



**NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20572

(202) 692-5000

In the Matter of the  
Application of the

OFFICE & PROFESSIONAL  
EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL  
UNION

alleging representation disputes  
pursuant to Section 2, Ninth, of  
the Railway Labor Act, as  
amended

involving employees of

AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC.

45 NMB No. 1

CASE NO. R-7504  
(File No. CR-7177)

FINDINGS UPON  
INVESTIGATION-  
DISMISSAL

November 8, 2017

FINDINGS UPON INVESTIGATION

This determination addresses the application of the Office & Professional Employees International Union, Local 277 (OPEIU or Organization) alleging a representation dispute pursuant to the Railway Labor Act (RLA), 45 U.S.C. § 152, Ninth (Section 2, Ninth),<sup>1</sup> among Aircraft Routers at American Airlines (American or Carrier). For the reasons set forth below, the National Mediation Board (Board or NMB) concludes that the Aircraft Routers are part of the Office Clerical craft or class. Therefore, the Board dismisses the application.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On July 13, 2017, OPEIU filed an application alleging a representation dispute involving the “Aircraft Routers” at American. The application was given NMB file No. CR-7177 and Cristina Bonaca was assigned as the Investigator. The Board requested that the Carrier provide it with a list and signature

---

<sup>1</sup> 45 U.S.C. § 151, *et seq.*

samples for the Aircraft Routers, which it provided, along with an initial position statement on July 27, 2017. OPEIU responded on August 9, 2017. The case was reassigned to Angela Heverling on October 4, 2017.

### ISSUE

Are American's Aircraft Routers part of the Office Clerical craft or class?

### CONTENTIONS

American argues that Aircraft Routers, along with Crew Schedulers and Crew Coordinators, are part of the much larger unrepresented Office Clerical craft or class at the Carrier and that OPEIU's application should be dismissed. The Carrier cites Board precedent finding Aircraft Routers to be part of the Office Clerical craft or class because these employees are primarily concerned with the internal functioning of the Carrier.

OPEIU argues that Aircraft Routers are a separate craft or class from Office Clerical because they are involved in the Carrier's flight operations and their responsibilities and duties vary greatly from those of the Office Clerical Employees. OPEIU also argues that routing requires a more advanced skill set than other jobs traditionally part of the Office Clerical craft or class.

### FINDINGS OF LAW

Determination of the issues in this case is governed by the RLA, as amended, 45 U.S.C. § 151, *et seq.* Accordingly, the Board finds as follows:

I.

American is a common carrier as defined in 45 U.S.C. § 181.

II.

OPEIU is a labor organization and/or representative as provided by 45 U.S.C. § 151, Sixth, and § 152, Ninth.

III.

45 U.S.C. § 152, Fourth, gives employees subject to its provisions "the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing. The majority of any craft or class of employees shall have the right to

determine who shall be the representative of the craft or class for the purposes of this chapter.”

#### IV.

45 U.S.C. § 152, Ninth, provides that the Board has the duty to investigate representation disputes and shall designate who may participate as eligible voters in the event an election is required.

#### STATEMENT OF FACTS

There are approximately 39 Aircraft Routers at American. They are unrepresented. They work in the Integrated Operations Center (IOC). Aircraft Routers are responsible for monitoring and adjusting aircraft routings to ensure that maintenance work can be completed without disrupting airline schedules. They work closely with other employees in the IOC to coordinate flights so maintenance can be performed at their destinations. They monitor aircraft to ensure that maintenance is performed. The Aircraft Routers interact with Planners, Ops Coordinators-Dispatchers, Crew Coordinators, and Crew Schedulers on the second floor of the IOC. Management personnel and some clerical employees are located on the first floor of the IOC.

The Carrier provided job descriptions for Aircraft Routers, Crew Schedulers, and Crew Coordinators. Aircraft Routers are “[r]esponsible for monitoring and adjusting the daily aircraft routings to ensure timely and effective completion of maintenance workload requirements while minimizing the impact to the airline operation.” The minimum requirement for the position is a high school diploma or equivalency. Preferred qualifications include experience in an aircraft operational environment, understanding of IOC planning unit structure, knowledge of the Carrier’s commercial schedule, and understanding of maintenance processes.

