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Special Legislative Update: Meeting at the White House

By Bret Oestreich, National Director

Recently, the White House requested a meeting with the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) to discuss foreign outsourcing. On November 20, 2017, AMFA National Director Bret Oestreich, AMFA Legislative Affairs Director Justin Madden, and Commonwealth Strategic Partners met with a representative of the White House Domestic Policy Council in Washington, D.C. to continue our efforts toward safeguarding the flying public and keeping high paying aircraft maintenance jobs in the

United States. We are pleased with the results of the meeting, and look forward to working with those who understand the importance of this issue.

AMFA has a critical mission to “increase the recognition of Aircraft Technicians.” One of the primary ways we achieve this aim is to be active in legislative affairs. AMFA’s leadership has committed resources to ensure that you have an advocate at the highest levels of government, and our commitment has achieved tangible results.



Bret Oestreich, AMFA National Director and Justin Madden, Legislative Affairs Director at the White House

AMFA will continue to proactively pursue being our Members’ voice, as well as the voice of the craft. Please read the monthly legislative reports for further updates on this issue, as well as other legislative issues we are steadfastly working on.

Outsourcing Epidemic Unchecked

By Jay Johnson, National Secretary/
Treasurer



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The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) is a craft specific, independent aviation union committed to elevating the professional

standing of our profession and to achieving progressive improvements in wages, benefits, and working conditions for the skilled craftsmen it represents. As the industry becomes more globalized and the threats of safety and security tend to be questioned, AMFA strives to maintain aircraft maintenance safety and quality standards in the United States.

The industry is experiencing unprecedented outsourcing trends of aircraft maintenance work, especially to foreign facilities that are not always held to the same oversight and safety standards as those in the US. This trend has decimated a high-skilled American aviation workforce and created incentives for US carriers to shop for low maintenance costs. A practice that creates an un-level playing field as federal policy does not uphold the same high safety and security standards at foreign repair stations. In other words, a US traveler has about a one in five chance of flying in a plane that had maintenance work performed overseas. To make



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matters worse, it was a government policy change 30 years ago that opened the floodgates to this outsourcing binge.

In 1988, the FAA inexplicably changed its longstanding rules and allowed US air carriers to outsource work to foreign stations, even when the aircraft in question operates exclusively in the US. Before this rule change, aircraft engaged in international travel could receive needed work abroad, but heavy overall work and scheduled maintenance was to be completed in facilities located in the US that operated under the rigid rules of the FAA. Under the 1988 rule change, some foreign repair stations became certified by the FAA for the sole purpose of exercising their low-cost structure to lure work away from operations in the US. Even though they were certified, foreign facilities were allowed to operate and work on US aircraft without meeting the same safety standards and oversight required at US facilities.

Additionally, many carriers have chosen to outsource certain aircraft maintenance checks to other countries where the certified to uncertified technician ra-

tio is as high as 1:70. Oftentimes, wages at these facilities are significantly low, accountability of safety and quality corrective actions are poorly or never documented, it is standard practice to police their own maintenance programs, and safety inspection oversight intervals are considerably less than the standards upheld in the US. This is one primary reason why safety and quality are in question by labor unions, and there have been many discussions on requiring employers to sign contract agreements limiting outsourcing to a defined percentage of work and locking in this percentage for a specific time period. While Congress has moved at various times to close this safety and security gap, AMFA supports stricter regulations to ensure the outsourcing epidemic does not go unchecked, and is working towards that goal.

As a result, domestic and foreign outsourcing is an area of critical concern to AMFA. We are committed to fighting for policies and regulations to require background checks and alcohol testing for foreign vendors and to raise awareness and international acceptance of these standards.

Increasing the Craft's Recognition

By Justin Madden, Legislative Affairs Director

To many of us Washington, D.C., is a place far, far away with little effect on our daily lives. Life there seemingly exists in a vacuum as vast legislation and dull regulations churn out. Some have questioned why the Association should put any focus on legislative affairs. What power do we have towards change?

