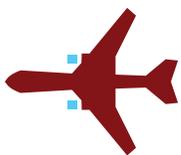


AMFA

The Grapevine

Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association

www.amfanational.org



"Safety in the Air Begins with

Quality Maintenance on the Ground"

2009 Issue 4

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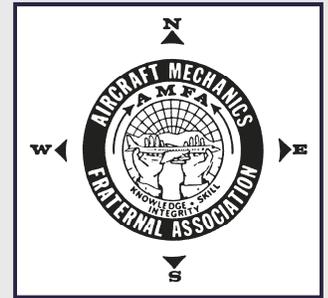
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

| | |
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| Louie Key | National Director |
| Floyd Looney | Assistant National Director |
| Steven Nowak | National Secretary / Treasurer |
| Fred Digne | National Safety and Standards Director |
| Earl Clark | Region I Director |
| Jack Coonrod | Region II Director |

MISSION STATEMENT

Disseminate news in any manner to keep the membership alert and well informed.” - an Association Objective, AMFA Constitution.

AMFA National produces this publication because it is our firm belief that an informed union membership creates a strong union. AMFA inalterably places the control of the Association with the membership. Every member has a responsibility to stay informed and involved.



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The Grapevine's editorial content must be generally consistent with Association policies. The guiding principle governing all submissions is respect for one's fellow member and for the Association. Submitted articles should address issues pertinent to the Association and its members, and must avoid references of a personal nature.

All articles, including guest editorials, should conform with policy positions of the Association as established by the AMFA National Executive Council, AMFA Constitution, and National Policy Manual. The responsibility for monitoring editorial consistency is shared by National Officers.

National Director



2009 Year End Review

By: Louie Key, National Director

As 2009 comes to a close it provides all of us a moment to reflect on what we have done in the previous year. In my role, I want to assess what accomplishments we have achieved as an Association compared to the goals we set for ourselves just over a year ago as the new National Executive Council (NEC) took office. To be sure, the airline industry has not slowed its pace in continual turmoil and flux as the struggle for the survival of the fittest continues. AMFA is fortunate to represent carriers that have demonstrated they are capable of carving out a niche and will be among those left standing.

So, just where were we a year ago? To be candid, as an Association, we were still dealing with the repercussions from the representation election loss at United Airlines the previous spring and were concerned with other representational drives being initiated against AMFA. We were in various phases of contract negotiations with three of our remaining carriers and working our way through bankruptcy and merger issues at Northwest Airlines. It was a time of strife for our Association and concern for what lay ahead. As the other National Officers and I were sworn into our new offices last October, we shared a level of anxiety as to what lay ahead. The one thing that we all focused on was single-minded determination that AMFA was the best craft union for aircraft mechanics and that the democratic philosophies of AMFA could not be extinguished no matter the amount of propaganda from our critics. This core belief kept us focused when we later dealt with the setback at Horizon Air. We knew we had to face these challenges head on and find resolutions that our officers and our members supported.

Over the course of 2009, the Southwest mechanics' contract was settled and it secured continued industry leading pay and put limitations on international outsourcing that had never existed previously. Later in the year we negotiated a two-year contract extension for Alaska Airlines that kept the mechanics there among the top paid in the industry. In May we held a Special Convention that resulted in our members re-establishing population-based dues split triggers into the AMFA Constitution. This provided the foundation for the NEC to successfully restructure the Association's expense basis so that we are solidly in the black and prepared to represent our members to the fullest.

Additionally, consistent with the goal of full representation of our members, AMFA National has retained a new legislative firm, Keys to the Capitol, to further our agenda in Washington D.C. We have been working hard to develop and implement our legislative strategies with our new partners.

As we reflect on where we were a year ago versus where we are today, it is clear we are in a much stronger position and prepared to face any new challenges that will come our way with the same determination that has seen us through the past. This core belief in what we do is what makes this cause called AMFA so worthwhile.



Are You in Compliance?

