

AMFA

The Grapevine

Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association

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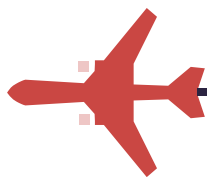


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"Safety in the Air Begins with

Quality Maintenance on the Ground"



2009 Issue 3

FEATURES

Cover	SWA - PHX Maintenance
1	Index & Credits
2	National Director - Contract Enforcement
3	Alaska Airlines Update
4	AMFA Legislative Update
5	Know Your Union - The Grievance Process
6	United We Stand Elections Update

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Louie Key	National Director
Timothy Cullen	Interim 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.



Produced by:
AMFA National Executive Council
14001 East Iliff Avenue, Suite 217
Aurora, CO 80014
Office: 303-752-2632
Fax: 303-362-7736

Email:
Admin@amfanatl.org

Internet:
www.amfanational.org

Editors and Publisher:
Steven Nowak

Copy Editor:
Ryenne E. Pelletier

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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. !

From the National Director



It's Everyone's Responsibility to Enforce the Contract

By: Louie Key, National Director

Tim Cullen's article in this issue of the Grapevine outlines the mechanics of the grievance process, and I have submitted articles in previous Grapevines (July 2006) on how contract interpretation comes into play in enforcing your contract. It is worth taking a moment to explain that it is everyone's responsibility to enforce the contract.

Recently as I have had the opportunity to speak with various Airline Representatives around our Association, a common theme has surfaced. Airline Representatives have expressed concerns about many members requesting them to file a grievance on various issues, and then the member expects the Airline Rep to pick up the ball and run with it while the member goes about his day interacting with the Company as if nothing is wrong. Also, some members may be afraid to be seen as "trouble makers" and will let their contract be infringed upon by managers who push the limits.

One of the problems with this approach is that the Airline Rep may already be very busy with previous grievances, going to hearings, fact-finding meetings and arbitrations. Also, no one is a "trouble maker" for filing a grievance. In the negotiations that led up to your contract, the Union and the Company jointly agreed and committed to a process for peaceful resolution of disputes on contract interpretation and implementation; the grievance process is simply the avenue the parties agreed to for resolving those issues.

Therefore, we all need to be vigilant in ensuring that the integrity of our contract is upheld each day in the workplace as management implements new policies and practices. When the Company has violated the contract, which was negotiated and agreed to, they must be held accountable. When management realizes they will be held accountable to all of the membership for trying to reach for more than what was negotiated, or they attempt to expand upon the work rules outlined in the contract, we all must stand shoulder to shoulder and put a stop to it.

When the Company is overreaching in their enactment of new practices we must be prepared to step up collectively and call them on it. We must let them know they are in violation of the contract and that we are not going to sit idly by while they attempt to take advantage. Individually we must be prepared to take a stand for our contractual rights and then collectively we will all benefit.

This approach will not only strengthen our position in the day-to-day administration of our contract, it will also serve to add bargaining leverage the next time we sit down to negotiate with the Company over changes to our contract.

Once the Company realizes they are going to have to deal with the collective membership and not just the boisterous Airline Representatives that they routinely see in grievance hearings, it will cause them to re-think their position on trying to push the edge on contract interpretation.

The Shop and Airline Reps are most certainly there to assist you throughout the grievance process and we should never hesitate to contact them on contractual matters, but each member should remember that they themselves are the ones who typically have firsthand knowledge of a contractual violation and should not let the Company intimidate them into not standing up for their negotiated contractual rights. We must all let the Company know that you and your union stand ready to defend your contract.

Alaska Airlines Update



From left to right: Back Row: Jason Munson and Airline Representative Timothy Cullen
Middle Row: National Director Louie Key, Local 14 President Jarod Mills, Airline Representative Mark Dahl,
Managing Director of line Maintenance Kurt Kinder, Manager of Labor Services Sonia Alvarado, and VP of Labor
Contract Negotiations Dennis Hamel. Bottom Row: Region I Director Earl Clark, and VP of Maintenance and
Engineering Fred Mohr.

