

UTA Wants CAA's "False" Amended Anti-Agent Poaching Lawsuit Guttled



- ▶ BUSINESS
- ▶ BREAKING NEWS
- ▶ LEGAL
- ▶ CAA
- ▶ UTA



by Dominic Patten
October 12, 2015 12:25pm



More than a month ago, CAA filed its first amended complaint in the agencies' ongoing agent-poaching case with new "aiding and abetting" claims and more accusations of "a lawless, midnight raid" by UTA. Now UTA, which was the beneficiary of five big-fish CAA comedy agents and a number of their clients jumping ship on March 31, has responded – and it is rather blunt.

"Like its original Complaint in this action, CAA's First Amended Complaint ("FAC") is riddled with irrelevant statements, half-truths and downright lies," said the motion to strike response filed by UTA lawyers Bryan Freedman, Brian Turnauer and Sean Hardy of Freedman & Taitelman last week ([read it here](#)).

"In fact, much of the FAC consists of irrelevant, false, improper or immaterial matters subject to being stricken," says the seven-page-plus memorandum of points and authorities motion, which was filed October 9. "It is clear from even a cursory reading of the FAC that CAA only fired off these hyperbolic and improper accusations in an attempt to publicly embarrass UTA." The filing requests a May 4 hearing on the motion to strike. A December 11 hearing out at the Santa Monica courthouse also is scheduled on a demurrer in the case involving the so-called seven-year rule over personal services contracts.

Similar to previous motions on [the initial April 2 complaint](#) from CAA, UTA wants references to "unlawful conduct," "lawless midnight raids" and "desperate attempt to steal clients and employees" cut from the amended complaint. Along with not having to pay out any punitive damages or lawyers' fees, it wants all new claims of aiding and abetting dropped too from what it calls a "straightforward business dispute" between the two big agencies. "After sifting through all of the irrelevant, false, improper or immaterial matters, the allegations contained in the FAC are simple," UTA attorneys said. "CAA alleges that UTA somehow interfered with its business operations by hiring several CAA employees, causing damage to CAA. The only reason that the incendiary allegations were made was so that CAA could provide the FAC to the press, which CAA has done. There is no justification for the continuing presence of these allegations in the FAC."

Add stings of CAA attempting a "smear campaign" through the courts and pleas that the agency is "relying on litigation privilege to protect it from defamation claims by UTA" and you have an open-palmed legal slap upside the head here.

Anthony Oncidi, Keith Goodwin and Jeremy Mittman of Proskauer Rose LLP are representing CAA in the case.

Full disclosure: UTA's lawyers Freeman + Taitelman LLP have represented Deadline's parent company PMC in various legal matters.