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MAR 04 2020
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March 4, 2020

To: Los Angeles City Council
From: SEIU USWW

RE: Issues with Emergency Preparedness Training at LAX & Coronavirus (COVID-19)

SEIU United Service Workers West represents over 45,000 property service workers across California, including 7,200 aviation service workers - the large majority of which are at LAX.

Workers at both SAS, the subcontractor of Southwest, and JetStream, of American Airlines, have come forward with serious concerns that they are not sufficiently trained, prepared or given adequate protective equipment and cleaning supplies to deal with the public health advisory generated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

National media¹ outlets have reported that airport workers were asked to clean an airplane arriving from China that was later quarantined without the appropriate training or protective equipment. Workers have reported that they routinely do not have adequate cleaning supplies or protective gear.

After the tragic active shooter incident of 2013 which underscored the importance of airport workers as frontline responders, the city council worked with Mayor Garcetti to amend the city's Living Wage Ordinance and the airport's Certified Service Provider Program to create a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Training program aimed at a safer and more secure LAX for both workers and the traveling public.

Over a dozen workers at both SAS and JetStream have come forward with allegations of serious, ongoing violations of the program's requirements and of California labor laws. These complaints were filed with the city's Bureau of Contract Administration (BCA), that agency is currently investigating these cases.

Although the training required is 16 hours long, workers describe trainings that often last no more than two hours - covering just a small, limited selection of topics, and at times culminating in exams where the answers are provided alongside the actual test. Shockingly, one worker described a training that "only lasted 10 seconds" and consisted of a manager simply calling them into their office in order to sign a roster before leaving.

In light of the urgency of adequate trainings for all airport workers, and in an effort to better come to a solution on these issues in a way that promotes partnership and cooperation to protect the public's health, we have a number of questions:

- What is LAWA's plan to enforce the training requirements that are now part of the Living Wage Ordinance? What concrete steps have LAWA or the BCA taken to enforce potential violations of the program by any contractor or airline?

¹ Overland, Martha. "Airport Workers Fear They're Unprotected From The Coronavirus." NPR, March 1, 2020 https://www.npr.org/2020/03/01/810873413/airport-workers-fear-theyre-unprotected-from-the-coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR0jtrCkRm_ZL-tR149uduvbfJRiDmepaWSZai_HYz9vBEr5Uc5ZHSRRR0A