AMFA - Alaska Airlines Extension Approved

This extension process started around the middle of 2008 with our first face to face meeting on November 13th. The Company proposed changes to eight different Articles of the contract. AMFA and Alaska met for five negotiating sessions reaching a Tentative Agreement on June 2, 2009. The AMFA Negotiating Committee believed that with the current economic conditions in the airline industry, it was in our members' best interest to have an opportunity to vote on the Company's contract extension offer and the negotiated Letters of Agreement (LOAs). The voting results now show that the majority of our members believe this extension and the three letters of agreement will give them some of the stability that they were looking for over the next two years.

On August 6th, AMFA and the Alaska Airlines jointly announced ratification of a two-year contract extension covering our 665 AMFA members at Alaska Airlines. The voting started on July 14th with the members voting on four items: the Contract Extension vote passed with about 78% of votes cast to accept and 22% to reject; the Alternative Work Schedule LOA passed with about 79% to accept, 17% to reject and 4% abstained, the Electronic Bidding LOA passed with about 91% to accept, 8% to reject and 1% abstained; the Leave of Absence in Lieu of Furlough LOA passed with about 89% to accept, 8% to reject and 3% abstained.

With the extension behind us, we now need to look forward. With the hopes that the economy is turning around our Alaska members' need to start thinking about their proposals for Section 6 negotiations which could start in October 2010, which is only 13 months away.

AMFA Legislative Update

Why You Need a Lobbyist

By: Fred Digne, National Safety & Standards Director

Every single day government is making decisions that affect your livelihood whether it be taxes or regulations. A damaging bill or rule could drastically impact your job or limit your ability to maintain financial stability.

You may be one of the many that from time to time expresses to their friends, family, and co-workers your discontent with the way things are going in Washington. But, most likely that's where it ends, in an informal conversation amongst friends. As Americans you have a right to be heard, but as long as you keep your conversations just amongst friends, government will never know you exist.

Having a federal presence is an absolute necessity for the American worker. This is why AMFA National has chosen **Keys to the Capitol** to represent our Association's interests and concerns in Washington. **Keys to the Capitol** are a bi-partisan group that will project a strong and ever-present voice to federal stakeholders in Congress and the Administration. Through coalitions and grassroots efforts, **Keys to the Capitol** will strengthen AMFA's voice and achieve our legislative and regulatory goals. They will develop and implement government relations, specific lobbying, and legislative strategies.

Having the right lobbyist at AMFA's disposal will ensure timely responses to government actions impacting our Association.

Greetings AMFA Members

On behalf of Keys to the Capitol, I would like to be the first to welcome AMFA as our newest client. All of us in our K Street offices are truly looking forward to forging a long, positive relationship with AMFA that serves not only to protect your interests, but also to raise your profile on Capitol Hill.

There are so many issues currently facing your industry, we've already been working non-stop on our Washington DC plan of attack. With Congress coming back from recess very shortly, the FAA Reauthorization Act (H.R. 915 and S. 1451) will clearly be the largest focus of our efforts. The bill has already passed the House of Representatives and has been reported out of Senate Committee. A vote is planned for the Senate floor in September, which means our window is a short one to get AMFA's positions represented. Other bills we are working include: the appropriations bills for both the Departments of Transportation and Homeland Security, the Transportation Safety Administration Authorization Act, the SAFE Air Act of 2009 and the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009. As you can see, there is quite a lot out there!

The large size of AMFA's membership, combined with having so many members spread out the country has given our firm the opportunity to start engaging many different Congressional stakeholders. This ability to rally support with Senators from Texas, California, Arizona and many other states will help make AMFA's voice a loud one in the coming months.

Some of the issues we're already working on The Hill include: foreign repair station regulation, the screening of aircraft workers entering and leaving the airport, rest period regulations, foreign and domestic aviation maintenance outsourcing, in-sourcing of foreign repair technicians, foreign ownership of domestic airlines and the Aviation Safety Action Program & Voluntary Disclosure Reporting Program. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that AMFA's members are protected and their needs are met.

