



TAMC Nuts & Bolts

Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

Message from Captain David Bourne, Teamsters Airline Division Director Welcome



to the first issue of your Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition newsletter. I commend the TAMC members for the work you do on a daily basis to make a positive difference for all mechanics in the aviation industry. And I am confident that this newsletter will serve as a valuable tool for all Teamster mechanics to not only become better informed, but to have a strong voice to stand up for the aviation maintenance profession.

There are more than 18,500 Teamster mechanics who, as part of the 1.4 million Teamster members, are a powerful force when it comes to negotiating with employers and working with political leaders on Capitol Hill. We are a large, diverse union with huge resources. However, we also have established a strong focus on mechanics' issues and concerns. The Teamsters have been a leading force fighting to protect aviation maintenance jobs and we have the best contracts in the industry.

But much more needs to be done. There are major threats to aviation mechanic job security, pay and benefit standards. The MROs continue to grow and 71 percent of aircraft heavy maintenance is now outsourced. Carriers are pushing hard to squeeze every cent they can from the pay and benefits of hardworking aircraft maintenance technicians, including resorting to bankruptcy proceedings if necessary to continue their plunder.

Strength in Numbers

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is a union consisting of many trades, including aviation maintenance. We have more than 40,000 members in the Teamsters Airline Division alone and aviation mechanics are the largest craft or class within the Division. Through the TAMC, Teamster mechanics at all these carriers are able to combine their industry knowledge, keep on the pulse of the latest trends in the aviation maintenance world and stand as a formidable force when it comes to making sure Teamster aviation mechanics are at the top of the industry in terms of wages, benefits, scope language and contract enforcement.

As a Division, we are continually striving to keep the aviation mechanic profession in the middle class and protect mechanic work. We

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to the first edition of the Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition (TAMC) newsletter.

In the fall of 2007, the Teamsters Airline Division formed the TAMC. Our mission is quite simply this: Secure our future by bringing together all Teamster-represented aviation mechanics and related under one umbrella, enabling us to speak with one voice on aviation issues. To accomplish this, we have set up a steering committee which includes a mechanic from each of our represented and organizing work groups. The steering committee will work with the Airline Division and the International Union to advance our agenda.

TAMC is focused on a variety of issues, including: organizing aviation mechanics, turning the tide on outsourced work, pension reform, regulatory issues, safety and patterned bargaining.

We, as mechanics in this industry, have issues that are common to all carriers. We will use our collective voice and the power of the Teamsters and the Airline Division to move our agenda to the highest levels of government and the court of public opinion. We will join with other like-minded unions and coalitions as we did last year at the outsourcing summit with the Transport Workers Union, which represents 12,000 mechanics at American Airlines. Last year the Business Travel Coalition, the largest purchaser of corporate travel, stood with us as we, for the first time, publicly exposed the MRO industry for what it truly is and the FAA's inability to police it.

Already in 2009 we have begun the work of passing the Moratorium on Foreign Outsourcing, the Express Carrier Employee Protection Act, and are actively working with the mechanics at Atlantic Southeast Airlines, Alaska Airlines, Horizon Airlines and FedEx in their effort to become Teamsters!

We have much work ahead of us as we fight to restore our class and craft to what it once was: a respected profession with solid wages, benefits, retirement and job security. This is a fight we will not back down from and one that TOGETHER we will win

In Solidarity,

Chris Moore
TAMC Chairman

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recently hosted a Blue Ribbon Commission on the plight of FedEx aviation mechanics at LAX. Commissioners included U.S. Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA); Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl; and Bishop Mary Ann Swenson of the United Methodist Church, Los Angeles area. The FedEx mechanics are not unionized, but we are working with them to fight company changes that worsen their benefits and to make sure their jobs stay in the middle class.

Fighting Outsourcing

In conjunction with the Business Travel Coalition, we hosted the first ever Aviation Maintenance Outsourcing Summit of key industry professionals, senators, congressmen, and aviation mechanics last year in Washington, D.C. The summit was the first to challenge the outsourcing industry's unsafe practices. We are planning to host a second outsourcing summit to keep on top of the fight against aviation outsourcing. During our outsourcing fight we have also taken our message to air travel consumers. We have leafleted travelers at airports informing them of unsafe outsourcing practices and were featured in an important CNN Lou Dobbs story on unsafe outsourcing to foreign MROs. One example of the effectiveness of our fight against outsourcing is a recent battle we fought with Frontier Airlines, after the company filed for bankruptcy and wanted to outsource mechanic work and which is covered in this newsletter.

