

Insändare:

Stockholm, 07 January 2011

Distribution:

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2. Head of Information, address as above
3. Head of British Airways Customer Relations, Postfach 286118, D-28361 Bremen, BRD

Delayed flight, booking no 5W3BUH

Dear Sirs,

With booking no 5W3BUH I was scheduled to fly First Class from London with BA0209 on December 17<sup>th</sup> 2010 to Miami to catch a Holland America Line cruise ship on the 18<sup>th</sup>. After having waited on board the aircraft for some five hours to have the aircraft de-iced, when the equipment finally arrived, they ran out of de-icing liquid. After another hour the F/C informed that the crew would have exceeded their working hours following this delay and that the flight had to be cancelled. It must be stressed at this time, that the situation had nothing to do with weather; outside the sun was shining from a clear blue sky. The reason for the cancellation was inadequate preparations or foresight within BAA, and also within BA, not being able to alert a stand-by crew.

After the flight was cancelled all passengers were taken back to LHT Terminal 5 where we were met by an old lady who handed out photocopied pieces of paper, saying that from now on it was up to ourselves to find hotel accommodation, food, transports etc. BA was not going to help. What a clever move it was with the old lady whom nobody would argue with! On that same piece of paper was a phone number to BA which was quite impossible to contact; I tried unsuccessfully until 3 am!

My first priority was to contact the cruise line in the US to inform that I would not board their ship m/s Eurodam in Miami the following day but would try to catch up on another day at another port along the cruise. Second priority was to retrieve my luggage (tag BA305840), which was to be delivered on one of the carousels. After almost two hours of fruitless waiting by the band, I managed to find a BAA employee who kindly looked into his computer and could inform that my luggage was in a container "somewhere at LHR" but that I should come back the following day. My next priority was to find a roof over my head. Fortunately I am a member of the Royal Air Force Club in downtown London. After having explained the situation, the club's staff kindly made a room reservation for as many days as I needed, also meals. After this I tried to re-book my First Class ticket, but all BA sales staff had left for their weekend holiday. No sales counters were open. Two young girls at the First Class reception had no grasp of the situation whatsoever and were of no help.

On the following day, when the snow had started to fall, I went back to LHR as advised to retrieve my luggage. The trip to T 5 took some five hours due to a total break down in the London Underground system. Finally at T 5 I was informed that the luggage was still in a container "somewhere", but I managed to re-book my First Class ticket for Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> with

BA0209 to Miami. Again contacting the cruise line by phone, I asked them to prepare for a hotel room in Miami on the 21<sup>st</sup> and a flight the following day to St Maarten on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Having lost all confidence in BA, I was to give HAL the final go-ahead with the reservations only when the aircraft was taxiing out for take off.

Coming back to LHR early on the day departure, I was informed that I had been down-graded from First Class because of over-booking. I accepted, since this was the only option to be on-board that flight. I was promised that my lost luggage was to be on that same flight, but upon arrival in Miami, it was still missing. A "missing luggage"-report (MIABA37594) was duly filled out, including all ports of call during the cruise.

I stayed over night in Miami and caught an American Airlines flight the following day, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>, to St Maarten, arriving at the cruise ship with only 15 minutes to spare. When the cruise ended on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, I still had not received my luggage, despite frequent correspondence with BA. They didn't seem to care very much about it. I consequently bought a new suitcase, clothes, toiletry etc.

I boarded my return flight BA0206 from Miami to LHR according to schedule on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Flying First Class, I surprisingly found the panel to adjust the seat and the light out of order (the A/H subsequently wrote a report), but was rather chastened at this time and didn't bother much. I was happy to be on my way home.

The lost luggage was finally delivered on January 4<sup>th</sup> to my home address in Stockholm, without the strap and in total disorder as somebody obviously had gone through the content.

### Summary

Flight BA209 on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> to Miami was cancelled due to LHR having run out of de-icing liquid and no BA stand-by crew. It was not a case of extreme weather/force majeure.

Sincerely,

Lennart Berns  
President  
Swedish Travel Writers Association  
(BA Executive Club Silver Member 10767132)

Ruddammsbacken 34, SE-114 21 Stockholm, Sweden

Toni kommentar:

Hej Lennart, jag känner igen mig från tidigare år när jag pendlade i många år till vår verksamhet till Miami. Till slut tog tålamodet slut och det blev att flyga via Frankfurt, att mellan landa i London och byta terminal och tro att bagaget är med, glöm det och när det var det fick man en mindre chock. BA:s utveckling är rätt sorgligt och som en god vän i UK sa till mig, det är dyrt att vara nationalist, så sant han har. Att resa är att uppleva, din resa Lennart är naturligtvis förknippad med en massa tillfällen där flygbolaget inte råder över allt. Att Heathrow flygplats ägs /ägdes av ett spanskt fastighetsbolag förklarar kanske en del av katastrofen, spanjorer saknar genen för ansvar och kundvänlighet, tyvärr och nu när BA slåss ihop med katastrofen Iberia bådär det inget gott för framtiden, ifall man inte hittar en chef

som kallar in Anticimex, möjligen är det enda utvägen! Ryanair är då rena himmelriket med sin utvalda fd Aeroflot personal som gör sitt bästa för att jävlas med kunden.