

UNITED PILOTS TO VOTE ON ACCORD WITHOUT 100-SEATER COMMITMENT

News / Airlines



Pilots at United Airlines will vote on a contract extension in January that lacks any commitment for a 100-seat aircraft order from the carrier.

The Chicago-based airline put the possibility of a small narrowbody order on the table in talks earlier this year, confirms Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) United master executive council chair captain Jay Heppner in a video posted on Facebook.

However, the potential order was eliminated from the agreement due to “much unnecessary consternation about suspected scope relief and the dangling of shiny airplanes to entice United pilots into a deal”, he says.

“I believe it is important that we physically have 100-seat aircraft on the United property, flown by United pilots on the United seniority list so we never have to negotiate that provision again,” says Heppner.

The two-year extension to 31 January 2019 includes pay rates for the Bombardier CS100 and

CS300 and the Embraer 190 and 195.

United is the only US mainline carrier without a roughly 100-seat aircraft in its fleet. American Airlines has 20 E190s and Delta Air Lines has purchased 91 Boeing 717-200s and 20 E190s.

“There is a natural need for a small mainline narrowbody,” said Gerry Laderman, United’s acting chief financial officer, in November.

He told analysts earlier in December that the airline would need a fleet of 25 to 50 100-seat aircraft in order for it to “make sense given the added complexity associated with training, spares provisioning and maintenance”.

United employees toured the CS100 when it visited Chicago O’Hare International airport in November, the airline confirms.

Bombardier also flew the aircraft to Atlanta earlier this month where Delta employees and executives viewed it.

The contract extension includes 22.3% pay increases by January 2018 from 2015 rates, a value of about \$1.1 billion to pilots, and other work rule changes, says ALPA. If ratified, it would become amendable on 31 January 2019.

Pilots will vote on the tentative accord from 6 January 2016 through 22 January 2016, the union says.

26 DECEMBER 2015

SOURCE: FLIGHTGLOBAL

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