Political Involvement

We are involved politically to make sure aviation mechanics' concerns are addressed on Capitol Hill on a regular basis. We've had more than 180 meetings on Capitol Hill in the last two months, bringing the issues that matter to our mechanic members to the attention of our senators and congressmen. We are lobbying for outsourcing reform, bankruptcy reform and seeking a moratorium on outsourcing. We are making sure that when it comes time, these political leaders are held accountable to the Teamsters that helped put them in office—that they will fight and vote in favor of the interests of Teamster aviation mechanics.

Teamsters: The Best Choice for Aviation Mechanics

The Teamsters have, without a doubt, the best contracts in the industry, with the best wages and benefits, but most importantly, the strongest scope language to protect these jobs. All of this has been negotiated into contracts by seasoned negotiators, and the contracts are fully enforced once signed off on. Our attorneys are the most accomplished union-side aviation industry lawyers in the U.S. and are experts on protecting jobs from outsourcing. Without a doubt, no union has conceived of, drafted and negotiated better language than the Teamsters. We in the Airline Division and the TAMC look forward to continuing to work on behalf of the Teamster membership and to press for the highest of standards for aviation mechanics throughout the industry.

Teamsters Fight the Good

Retaining Jobs is a Teamster Priority

When Frontier Airlines filed Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in April 2008, the company came to the Teamsters and asked for concessions. Because the workers wanted the airline—and their jobs—to survive, they agreed to short-term pay cuts and preserved pension and health benefits. However, the Teamsters took a strong position opposing the outsourcing the company wanted to do.

Frontier Airlines wanted to outsource nearly 129 heavy maintenance jobs to Central America. It tried to use the bankruptcy code—a very anti-worker, anti-union set of provisions—to force outsourcing on Teamster mechanics. But the Teamsters fought back and thus far, have prevailed in a very tough situation. Frontier union representatives met with Colorado political leaders who took a firm stand against outsourcing good, American jobs. The Teamsters did hard bargaining for two months, proposing innovative ideas to keep jobs in-house with no outsourcing. The IBT also fought hard in bankruptcy court—a forum notorious for being anti-worker—and forced Frontier to change its proposals. The IBT got the judge to rule that outsourcing would be permitted only as a “last resort.” Later, the bankruptcy judge stated that, because of changes the Teamsters forced through the court and bargaining, there was no likelihood of outsourcing at Frontier.

Jobs so far have been saved, but the battle isn't over yet. The Teamsters are taking the issue all the way to Federal District Court, where they hope to permanently secure Frontier heavy maintenance work.

With the Teamsters, Frontier mechanics have been able to fight the good fight. We have made fighting outsourcing a top priority through strong scope language, legal battles and legislative reform. The Teamsters have the power, the resources, the strength and the respect to take on important issues and WIN!

Dan Pimental

Dan Pimental,
Frontier Airlines





Mechanics at United Have Come a Long Way

By Dave Saucedo, UAL, AMT Seattle

It is hard to realize where we are now without first taking a look back at where we started from. This is our third and hopefully final chapter in gaining representation from an organization with the capacity to effectively represent us mechanics for the professional group that we are.

There are very few of us in maintenance who did not form some type of relationship with that first union that molded our collective bargaining agreement. The one opinion we all share: change was needed. For some, the name change and slight policy change from IAM District 141 to District 141-M, was just too little, too late.

We all wanted real change, from top to bottom, and not just the window dressing that was provided. AMFA promised that and built a new road from new grass roots members who took stock in what it was to be a union member—some for the first time. The AMFA push was responsible for involving a considerable number of new faces to the idea of organized labor, and many of those new activists have stayed on to make up some of the talented energetic leaders we have today.

Sadly, through no fault of the many who tried to make this single craft concept work, the fraternal organization proved it could not keep up with both the promises made, and demands of us mechanics, who still deserved more. We asked for more and what we finally understood was that this second union only offered more of the same: The same contract, the same delays resolving issues, the same insecurities about our future, the same lack of respect.