The article below is being reprinted here with the permission of the FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam). This is just one of the many types of notices that you can have sent directly to your email address. For more information on the FAASTeam, or to sign up for email notices, go to their website at: <http://faasafety.gov> and register

Maintenance Safety Tip

Notice Number: NOTC2019

FAASTeam Maintenance Safety Tip

By Western-Pacific FAASTeam

Tip 2

November 2009

Were you ever given a maintenance task you felt you couldn't do by the book because you didn't have the required tools, supplies, or test equipment? Odds are that you used some kind of unwritten "alternate" method or "work-around" in order to get the task done. We technicians can come up with impressive and innovative ways to get the job done. We often can develop unwritten alternate procedures in order to accomplish that impossible task. But that's not the way we are supposed to work. You must not deviate from a maintenance procedure, unless you first obtain authorization to do so. The authorization should be in writing and come from an approved or authorized source.

Maintenance manual procedures are developed by the manufacturer and accepted or approved by the FAA. These procedures, when properly accomplished, ensure the aircraft will continue to operate within its designed safety margins. If you deviate from these procedures without an accepted or approved alternate procedure, you made the wrong decision. You committed a human error and this compromises safety . . . and you're liable. Your actions affect the public confidence in our profession. Be aware that your mistakes can jeopardize the reputation of each and every maintenance professional.

So, be safety conscious when performing maintenance and only use written instructions that are authored by an approved or authorized source.

The FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) is committed to helping you achieve the highest level of safety by providing "tools" and resources to enhance your knowledge and proficiency. For more information on maintenance safety, go to <http://faasafety.gov/AMT/pub/mh.aspx>.

Send your suggestions for improving maintenance safety to AMT@FAASafety.gov.

Assistant National Director

Howdy

By: Floyd Looney, Assistant National Director

Hello from Dallas, Texas. My name is Floyd Looney, and I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be your new Assistant National Director. With that being said, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the people out there that have no idea who I am.

I have been married to the love of my life for 23 years. I have two very beautiful and intelligent identical twin daughters, and an equally gifted computer guru son.

I have lived in Texas most of my life, with the exception of a stint in the U.S. Air Force where I worked on the KC135 Stratotanker at Seymour Johnson AFB in Goldsboro, N.C., and at Altus AFB, Oklahoma. I was in the Air Force Reserves at Carswell AFB, Texas.



Recently elected Assistant National Director, Floyd Looney being sworn in by National Director, Louie Key

The employment opportunities in my life includes everything from digging ditches, custom harvesting, and building metal buildings to commercial building maintenance, as well as operating a series of restaurants with my family. I've worked at Associated Air Center in Dallas and Dee Howard in San Antonio on the FBO side. I have had the pleasure of working in the line, structures, and shop environments at Southwest Airlines in Dallas for 20+ years.

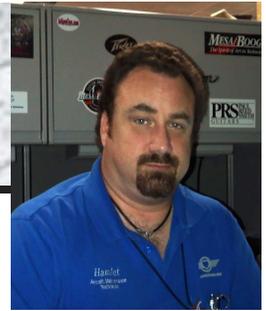
I have been involved in the union as a Shop Steward for 15 years, and I have been a member of the Professional Standards Committee and part of the Local 11 Financial Audit Committee.

If all aircraft mechanic jobs were rosy, there would be no need for unions. Everything in the industry would be great; supervision would work hand in hand with the employees. ***Guess what***, it does not happen that way. In the present day with companies trying to manage contentment in the boardroom, there is a continuous struggle between management trying to get more for less and the employees trying to turn a safe, airworthy product. With the differing views, it is important for there to be someone who will stand up for the employees. ***This is what AMFA does***. We are here for the purpose of being a go-between to make sure the company treats all represented employees the same.

With this in mind, I will strive to make sure all employees will be represented according to their current contracts and in the future evolution of their work environment and contracts to the best of my abilities.