First of all, legislation and regulations can and do affect our daily lives. For example, there is legislation presently moving through Congress related to airport worker security that will certainly impact you every day. But it is more than just the present we should be concerned with moving forward, as our future matters too. There are conversations occurring right now at the highest levels of government related to certification, qualifications, licensing, moreover, the important topic of how to address the upcoming shortage of Aircraft Maintenance Technicians (AMTs).

Until recently, the AMT's voice at the highest levels of government has been basically non-existent. To put it plainly, corporate America and their special interests have been speaking for you, in many cases, with the tacit understanding that a lawyer or someone with an advanced business degree encapsulates all of the required knowledge of our craft. While the respective pilot and flight attendant labor voice is almost always seated at the stakeholder table, the labor voice

of the AMT is curiously absent in most cases. AMFA vehemently disagrees with our craft's exclusion and is working hard to change this.

We believe that it is beyond time for the essential voice of the AMT to be heard. Although their input is important, corporations and special interest groups cannot and do not speak for us. Furthermore, we believe that AMFA presents the clearest possible voice for the craft, as we represent only the class and craft of technicians. AMFA can offer a "boots-on-the-ground" perspective essential to the safety and security of the flying public — one unadulterated by the profit motive.

AMFA has an obligation under its constitution to "encourage a higher standard of skill, raise the standards, and increase the recognition of aircraft technicians." One of the primary ways that leadership achieves this very important constitutional aim is to be active and vigilant in legislative affairs. Since its existence, AMFA has attempted this in different manners with various levels of success. Today, your leadership team has taken this aim seriously and is fully committed to fighting the battle our craft faces by forming a legislative affairs team capable and proven successful, most recently in gaining legislation creating a level playing field for American AMTs.

In addition to our efforts towards ending the international outsourcing of maintenance, AMFA is carefully monitoring legislation and regulations that affect our

craft, and offering input where necessary. We have established partnerships where none existed before. We are working feverishly hard to ensure

that the AMT does not just have a voice, but also a seat at the decision-making table. Please continue to be professionals, and thank you for supporting AMFA as we position our craft to receive the respect it rightfully deserves.



Justin Madden,
Legislative Affairs
Director

AMFA 2018 Scholarship

The AMFA National Executive Council (NEC) is pleased to announce that we are currently accepting applications for two AMFA Scholarships for 2018. Scholarships will be \$2500, payable to each student's institution of higher learning.

Last year's scholarships were awarded to students of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology.

Those who apply must be currently enrolled in a school or university to gain their Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) license, be a US Citizen, and submit a 500-word essay about the difference between a craft specific union and an industrial union. Applications and further information can be found on the Education page of the AMFA National website.

SCAR: Safe-Compliant-and-Repeat

By Scott King,, National Safety and Standards Director



Scott King, National Safety and Standards Director

As licensed professionals we must take ownership of the fact that we bear the burden for ensuring the safety of the crew and passengers on the

aircraft on which we perform maintenance.

This starts with **Safety**, specifically, our own personal **safety**. There are several things that must be considered and prepared to safely perform your job task(s) each day. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as safety glasses, respirators, protective gloves, coveralls, etc., needs to be taken into consideration and obtained, if necessary. Your work

environment should also be evaluated to consider factors like outdoor temperature, condition of stands or ladders, footing conditions (icy or wet ground), etc. The need for ground equipment should be assessed as well as whether or not there is a qualification requirement for equipment to be operated while performing the task (e.g. – operating a crane, forklift, tug or man lifts). If ground equipment is required, we must also ensure that such equipment is in good operating condition prior to their use.

The next component of taking ownership for our profession is **Compliance**. There are several challenges for the modern day Aircraft Maintenance Technician (AMT) when it comes to being **compliant**. With the abundance of manuals and information used to maintain these complex aircraft, AMTs face several risks

while staying **compliant**. As a licensed professional, we must clearly understand what the job instructions are and be able to fully **comply** with them. If there is ANY ambiguity, we must stop the work and get clarification that satisfies the question or issue. Another aspect of the **Compliance** component is the use of calibrated tools/equipment. We are the entities responsible for ensuring that any calibrated tool that is used is current, and we must remember to verify the calibration due dates. Tool room tracking systems are fairly reliable, but with human factors taken into consideration, there is always a risk of failure.