The Crew Coordinators’ job purpose is described as the following: “Responsible for ensuring flight crew coverage . . . Plans and coordinates crew scheduling activity during the day-to-day operations, ensuring efficient, compliant, and reliable crew resource management.” The minimum qualifications are a high school diploma or equivalency and crew scheduling or tracking experience. Crew Schedulers are “[r]esponsible for efficiently scheduling pilots to ensure a complete flight crew is staffed on every American Airlines (AA) flight according to contractual guidelines, Company policies and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements (FAR 117 Limitations).” The minimum requirements are a high school diploma or equivalency and the ability to complete a one-year commitment.

The Aircraft Routers are on the same pay grade schedule as Crew Schedulers and Crew Coordinators. They also receive the same benefits, such as holidays, vacations, medical coverage, and sick leave. Lateral moves between Aircraft Routers and other positions such as Crew Schedulers and Crew Coordinators happen frequently. Routers, Crew Coordinators, and Crew Schedulers work the same shifts and have the same shift premiums and overtime rates. According to the Carrier, all of these employees are integral to its internal operations.

## DISCUSSION

### *Craft or Class Determination*

In determining the proper craft or class for a group of employees, the Board considers a number of factors, including functional integration, work classifications, terms and conditions of employment, and work-related community of interest. *Southwest Airlines*, 42 NMB 110 (2015), *Louisville & Indiana RR*, 41 NMB 82 (2014); *Indiana Southern RR*, 37 NMB 226 (2010); *Florida Northern Railroad*, 34 NMB 142 (2007). The Board makes craft or class determinations case by case, based upon Board policy and precedent. *USAir*, 15 NMB 369 (1988); *Simmons Airlines*, 15 NMB 124 (1988).

The Board has repeatedly determined that the position of Aircraft Router is part of the craft or class of Office Clerical. See *U.S. Airways, Inc.*, 28 NMB 104 (2000); *Eastern Airlines, Inc.*, 12 NMB 29 (1984); *Trans World Airlines*, 7 NMB 465 (1980). In *U.S. Airways*, the functions of the Aircraft Routers in question were defined as the following:

[T]o assign and track aircraft for all scheduled flying and inform all relevant personnel of daily routing activity. They participate in all irregular operations and ensure operational and maintenance requirements are met within their assigned fleets. They coordinate and schedule selected maintenance requests consistent with priorities and station capabilities to provide scheduling opportunities for other maintenance requirements.

*U.S. Airways, above*, at 115. In *Trans World Airlines, above*, the Aircraft Routers also scheduled aircraft for maintenance purposes and established maintenance schedules. These are the same duties and responsibilities of American's Aircraft Routers' discussed above.

OPEIU has provided no evidence to justify changing the traditional craft or class determination for these employees. The Organization argues that the position of Aircraft Router requires a more advanced skill set than other

positions traditionally in the Office Clerical craft or class, such as Crew Schedulers. Even if this were the case, the Board has long held that these employees belong in the same craft or class. *See e.g. American Airlines, Inc.*, 5 NMB 138 (1972).

The Board has a policy against fragmenting traditional crafts or classes. *See e.g. American Airlines, Inc.*, 21 NMB 60, 73 (1993) (“The Board has frequently stated its policy against fragmenting crafts or classes, and, indeed, recognizes that it is not authorized to make a determination for a unit smaller than the entire craft or class”). OPEIU has not provided any compelling reasons to break from precedent and remove Aircraft Routers from the Office Clerical craft or class at this Carrier.

#### CONCLUSION

The Board finds that American’s Aircraft routers are part of the Office Clerical craft or class. OPEIU has failed to provide the required showing of interest for this craft or class. As there is no further basis for investigation, NMB File No. CR-7177 is converted to NMB Case No. R-7504 and dismissed.

By direction of the NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD



Mary L. Johnson  
General Counsel