AMFA - SWA Outsource Liaison Representative



Outsourcing at Southwest Airlines A Fine Line Between Profitability and Job Security

By: Craig Hamlet, AMFA/SWA Outsource Liaison

Southwest Airlines (SWA) has, throughout its history, outsourced a majority of its Heavy Maintenance. That outsourcing is one of the factors that allowed SWA to maintain a cost advantage over its competitors for decades. It also helps to make it possible for Southwest Mechanics to enjoy an industry leading compensation package today. Outsourcing though, is clearly a double edged sword, and a balance must be maintained to preserve job security and allow for member groups growth.

During the recently negotiated AMFA/SWA Collective Bargaining Agreement, a letter of agreement was attached which directly impacted SWA's ability for outsource work. Specifically, it provided language to allow SWA to outsource a limited amount of Heavy Maintenance to an international vendor. In return SWA agreed to several things. One of which was to allow AMFA to directly monitor all of its outsourcing. This has been implemented in July 2009, through a full-time elected position embedded within the Planning Department at SWA.

My name is Craig Hamlet, and in the summer I was elected to the office AMFA/SWA Outsource Liaison Representative. I have spent the past seven years employed as a mechanic with SWA in Dallas. For the past two years, I have been active within AMFA as a Shop Representative. I disagreed with language allowing SWA to outsource its maintenance to a foreign vendor, and I voted against ratification of the current contract because of it.

I was motivated to run for this office by a host of pointed views about outsourcing, both in general, as well as, specifically at SWA. It is important here at SWA to keep a vigilant watch on outsourcing, to prevent a creeping erosion of job security, and stagnation of work groups. It is also vital to the health and preservation of our profession as Aircraft Mechanics. Finally, I believe that it is just bad for America. The ranks of skilled labor have been difficult to maintain in America over the past few decades. Our profession has taken hits along with all the rest.

Outsourcing seems to be in vogue these days in all facets of business. We see it every day all around us. Retailers even outsource its labor to you, the customer. Think about it the next time you scan and sack your own groceries at the supermarket.

This office is dedicated to holding SWA to the agreements that it has struck with the AMFA Membership. Through careful and thorough monitoring, we intend to preserve the work that we have, and encourage the growth of our member group. Having said that, we also intend to nourish a healthy partnership with SWA, as a strong and profitable SWA is to all our benefit.

AMFA, through this office, is currently monitoring Heavy Maintenance Checks, Modification and Special Visit Maintenance, Shops Maintenance, Drop In and Out of Service Maintenance, and anything else I can get a lead on. These are being scrutinized down to the task card level. From July to November, this office has reviewed a vast amount of data including:

175 Aircraft Maintenance Vendor Packages

19,876 Task Cards

More than 1,000 Repair Orders and Vendor's Documentation

(Continued on next page)

2010 Dues Objector Notice

Federal law requires that the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) notify all AMFA represented employees annually of its dues objector procedures. These procedures require that you notify AMFA between January 1 and January 31 each year if you intend to be a dues objector for that year. Dues objector requests received either before or after these dates will not be accepted and you will not have dues objector status for that year.

Dues objectors are required to pay only the portion of dues that is germane to collective bargaining, including, but not limited to, grievance adjustment and contract administration. The non-germane percentage of dues is set annually by June 1 and is based on an independent CPA's verification of germane/ non-germane expenses for the prior year. A compilation of 2008 expenses was conducted, and the fees paid by dues objectors in 2009 were 90.40% percent of full membership dues.

If a dues objector disagrees with the calculation of the percentage of the reduction, the policy allows for an appeal before an independent arbitrator. Costs of the arbitrator are paid by the Association. Objectors bear the costs of presenting their appeal.

It is important to know that if you elect to become a dues objector you will no longer be entitled to the rights and privileges of membership, including, but not limited to, the right to hold a National or Local office, vote in National or Local elections, attend union meetings, participate in contract negotiations, or vote on a contract ratification. We suggest you consider these restrictions before deciding whether or not you wish to become a dues objector.

To receive more information on filing for dues objector status, please call the AMFA National Office at (303) 752-2632 or write to: AMFA National Office 14001 E. Iliff Ave, Suite 217, Aurora, CO 80014.



