



Randy Barnes
President

Jerry McCrummen
1st Vice President

Albert Barbosa
2nd Vice President

Jessica Hayes
Financial
Secretary-Treasurer

Juan Cordova
Recording Secretary

REPRESENTING THE RAMP, OPERATIONS, PROVISIONING, AND FREIGHT AGENTS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Statement by Randy Barnes President of TWU Local 555 Representing Ground Workers at Southwest Airlines on Southwest Airlines' Holiday Meltdown, Stress and Unreasonable Demands Placed on Ground Crews

The fact is this is not the same airline that Herb Kelleher built where planes went point-to-point. We are now experiencing the same problems as the more traditional airlines that rely on a hub and spokes system. When Southwest's model changed, preparation needed to change. If airline managers had planned better, the meltdown we've witnessed in recent days could have been lessened or averted.

When you're dealing with sub-zero temperatures, driving winds and ice storms you can't expect to schedule planes as if every day is a sunny day with moderate temperatures and a gentle breeze.

The human factor also has to be a consideration. Ground workers need more support. Many of our people have been forced to work 16-hour or 18-hour days during this holiday season. Our members work hard, they're dedicated to their jobs, but many are getting sick, and some have experienced frostbite over the past week. In severe weather it's unreasonable for workers to stay outside for extended periods. People need to be able to cycle in and out of the cold. The airline needs to do more to protect its ground crews.

Although it can be complicated, especially during the holiday season, we need to consider better spacing of flights during extreme weather events in the bitter cold of winter – as well as the extreme heat of summer. When the forecast for Denver, Kansas City, Atlanta, Nashville, Baltimore, Chicago, Portland and a long list of other key markets for the airline looks challenging, as it did over the past week, we should consider slowing the entire schedule.

Ground Workers at Southwest Airlines represented by Transport Workers Union Local 555 work behind the scenes day and night to get everyone to their destination safely and with their baggage. We know that Southwest Airlines' management can fix the problems that we have all witnessed this month. Our union is ready to be a partner to make those necessary changes happen.

TWU Local 555 is a local union of the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU), representing more than 17,000 ramp, operations, provisioning and freight agents at Southwest Airlines.