What we needed was a complete overhaul to the manner in which we conducted business with management, and we needed the influence and reputation of a group that would help us obtain the respect we long ago earned. We wanted real and permanent change. We called on, and in April 2008, were ratified as members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Sometimes we need an outsider's view to point out our strengths and warn us of our weaknesses. The Teamsters have stepped into that role with patience and resolve but made us realize before we can make a run, we first need to learn to crawl.

We spent much of the first part of our first year doing exactly that. We formed our leadership and organized offices and groups. We played on those strengths pointed out through Teamsters guidance and formed committees. We formed new ground and flight safety committees and we re-establish the Outside Vendor Farm-Out Committee. We have formed new communication channels including web and blog sites to help better the exchange between the members and union leadership. We worked hard through San Francisco and Chicago to restore our MSAP program. We have worked at individual stations to save jobs and keep the work force we have, making big wins along the way. We worked with our business agents to finally bring resolution to

many outstanding and over dated grievances, despite the shortfalls of our contract. Some of the work has been slow and some issues still need that yet to be negotiated push of contractual language, but steadily progress is being made.

Not everything was a slow crawl in the beginning, especially when the Teamsters were "let loose" on our behalf to show us what they can do. A first sample of what is more to come came in the showing of tact, grace and ultimate leadership at the UAL annual stockholder meeting, held just a few short months after the Teamsters became our bargaining agent.

A team of Teamster representatives showed up to the meeting very prepared, professional and ready to dominate the meeting. And they did. United CEO Glen Tilton himself later expressed respect and even a bit of trepidation for this new union he would be forced to deal with. The pilots groups, too, were astounded by the Teamster performance and have since taken steps to restore close relations with mechanics.

In fact, eight months before becoming Teamsters, August 2007, Tilton proposed the sale of UAL's maintenance division, including its heavy maintenance base in San Francisco, which employs more than 4,000 mechanics. Shortly thereafter, UAL also announced plans to sell off its profitable Mileage Plus frequent flier program.

It was the Teamsters who publicly and loudly came to our aid, causing dozens of news publications to run tag lines such as a quote from James P. Hoffa who loudly proclaimed, "It's time to run UAL like company, not a tag sale!" The Teamsters led organized campaigns at various airports in November by United Airline mechanics and supporters who leafleted airports nationwide. They asked passengers to sign a petition urging United Airlines to pull back from its plans to sell off its Mileage Plus program and its San Francisco aircraft maintenance operation, and caused public outcry and unwanted attention. Eventually, both planned sales were scrubbed.

But still the Teamsters pushed on, calling for lawmakers in Washington, D.C. to look into the Mileage Plus deal, courageously explaining and bringing to light that UAL employees, the PBGC and the American taxpayers have a right to know if the largest corporate pension default in U.S. history was orchestrated using misleading information or could have been avoided entirely—questions UAL would rather not have answered.

The Teamsters union stood up for us again in February of 2008, still two months before being ratified as our bargaining agent, when they announced it would oppose a merger between United Airlines and Continental Airlines unless such a deal benefits workers at both airlines.

UAL began to take a second look at with renewed esteem at just who these new Teamsters mechanics were and how we conducted ourselves. This was never more evident than in August 2008 when an invitation was accepted by senior members of

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United management to the Teamster flag raising ceremony at the San Francisco Maintenance base. This occasion marked the first time in time in many years that a union flag was flown on United Airlines property. The event was attended by well over 300 United mechanics and several leaders from the Teamsters including Teamsters Vice President of the Western Region Chuck Mack and Director of the Airline Division, David Bourne.

This bold stance by the Teamsters has had a profound impact on the way UAL is now doing business with its mechanics. Glen Tilton patiently waited for a meeting with David Bourne to discuss the future and positive new relationship between the mechanics and UAL top management. It was this meeting that led to talks between UAL and a small contingent of Teamster representatives including chief stewards Larry Calhoun and Jock Creach, which helped in decreasing the numbers of mechanics who were to be furloughed after United announced the grounding of its entire fleet of 737s. These talks also eventually led to the halting of plans to completely close the line maintenance operations at LGA airport at the New York point, effectively saving mechanics jobs.