(Outsourcing continued...)

I believe that AMFA has made an impact on SWA's standing practices concerning outsourcing, particularly in the area of Heavy Maintenance. We have been successful at pulling a long list of tasks back in-house that were routinely outsourced in the past. We have also succeeded at curtailing Heavy Check "reach out," a process where work was brought into heavy check early, and denying AMFA members' opportunity to accomplish it in-house.

Becoming familiar with the scope of maintenance that our airline accomplishes has been quite an eye opening experience. Keeping our planes flying and safe is a vast business operation all to itself. We ask that all members keep a watchful eye for outsourcing issues in your group. If you have questions or concerns about outsourcing, either at your station, or in general, please contact the Outsource Liaison Office via email cdhrep@live.com or you can call (214) 792-2295. The more people we have involved in our mission the more successful we will be.



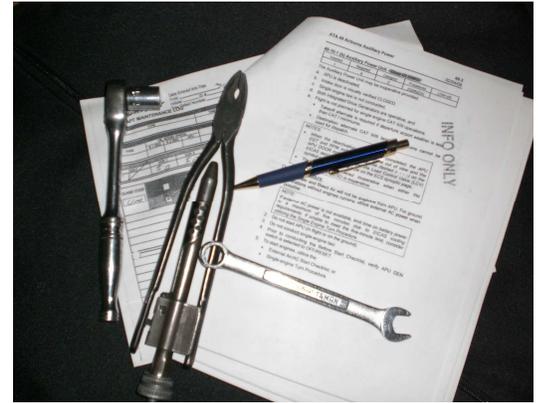
Safety and Standards Director

The Most Valuable Tool

By: Fred Digne, Safety and Standards Director

I must admit that I have never been much of a reader. I just don't enjoy it as much as some. I would rather be outside or building something. As a kid I enjoyed building model airplanes but I would do so without reading the instructions. My wife seems to think it's a guy thing, "guys never ask for directions." So it amazes me that my nine (9) year old son is able to read two Harry Potter books at the same time – He must get it from his mother. But nevertheless, here I am plunged into a position that 99% of the time requires me to read, interpret, and write something.

I once had an A&P instructor who told our class that the most important tool in a mechanic's toolbox is their pen. What he was saying is that mechanics have thousands of dollars worth of tools to accomplish various jobs, but none of those tools were as important as the pen he used to sign off the work. But, maybe what he should have said was that the ability to read, interpret, and comprehend is the primary tool that supersedes the pen. That is to say the requirement to read and understand a manufacturer's maintenance manual or company procedures manual must be done first prior to signing off any steps of a task.



CFR Sec. 65.81 (b) – A certificated mechanic may not exercise the privileges of his certificate and rating unless he understands the current instructions of the manufacturer, and the maintenance manuals, for the specific operation concerned.

It would be difficult to argue a mechanic's case if it was apparent that he chose not to follow written instructions, was unable to comprehend them, or just didn't have them on hand, which the FAA has stated is a **failure to properly perform maintenance**, a violation of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) and could result in a license suspension of 30 to 120 days.

CFR Sec. 43.13 (a) – Each person performing maintenance, alteration, or preventive maintenance on an aircraft, engine, propeller, or appliance shall use the methods, techniques, and practices prescribed in the current manufacturer's maintenance manual or Instructions for Continued Airworthiness prepared by its manufacturer, or other methods, techniques, and practices acceptable to the Administrator, except as noted in §43.16. He shall use the tools, equipment, and test apparatus necessary to assure completion of the work in accordance with accepted industry practices. If special equipment or test apparatus is recommended by the manufacturer involved, he must use that equipment or apparatus or its equivalent acceptable to the Administrator.

(b) Each person maintaining or altering, or performing preventive maintenance, shall do that work in such a manner and use materials of such a quality, that the condition of the aircraft, airframe, aircraft engine, propeller, or appliance worked on will be at least equal to its original or properly altered condition (with regard to aerodynamic function, structural strength, resistance to vibration and deterioration, and other qualities affecting airworthiness).