We invite you to visit our website at: <http://www.KeysToTheCapitol.com> for more information on our firm and to keep abreast of current happenings in Congress. If you use Twitter, you can follow us: @unlockyourvoice

Keys to the Capitol
Paul M. Kanitra, President

Know Your Union

The Grievance Process

By: Timothy Cullen, Interim Assistant National Director

The grievance process is the most basic right a union member has, but how much do you know about the process? What is a grievance? A grievance is a dispute that arises out of a violation or interpretation of your specific Airlines' Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA or contract). Many of us have never filed a grievance, so what will you do if you have an issue? First, review the situation and ask yourself if it is indeed a grievance, if you're not sure, gather all relevant information and talk to your Shop Representative. Keep in mind that time limits may apply, so you don't want to wait too long. Your Shop Representative will be able to determine if a grievance is appropriate and get the process started. The grievance process is slightly different in each CBA, but each is a similar multi step process ultimately ending in arbitration. Remember, be patient, the process takes time, and your Representatives are likely working on many grievances.

Let's look at the Union Representatives involved:

Shop Representative: The soldier on the floor, he or she reports to the Airline Representative(s), Area Representative, and Contract Committee.

Area Representative: Utilized at some outstations, he or she oversees the grievance process at that station and reports to the Airline Representative(s).

Contract Committeemen: They are tasked with assisting the Shop Representatives with the processing of grievances, and report to the Airline Representative(s).

Airline Representative(s): The chairman of the Contract Committee, he or she is tasked with overseeing the grievance process, interpreting the CBA, and coordinating with AMFA Legal.

Local Grievance Committee: Determines the disposition of any grievance being considered for arbitration. The Committee is comprised of the Local Executive Council (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Safety and Standards Chairman) and the Airline Representative presenting the grievance.

These are the people who will help you get through your issue. But there's one more important fact about all of these Representatives, they are your coworkers, they are Technicians just like you. This is the one fundamental fact that differentiates our organization from others. The grievance process is owned by the local membership.

United We Stand

By: Jack Coonrod, Region II Director

This is counter to the maxim, divide and conquer. As a union we should be aware of the tactics often utilized to defeat us. The primary tactic used is to divided our membership: line versus hangar, days versus evening, bay versus bay, mechanics versus appearance technicians, etc. There are many differences between these examples but let us work out these differences amongst ourselves. We should not divide ourselves into groups to be slaughtered one at a time by outside forces. Instead we should work more closely not only among ourselves but also with other organized groups such as the pilots, flight attendants, and ramp. The more knowledge we have of what is happening to those around us, the better prepared will be when it is our turn in the spotlight.

What can you do as an individual?

Educate yourself on the contract and do your part to enforce it: communicate with union officials and other work groups; do not comment on the performance of others with management; do not allow yourself or others to be singled out.

If we allow others to be slaughtered, who will be next? And as I see it there is no downside to this, it takes only minimal effort, and can have significant rewards.

Aesop's Fables (Sixth century B.C.) – An OLD man on the point of death summoned his sons around him to give them some parting advice. He ordered his servants to bring in a bundle of sticks, and said to his eldest son, "Break it." The son strained and strained, but with all his efforts was unable to break the bundle. The other sons also tried, but none of them was successful. "Untie the bundle," said the father, "and each of you take a stick." When they had done so, he called out to them: "Now, break," and each stick was easily broken. "You see my meaning," said their father.

"A Union gives strength."

Elections Update

By: Steven Nowak, National Secretary/Treasurer

One of the primary means by which the membership communicates with their elected union leaders is through their participation in elections and referenda. However, without your participation we are left with making assumptions as to what issues or concerns affect you the most.

Whether it is the election of officers and representatives, contract ratification, prioritizing contract proposals, or participating in a survey, the voting process gives the membership the opportunity to let your voices be heard. The voting process also allows members to make their choices and decisions free of the distractions or influence of others. The AMFA Constitution and Federal law provide for the sanctity of the secret ballot election process. Which means that what and how you vote is your own business and cannot be made known.

AMFA National is currently conducting the annual member survey. This is something new that has been implemented with the recent ratification of the AMFA Constitution. Please take the time to participate and let the Union know your thoughts and opinions. The Association should be able to gathering invaluable information from the membership.

Also starting soon will be the Assistant National Director Election. The Locals have submitted their nominees to AMFA National. Candidate profiles and pictures are available for review on the Elections and Referenda page on the AMFA National Web site at <http://www.amfanational.org> . Now it is up to you, the members, to elect the person that will fill this position.