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Important – You must Read

Message from Dave Smith, BACC Chairman

27th February 2008

Fellow BALPA members,

Following on from my letter of 21st February, I and members of the Head Office Team met with BA yesterday, the 26th February, where we were eventually shown the business plan for OpenSkies. Whilst this was useful, the presentation left some questions unanswered and we have asked for further detail.

After meeting with BA, BALPA had an exploratory meeting with the Chair of ACAS, Ed Sweeney, and Ken Owen, Acas National Conciliator. As a result of that meeting BALPA proposed using the services of an independent conciliator, Professor John Goodman, in conjunction with ACAS. BA subsequently agreed to this proposal.

Although BALPA was ready to commence conciliation immediately, Professor Goodman was not available until Monday 3rd March. We therefore took the decision to wait until next Monday in order to secure the services of the right person and to allow ACAS to prepare themselves fully.

The following has just been released by ACAS

BRITISH AIRWAYS/BALPA – OPENSKIES

“British Airways and BALPA have jointly agreed ACAS conciliation in seeking to find a solution to the current items of disagreement.

The conciliation talks will be facilitated by Professor John Goodman, Professor of Industrial Relations at UMIST (University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology) and Ken Owen, Acas National Conciliator.

The talks will commence on 3 March. No further statements will be made during the duration of the talks”.

I appreciate that some members feel they are in a hiatus at the moment, especially after the overwhelming support BALPA received in the ballot result, and some just ‘want to get on with it’. I am conscious however of the fact BALPA owes it to its members to try every avenue to resolve this dispute.

The intention is lock ourselves away next week with BA and the conciliators and to come out with an agreement or move on to the next step. We have made it very clear to both BA and ACAS that we will not allow conciliation to be used as a delaying tactic. The clock is ticking.

As ACAS have stated there will be no running commentary while we are in the negotiations next week but BALPA will be updating you on our support groups, on our pledge fund and how you can best prepare yourselves if the talks fail.

Whilst we will be trying our best to avoid having to use the significant mandate we have been given members should, nevertheless, be fully prepared to take strike action if the negotiations prove fruitless and the Company leaves us with no option but to do so.

Dave Smith
BACC Chairman