

How R-24 “Penalty Lines” Work

The recent high number of R-24 Penalty Lines in the Memphis 757 bidpack has raised some questions about where these special lines originated, how they work, and how they affect the way in which the Company builds the Memphis 757 and Memphis 767 bidpacks.

When the 767 was first introduced at FedEx, the Company initially proposed one 757/767 crew status and one bid pack with a narrow body pay rate and a 767 override. The negotiations obviously progressed from that point to a common base but separate bid packs. ALPA was concerned that with this concept, a potential overstaffing of the 757 bidpack could result (e.g., almost all reservists would be narrowbody pay 757 pilots, and only get widebody pay when they actually flew a 767).

It was negotiated that each month the 767 bidpack must have as many Non-Pay-Only pilots per Scheduled Credit Hour as the 757 bidpack. But, how to penalize the Company if they miss the proper ratio? Each pilot they were “short” in the MEM67 bidpack equated to one 757 pilot who should have been transitioned and receiving widebody pay. It made sense as a deterrent to require that, as a penalty, they pay TWO 757 pilots widebody pay that month for every 767 pilot they were short.

Thus, R-24 Penalty Lines were created in order to allow 757 pilots to bid on this widebody pay with seniority. The R-24 penalty lines are in addition to any normally required R-24 lines.

Despite the partial split of the bidpacks (instructors are still dual qualified), and while the parties are engaged in current discussions, the B767 LOA is still in effect. The calculations of the number of Penalty Lines for each seat appear in the MEM57 bidpack each month. The penalty line count is always even (two per every pilot or fraction thereof that the MEM67 seat is short) and they are the first group of reserve lines listed.

What do you get if you bid and hold one? Basically, all the in-month credit hours you receive that month will generate an ATO (Airplane Type Override) on your pay summary where those hours will be multiplied by the difference between

narrowbody and widebody pay for your seat and longevity, and then paid to you on the 15th of the following month. In-month CH includes reserve days, flying, carry-in from the previous month, recurrent training, makeup trips picked up in open time, vacation, etc. It does not include carryout R-days or the carryout portion of a carryover trip in the following month.

In February, with Peak flying over, the 757s not flying much during the day, and the schoolhouse repopulated, the ratios of pilots to credit hours shifted dramatically. The result was 46 FO and 24 CA Penalty Lines in the MEM57 bidpack.

Going into March, pairings were adjusted in both bidpacks in order to reduce the number of Penalty Lines. The MEM67 bidpack replaced longer layovers with deadheads wherever possible to reduce credit. Conversely, the MEM57 bidpack replaced DHs with weekend layovers wherever possible to increase credit, and built hotel standby pairings to do the same.

We can expect some pairing design change going forward as the Company manages its Penalty Lines under the LOA.