. Our pilots want to be able to do those turns but, by law, they cannot fly over 8. However, if you are a junior commuter then you are taunted by the numerous turns on the bidsheet vs. 2/3 day trips.

At our meeting, we were represented by high time flyers, early morning TA Moms, back to back vs. no back to back, the all nighter, layover, the wide body groups and we did our best to represent commuters since there were no representatives from that group who could make it . At this point, commuters (as defined by the HI17 entry) make up 21% of our base. If you go strictly by non Illinois addresses, which would include those who drive from surrounding states, the number is 38%. To be candid and as forthright as possible, ORD is not a good junior commuter base right now. If a prime 3 day trip shows up on the bidsheet, it is subject to seniority. There is nothing that says a local FA will not bid a multi day trip. There is also nothing to say that a more senior, commuting FA will not bid the high time TAs. As FAs, we will go for what we can hold and make it work for our lives.

ORD APFA continually recommends to the company that we can handle more flying. Our reserves are covering a high percentage of out of base flying and it is obvious that we

have the heads to cover these hours on our bidsheet. In the month of June, close to 59% of ORD reserve flying was out of base.

We are in the center of the country. We get that. We know there will be more MICs here due to our central location; however, much of this out of base flying *originates* out of MIA, LGA, STL, DFW and DCA. That is just not right. Those are all crew bases and with the exception of STL all have adjacent international reserves that should be used on domestic, if available, before a line FA is RSK/RA. It is apparent that these bases cannot handle their own flying so put more time on the ORD Bidsheet and let us cover it with line FAs and NOT reserves! Right?

Some members of management in Dallas have stated that perhaps ORD is overstaffed due to the high reserve numbers. We disagree. DFW has nearly the same percentage of reserves. MIA has been “overstaffed” for at least 10 years and flying has been pushed there to the point that we continually cover MIA flying on reserve. Money is being spent creating sequences with additional DHD time and layovers so that reserves can cover out of base flying. Is that not penny wise and pound foolish?

We will be happy to take the MIA French flying due to MIA French Speakers continually complaining about the bid denials since they got all of the 737 trips. We would be happy to get 777 qualified and cover 777 flying out there. We can also handle Trans Cons! Our reserves are doing them so why not our line FAs? Reserve at other bases has increased due to our constant research (Thanks Todd Breckenridge) on out of base flying. Although, some of our reserves like the out of base flying for the layovers!! Oh, well!

We did get more 757 flying. The majority of it is TAs but it is an increase in flying. Again, the shrinking of ORD has been significant. If anything, that has had the greatest impact on our bidsheet. Local Management is also fighting hard for more flying.

The 3 R's: this has been an enormous point of aggravation. We have spent hundreds of hours pulling stats in all 3 categories since one impacts the other. We, APFA ORD, firmly believe that line FAS should not be RSK when there are SBs or when crew tracking has advance notice to call out reserves/MU at home. The bottom line is reserves are for last minute assignments. The majority of time should go into open time where AV/MU/OPII/SMU FAs can cover it and the reserve list should be reduced, permanently.

Hence, the **OPII test in ORD**. Outside of full-blown negotiations, there are very few ways to reduce reserve permanently. As always APFA recommends we help our fellow FAs first. We see the advantage here for our high time flyers who lose flying mid sequence and do not qualify for HVBL days. That FA has been out of luck and usually the day to fly is lost. HVBL is a form of super seniority OPII in that HVBL is awarded prior to MU/OPII and is open every day of the month to those who qualify. The OPII Test expands protection for bases that have a fair amount of mid sequence MICs due to turnarounds preceding or ending a sequence. Continuation of the test is pending. For anyone concerned that OPII flying will slow down the recall of furloughed FAs, we have thought long and hard about that one as well. The reality is that AA is grounding

numerous aircraft and eliminating big international routes. Sad to say, that alone may keep any furloughs from returning. We have to look for ways to reduce and improve reserve without full-blown negotiations. We will closely monitor the stats and any impacts that could be negative and/or positive.

Another way to possibly reduce reserves and get the reserve list out earlier in the day is the **daily bid of MU and OPII flying**. The concept has been around for years. The programming may now be available if we want this to start sooner rather than later. Crew Sked, in today's environment, has to make upwards of hundreds of MU/OPII calls per day before they can start the reserve list which factors in to putting so many reserves on ready, then calling them all night with their assignments.

