

American Airlines Flight Attendants Burlesque Video Prompts An Outcry

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American Airlines aircraft viewed from O'Hare International Airport in July 2017. (Getty photo)Getty

This story has been corrected to say that two of the women in the video, rather than four as it originally stated, are American Airlines flight attendants.

A video that apparently shows four women, including two off-duty American Airlines flight attendants, performing a burlesque-like routine has drawn the ire of two American unions.

The airline said it had nothing to do with the video, which was posted by The Forward Cabin, an airline industry-oriented site that offers comments on airline miles and points awards.

The unions and the airline engaged in a Sunday afternoon battle of prepared statements. The video was deleted once it became controversial.

The video shows four women, fully clothed in flight attendant-like uniforms, dancing and making comedic statements about air travel as they surround a man who portrays an airline passenger seated in a premium seat. A large American Airlines

insignia is displayed on the stage. Two of the women are Dallas-based flight attendants

The Association of Professional Flight Attendants, which represents 26,000 American flight attendants, demanded an investigation.

The video showed “individuals portrayed as flight attendants promoting sex appeal as an attraction to AA’s most prominent and lucrative passengers,” APFA said in its statement, which was entitled, “American Airlines Flight Attendant Union Demands Investigation Into Company’s Involvement in Demeaning Sex Object Video.”

“This cannot be happening in today’s environment. We will not tolerate our profession being objectified in a sexist manner,” said APFA National President Lori Bassani. “We want the facts about the company’s involvement and we want answers.”

The Transport Workers Union released a statement saying that American CEO Doug Parker and President Robert Isom have developed a business plan: “Destroy blue collar America and expose air travelers to potential disaster by fixing AA planes on foreign soil, while simultaneously sexualizing and degrading their own flight attendants.”

TWU and the International Association of Machinists jointly represent about 14,700 mechanics and related employees and about 17,000 fleet service workers.

American said that it “saw a customer’s social media post depicting a group of American flight attendants at a customer-organized and hosted event.

“What was portrayed in the skit was not sanctioned by the airline and is not representative of the 27,000 professional flight attendants who take great care of millions of customers each year,” the carrier said. “We spoke to the customer who posted the video and shared our concerns that the actions depicted in the skit he witnessed are demeaning to our professional flight attendants and crew members throughout the industry. We appreciate that he listened to our concerns and that he agreed to remove the video. “

On The Forward Cabin, which has 22,500 followers, site creator Jamie Larounis posted twice Sunday afternoon. He said the Saturday night event “was not an American Airlines sanctioned event and was held on private property.” However, he said, “The people in the skit were on the payroll of AA. They have an out of work group called Salute that performs at shows.”