

PILOTS AT LYNDEN PINDLING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CRYING OUT FOR HELP!

The Lynden Pindling International Airport is used on a daily basis to commute back and forth between the islands for both business and pleasure; however there lies hidden secrets of which the public has absolutely NO knowledge.

Pilots at LPI are very concerned for their jobs, their sanity, their lives and most of all the safety of the general public because our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, cousins, kids, the travelling public, and country in general are all in danger.

Most of the air charter companies are transforming from charter companies to airline status. Unlike before when Bahamas Air was the only airline that ran schedule flights to the family islands, we now have commuter airlines that go to the family islands multiple times daily giving quick access to the capital but there is a scary side to this.

1. Most pilots are being paid by the day. The operators save money by not paying most of their national insurance contributions and any other insurances by calling them part-time workers even though they have full time jobs with the company. They receive a pay cheque every two weeks and have a full time roster like any other full time scheduled worker in the Bahamas. There is NO other industry in this country where this blatant nonsense is tolerated, much less even sanctioned.
2. According to the Employment Act 2001, "Except as otherwise provided by or under this Act, no employer shall cause or permit any employee to work in excess of eight hours in any day or forty hours in any week (in this Part referred to as the "standard hours of work") without the payment of overtime pay in respect of any such excess in accordance with section 10." This does not apply to pilots at LPI. There are by-laws by the Civil Aviation Department that allow a flight crew to work a twelve (12) hour duty day, with up to eight (8) hours flight time or ten (10) flights in most cases. Most evening flights are done by a very tired flight crew. Working twelve hour days in some cases and flying ten or more flights in a single day is not an easy task, much less with people's lives at stake.

3. Pilots are coming to work and flying aircraft with serious issues, most deeming them non airworthy and should be grounded in fact. The pilots fly these aircraft because if they don't fly that day they won't get paid. One operator often quotes and is infamously known for his quotes, "I need my plane to fly in order to pay you!" So most pilots who are paid by the day have no choice and most times take these extreme risks in hopes of returning alive, all to receive an already minimal pay cheque. This in itself is added stress and fatigue to an already critical job in itself. Most of the aircraft are stringing along for dear life. When will we acknowledge these issues, after there is another Chalks flight 101, except this time in the Bahamas?
4. Another challenge at the airport is the security risks that pilots fly under on a daily basis. While pilots go through the security screening check point, taking off their shoes, belts, watches, keys, phones, shades, etc, porters, and baggage handlers are allowed through an easy access door close to the ramp with carts loaded with UNSCREENED bags and are merely patted down. Any person with common sense would think that these bags might need the additional screening and not the pilots. When a flight crew arrives at their aircraft, they are unaware as to the contents onboard, but are still the primary target and most susceptible to arrest by the police, customs or whichever authority when something illegal or prohibited is found onboard the aircraft.
5. Last but not least there is a very serious problem with the operators who now hire foreign employees, namely pilots while there are so many Bahamian pilots and other persons out of jobs. For example Sky Bahamas has numerous foreign pilots and ground personnel and the only reason they are here is because the new C.E.O. of the company has fired or terminated every staff member he met there, and has on numerous occasions quoted to staff members that, "the foreign workers are cheaper labor." Is this country no longer the Bahamas? Sky Bahamas has made history at the airport for the most persons fired or those that could no longer bear the injustice and

unfairness and simply quit. Not to mention, these staff members were let go without the proper compensation and have all taken the company to the Labor Board where there are numerous outstanding cases against this C.E.O. and his company for the same.

There is a serious problem in the Bahamas when Bahamians are no longer the focus of its' own country and this time has not only arrived, it has resided for quite a while now. Over the years pilots have grown tired of seeing their co-workers treated unfair, fired, and even killed in an attempt to sustain and maintain mere livelihood.

BAHAMAS, we are crying out for your help before we lose another life, or the lives of our and your families due to the lack of care, concern and due diligence in this our aviation industry of the Bahamas.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!