Lastly, with all of the responsibility that an A&P licensed AMT must bear, it's important to remember to be **Safe, Compliant, And to Repeat (SCAR)**.

AMFA: There's an App for That

The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) has a mobile device app for its members. Available for both Android and Apple tablets and phones, the app is a quick link to the latest news and information from your Union. With built in GrievTrac access, the app also gives our contract representatives private access to file grievances on behalf of our members.

In addition to being a great tool to get Association news, the AMFA app is a quick and easy way for members to access their **AMFA Number**. The AMFA app is only available for download from the AMFA National Website; it is not found on iTunes.

Download your copy today at:
<http://apps.unionactive.com/clients/amfa/amfa.html>

If you encounter problems registering with the site or downloading the app, contact the AMFA National Office for assistance.



Moving Forward in the New Year — Alaska and Virgin Discussions

By Earl Clark, Region I Director

In 2017, the AMFA Alaska Airlines (ASA) and Virgin America committees commenced discussions to work on a single integrated seniority list of the Aircraft Maintenance Technician (AMT) group. The two sessions held resulted in a tentative agreement (TA), which is pending membership approval.



Earl Clark,
Region I Director

also negotiate how to convert the Virgin AMTs benefits into our current ASA collective bargaining agreement. When AMFA and ASA achieve a Transition Agreement TA, this too will be sent out for membership approval. If the integrated seniority list and Transition Agreement are approved by both the AMFA-ASA and Virgin America members, AMFA will then file for Single Carrier Status with the National Mediation Board (NMB).

Further details regarding these discussions can be found on the Alaska Airlines page of the AMFA National Website. We look forward to welcoming the Virgin AMTs to AMFA in 2018.

In the TA, AMFA agreed to a process to dovetail seniority for the classifications of Aircraft Technician and Lead Aircraft Technician. The Virgin Technicians will be integrated into the ASA Technician seniority list based on their date of entering the classification of Aircraft Technician at Virgin America. For most Virgin Technicians, this date will be the date of hire. The Lead Aircraft Technician will be integrated into the ASA Lead Aircraft Technician seniority list based on the date they started being paid as and performing the duties of a Lead at Virgin America.

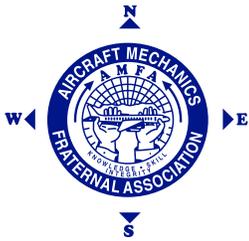
A slightly more complicated process was agreed to for the integration of the Aircraft Technician Trainer (OJTI) group. AMFA agreed to place ten of Virgin's twenty two documented OJTIs on the ASA Trainer seniority list. Six of Virgin's twenty two with the highest number of qualification designations will get

seniority based on the date of completion of the Virgin America OJTI course; the next four will be placed at the bottom of the seniority list.

The next step in the merger process is to have discussions with Alaska Airlines on a Transition Agreement. Discussions are currently scheduled for January 2-3rd in Dallas, and January 24-25 in Seattle. These talks will include discussions for better job protection for our current ASA AMTs, as well as protections for the Virgin AMTs. We will



By Konstantin Von Wedelstaedt - Gallery page <http://www.airliners.net/photo/Virgin-America/Airbus-A319-112/1387818/LPhoto> <http://cdn-www.airliners.net/aviation-photos/photos/8/1/8/1387818.jpg>, GFDL 1.2, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=26825471>



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Dues Objector Notification

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 February 1 and March 15, 2018, if you intend to be a dues objector for that year. Dues objector notices 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 2016 expenses was conducted and the fees paid by dues objectors in 2017 were 93.10% of full membership dues.

If a dues objector disagrees with the calculation of the percentage of the reduction, our 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 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, 7853 E. Arapahoe Court, Suite 1100, Centennial, CO, 80112.