



ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO
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August 18, 2005

The Honorable Marion C. Blakey
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator:

On behalf of our 46,000 flight attendant members at 22 airlines, the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO (AFA) is very troubled to learn that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) may stop funding their CARI program that is currently used world wide to track an individual's dose of galactic radiation during commercial airline flights.

AFA has had some reservations about the CARI program as an exposure assessment tool for use by *individual* flight attendants because it requires the user to enter some specific altitude data that a flight attendant is unlikely to have. However, there is no doubt that the CARI program is very useful for pilots (who have access to those data), and is an essential tool for health researchers and airlines. If flight attendants were provided with the necessary altitude data, the CARI system would also be a useful tool for them.

When the FAA claimed jurisdiction over the health and safety of crewmembers in 1975, it claimed to have a program that "fully occupies and exhausts the field of crewmember occupational safety and health" (40 FR 29114, 1975). Unfortunately, crewmembers are still largely without safety and health regulations, but the one health issue that the FAA is known and respected for in research circles is cosmic radiation. The cornerstone to the FAA's research is the CARI program, designed and maintained by the Radiobiology Research Team.

As you may know, in June 1996 the European Union passed legislation that required all carriers in member states to issue and enforce radiation protections for crewmembers by June 2000¹. European airlines have since met this requirement with standards on crewmember education, dose tracking, and pregnancy protections. The US is already far behind our counterparts in Europe. To lose the CARI program would be an embarrassment and a disservice to crewmembers.

In short, the CARI program, in conjunction with the solar radiation alert system that is developed and maintained by the Radiobiology Research Team, are invaluable health resources for the aviation industry, not only in the US, but globally. We hope that the FAA will take the strong crewmember support for these activities into consideration and elect to maintain them and upgrade them as necessary so that the US can continue to be recognized for this contribution.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Friend
International President

¹ Official Journal of the European Communities, L.159, V39. Issued 29 June 1996