With the daily bid, FAs can submit a bid for MU/OPII/SMU. The bid can be changed up until the closing time. Bids can be run in the daytime along with a secondary bid in the early evening. Sick trips can be bid. Trips that open due to MICs as the day goes on can be bid. When the bid run is accomplished and MU/OPII/SMU is over for the first round Crew Sked can then run the reserve list more efficiently.

Below we have listed the pros and cons as we see them. ORD will be surveyed to see if we want to be the test base for daily bidding on MU/OPII. Please take the time to read the info and tell us your thoughts and recommendations. Automation is going to happen. We want to get in front of it instead of having it thrust upon us. The first step is to do it by hand before committing the funds for programming. We also want to work out the kinks like we did with availability self plot which also ran as a test, changing it here and there, until it was incorporated into the contract.

The Daily Bid Ballot Test will require that all requests for MU/Option II flying be made via HISEND for day-before coverage. The HISEND must include specific sequences or specific parameters so that CS can award trips. For the first month only, your HISEND may include a request for phone contact from crew sked. The HISENDs will be placed in seniority order and if the trip is awarded prior to 1900, the trip will be considered confirmed. The hope is that this will reduce CS error in awarding sequences and potentially allow for improved proffering of more flying. Flight Attendants will not need to be available to answer the phone.

	Pros	Cons
APFA	Consistency in honoring seniority when awarding flying	No phone call after 1 st month of test
	Faster MU/Option II process	Potential time zone problems
	Freedom from phone obligation	Only small improvement for reserves if trips awarded somewhat earlier
	Earlier reserve assignments	Viewed as concessionary by some
	Potential for more MU/Option II runs throughout evening	
	Groundwork for applying bid process to AVBL/Reserve flying	
AA	Efficient for Crew Scheduling	Manual process for test period
	Eliminate double payments due to CS error (Passed on MU)	If programmed, return on investment may be small due to implementation of new FOS

Truly, we are continually working on improving our work lives on all levels. We do NOT believe that line FAs should be used as reserves. We do NOT believe that reserves should be covering all open time regardless of base. We DO believe that we need to at least try new ideas and new concepts. Our hope is that we can eventually get to a daily bid on reserve that would allow FAs to plot trips on reserve, plot SB, etc. Control! That is the issue!!

On October 26th, 1100-1300, Doug Brown, AA's new Managing Director of Crew Resources will be in ORD K19 OPS for ORD FAs ONLY to discuss all things crew scheduling/planning. Please bring any and all supporting documentation for discussion. We also are looking for ORD FAs to bring forward their own unique ideas.

ORD has always been a leadership base. Shortly after the meeting with Doug Brown we will be balloting the base to see if we want to participate in a 3 month test for MU/OPII/SMU daily bidding. Watch for the ballot in your FA mailbox.

Side notes: Did you know that only FAs get paid **diversion pay**? The pilots do not get this pay. Pay Comp receives a daily chart with diversions so it may take a day or two to see it on your HI1. If you have not received it within a few days, then contact Pay Comp. Pilots also do not receive Holding Time, Required to Stay Late Time or Ground Time.

Minimum Rest: you must notify Crew Tracking when you are behind the door in your hotel if you are reduced to minimum rest. That will set your new departure time.

The ATC Arbitration was postponed at the request of the company. Either side has the right to request a postponement.

FML: If you take FML for a family member, you will AUTOMATICALLY have your vacation docked. At your option, you can use PVDs when you run out of VC days.

Please check www.apfa.org for extensive FML information.

767 crews: if you have been subjected to RSK either mid sequence or at the end of your trip, please let us know ASAP.

Trip Trades/Payments: If you say you are going to pay someone then please do it promptly. This is not an APFA issue. This is a personal issue.

SFO/LAX Hotel: Yes, we agree these two layovers are the best we have. The Hilton in SFO has substantially raised their rates. Sad to say our trip is going to Foster City instead of downtown. The Hotel Committee is now seeking a 3rd long layover hotel in LAX and will continue to seek a resolution to SFO.

E-mail: it is proving to be our fastest way to communicate and resolve FA problems!

That's it for now. Fly Safe and take care of each other!

**In Unity,
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