

## **Delta's Conflict Resolution Procedure Vs. NWA AFA Grievance/Arbitration Process**

You may have recently seen an article on the DeltaNet website written by Sandy Gordon, Delta's Vice President of Inflight Services, which attempts to favorably compare Delta's Conflict Resolution Procedure (CRP) to the contractual Grievance and Arbitration process.

To begin, Delta flight attendants are severely limited in the scope of issues which can be brought forward under the Delta CRP process. Only issues involving discipline issued by a manager and termination cases can be addressed. This stands in stark contrast to our ability to file grievances over past practice, policies which harm our members, as well as contractual violations and disciplinary issues. Ms. Gordon suggests that the Delta CRP process is designed to be "handled more quickly" than the grievance process. It's a little difficult to believe that when the Delta process calls for 5 steps before possibly achieving any resolution of your issue.

Delta CRP has a proceeding called the "Employee Review Panel" (ERP), which is step #4 in their process. It was designed as an alternative to the Arbitration proceeding (System Board of Adjustment) provided to us in our contract. However, the ERP is anything but an alternative to arbitration. In the ERP, a flight attendant "gatekeeper" asks you for a summary of your testimony in advance. They determine which witnesses you can and can't utilize, and they decide which pieces of evidence are "appropriate" for the hearing. You can't use anyone other than a Delta employee as a witness - no experts, no attorneys. There is no transcript of the proceeding taken, meaning that you won't be able to prove who said what. Finally, you present your case to a panel of Delta employees, not a neutral arbitrator with years of experience chosen jointly by the Union and the Company.

Finally, if you disagree with the findings of the panel of Delta employees who are judging your fate at the ERP, you are entitled to one more step – step #5: You get to present your case to a Delta Vice President.

- Submitted by MEC Grievance Chair Greg Riffle, August 2009