(Continued on next page)



Legislative Update



Keys to the Capital (KTC) hosted AMFA leadership at the company's K Street offices on October 13th. During the productive meeting there was a thorough review of the legislative one page document used on Capitol Hill. In addition, an overall strategy session was undertaken that laid the groundwork for the lobbying path forward. Starting just the following day, KTC began the process of meeting with pertinent Congressional offices in order to create the groundswell of support needed to eventually accomplish AMFA's legislative agenda. Specifically, KTC completed the following tasks since the October 13th meeting:

- Introduced AMFA leadership in private "one on one" meetings with Congresswoman Johnson and Congressman Smith.
- Worked tirelessly on a letter draft from Congresswoman Johnson to the Transportation Committee Chairman expressing AMFA's legislative needs.
- Worked with Congressman Smith's office to find a date and format for a tour of AMFA's SeaTac operations.
- Finetuned the legislative one page document.
- Tracked multiple pieces of pertinent aviation legislation.
- Held numerous other meetings with Committee staff and other Congressional Members' offices.

(Continued on next page)

(The Most Valuable Tool continued...)

Yet another scenario that seems to be a recurring theme is improper documentation or instructions that have an obvious error. It may be as simple as incorrect fastener identification or maybe a tool that is not available and has no alternate. The engineer and tech writers that sit behind a desk develop the tasks but seldom apply it in a real world situation. At times they may go out onto the floor and try a hands-on approach, but that doesn't mean it will necessarily work on the entire fleet? When a mechanic ignores the errors and chooses to "just make it work," not only is he deviating and violating the FARs but he could quite possibly be setting up the next guy.

(c) Special provisions for holders of air carrier operating certificates and operating certificates issued under the provisions of Part 121 or 135 and Part 129 operators holding operations specifications.

Unless otherwise notified by the administrator, the methods, techniques, and practices contained in the maintenance manual or the maintenance part of the manual of the holder of an air carrier operating certificate or an operating certificate under Part 121 or 135 and Part 129 operators holding operations specifications (that is required by its operating specifications to provide a continuous airworthiness maintenance and inspection program) constitute acceptable means of compliance with this section.

However, every carrier has a program in place that allows the mechanic to identify short comings in work cards and allow the mechanic to suggest a correction or an alternate means by which to accomplish the task. Now more than ever, the FAA is aggressively attempting to change their public image by uncompromisingly pursuing investigations of carriers' aircraft records and in some cases as far back as nine (9) years.

My advice? Read it, understand it, or question it! The mechanic should continue to review the documentation and use the processes available by their respective carriers to address any concerns prior to commencing a job.

(Legislative Update continued...)

KTC continued to meet with various members of Congress and committee staff to discuss outstanding legislation. In addition, KTC legislative tracking system continued to monitor AMFA specific bills.

FAA Funding Extension Bill (HR 4217) - NEW BILL The US House of Representatives voted to extend the excruciating limbo that is the Federal Aviation Administration budget when it extended current funding through to the end of March with HR 4217. The industry has been waiting for a new FAA reauthorization bill since 2007 and the current continuing resolution expires at the end of the month. Fiscal Year 2010 Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act, Part II was approved by voice vote. A similar measure is expected in the Senate shortly.

Earlier this year the two houses proposed their own versions of reauthorization keeping them at two years pending the Obama Administration presenting its own bill. However, all legislation save economic rescue packages and health care have been shoved to the back burner in what is increasingly looking like a one-or-two annual legislative agenda for Congress. The House managed to pass its version introduced in February last May, the Senate, which introduced its reauthorization legislation last summer, did not.

HR 4217 provides USD2 billion in contract authority for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) through the end of March. This USD2 billion will enable airports to move forward with important safety and capacity projects. When annualized, this level of AIP funding equals USD4 billion, which is consistent with both the House and Senate FAA reauthorization bills, and the FY 2010 Concurrent Budget Resolution.

The bill also authorizes appropriations for FAA Operations, Facilities and Equipment (F&E), and Research, Engineering, and Development (RE&D) programs, consistent with average funding levels of the FY 2010 House-approved appropriations bill and the Senate-approved appropriations bill.

HR 4217 also extends the aviation excise taxes through to 31-Mar-2010. These taxes are necessary to support the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which funds a substantial portion of the FAA's budget. With an uncommitted cash balance of just USD251 million at the end of FY 2009, any lapse in the aviation taxes could put the solvency of the Trust Fund at risk.

In addition to extending the aviation taxes, HR 4217 extends the FAA's authority to make expenditures from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through to March 2010.

FAA Reauthorization Act (HR 915/S1451)

Passed the House.

Currently awaiting floor debate in the Senate.

KTC has taken meetings with Senator Hutchison (Texas) and Senator Cantwell (Washington) to discuss our positions. More, in-depth meetings are in the works to garner support. KTC will be leveraging the letter to come from Congresswoman Johnson to gain a stronghold on negotiations when the bills eventually go to conference.

Appropriations for Department of Transportation, HUD & Related Agencies (HR 3288)

Conference Report just issued. KTC analyzing the lengthy document for effect of funding allocations.

Appropriations for Department of Homeland Security (H2892/S1298)

Passed by both the House and Senate. Signed by the President. KTC analyzing the bill for the effect of funding allocations.

(Continued on next page)

Region II Director



No Need to Send Our Aircraft Maintenance Out of this Country to Save Money!

By: Jack Coonrod, Region II Director

Why send maintenance to a foreign country and risk the ire of public opinion when you can just import cheap foreign labor. Or you can subsidize and surreptitiously bless this practice by outsourcing your aircraft maintenance to a vendor in this country who lays off US workers and imports cheap foreign labor to replace them. Either of these methods is deplorable, outrageous, and most often illegal. This is an especially grievous practice, as we are experiencing the most extraordinarily high unemployment levels in this country in more than 30 years.

After spending the last year, researching, securing records, and documentation. Then forwarding all of this to the powers that be. I have come to the conclusion that although the majority of this practice is strictly illegal. The corporations, the FAA, the INS, and our local, state, and federal officials are complicit in this on going criminal activity. Undeniable evidence of this criminal activity has been provided for specific companies and individuals in San Antonio, Texas and Dothan, Alabama. And I suspect I have barely touched the surface.

At Southwest, we have the contractual ability to deny the foreign outsourcing of our work. But, no recourse to the unscrupulous and illegal practice of laying off US workers and in-sourcing cheap foreign labor to perform our outsourced aircraft maintenance in this country. This in-sourcing provides virtually the same result as sending our maintenance outside of the country, minus the negativity of foreign outsourcing. This is a win, win solution for everyone, except the US working man or woman.

Please contact your local, state, and federal officials and let them know you too are outraged at this immoral and illegal activity. Let them know if something isn't done immediately they proceed at their own political peril. Contact aviation schools and associations and let them know their students and members are being shunned for cheap imported foreign labor. For AMFA members, the Association, and the US as a whole, to have an effect on the issues that affect them most, everyone needs to participate and engage him or herself in this process. Without your help and assistance, this is the future of America, our children, and our grandchildren. If you are willing to get involved, the help you can be, and the good you can do, is limitless.

(Note: At the request of the author, no editorial changes have been made to this article.)

(Legislative Update continued...)

Transportation Safety Administration Authorization Act (HR 2200)

Sent to Transportation Committee and awaiting Committee vote. KTC monitoring closely to ensure synergies with AMFA's legislative agenda.

Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009 (HR 3371)

Passed out of the House under suspension of the rules in late October. Currently sitting in the Senate Transportation Committee awaiting vote. KTC monitoring closely to ensure training requirements don't encroach into AMFA's arena.

(For the complete text of this Legislative Update, visit the Legislative page on the AMFA National Web site at www.amfanational.org)

From the Digital Wrench



Please email interesting photos of members on the job to: Admin@amfanatl.org

AMFA National

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