Most recently, these same types of high level talks and willingness by United to cooperate rather than dictate have helped to mitigate the number of mechanics now affected by the plans to reduce costs to the ground support and equipment functions across the system. Because of direct involvement of the Teamsters and representative members from affected stations, even with the absence of contractual language, we were able to mitigate closures of stations and loss of some jobs. We did take some cuts, but were able to do so without surrendering any of our existing contract language.

It is the strength of the Teamster contracts that defines them from any other union. In the attempt to get us on our feet, the

Teamsters called on the experience and talent of Teamster Airline Rep and negotiator Clacy Griswald to bring about the needed change. Clacy organized members from all areas of maintenance into a steering committee in order to best represent the issues from the floor. It is from this committee, that thirteen members were picked to represent the mechanic workforce in the Section Six bargaining negotiations with United Airlines.

Chief among issues beyond financial is the need to update and have greater control over our scope clause and grievance procedures, both of which will add security to our ranks. But rather than just change a few words or meanings, through the advice of our Teamster leaders, the steering committee chose instead to re-write and shore up several trouble spots to our contract. This took some time to come to a consensus; however, we are confident that the changes made will be the benefit and strength we need for future battles to secure our future.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "When you cease to change, you cease to exist." But change needs to be done carefully and methodically, never rushed or poorly planned, and when possible, helped along through experience and might of a power that can truly help.

We have celebrated our first year as Teamsters, and are now learning to walk. The process at times is indeed slow and there are issues or growing pains that are yet to be resolved, but true progress is that which is done with patience. We rushed in to what we thought was change twice before, only to find ourselves running in those same lost circles. We have accomplished, and grown a lot in a year.

This time we will march unified with other Teamster aviation maintenance professionals who share our common beliefs and goals for a more secure and lucrative future.

Another Message from TAMC Chair Chris Moore

There is a lot to report to you and I wanted to make you aware of my new assignment. Teamster carriers represent 18,500 mechanics. The TAMC has been active on a variety of aviation mechanic issues, most importantly on the fight to stop outsourcing practices.

A few months ago I was asked by the Teamsters Airline Division to begin a review of our Teamster activities at UAL. The division leadership felt that after a year of representation at UAL this was a responsible course of action. I am writing you today to let you know that I have already scheduled travel to your three largest stations Chicago, Denver and San Francisco and will soon be scheduling trips to other locations. My assignment is to meet with as many of our members as possible to assess what we are doing right, what we are doing wrong and what we need to do to move forward. Our goals are to build the strongest possible union at UAL and win the strongest possible contract.

I will also be discussing other TAMC priorities such as our foreign outsourcing battle. This issue is one of the Teamsters highest priorities on Capitol Hill. We will relentlessly fight to gain ground on this issue and get legislation passed that will protect our craft and industry from these outsourcing practices.

I hope that you will take the time to talk with me in a full and frank manner while I am at your base. You can also reach me by phone or e-mail at 202-409-6038 and cjm91@sbcglobal.net.

The first bargaining session for your first Teamster contract took place on April 28. We have very important goals in these negotiations including:

- Improving to your retirement security (by negotiating a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan);

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- Tightening and improving the weak scope (job protection) language; and
- Developing a more efficient grievance procedure that prevents the company from delaying grievances.

Given the importance of your bargaining, I hope to get your thoughts on the system-wide contract campaign we are putting together. Please consider voicing your opinions on 1) the best way to get rank-and-file participation in the campaign, 2) the sort of contract campaign communication vehicles should we set up and 3) activities that will best get management's attention in a constructive manner.

We, the Teamsters Airline Division and the TAMC, are committed to being the union of choice for all aviation mechanics

and related. United is only the first stop as we move forward with our plan to assess our strengths and weakness at all of the airlines we represent in order to better serve our members.

Sincerely,



Chris Moore
Chair, TAMC

Negotiating Update: Negotiating Strong Contracts to Secure Strong Futures

The Teamsters Union is working hard each and every day to give our members the support and respect they deserve. Much of that support and respect comes in the form of negotiating and securing strong contracts that raise wages, better working conditions, secure decent benefits and provide job stability for our members and their families. Contract negotiations in the airline industry are currently on-going at the following companies:

Continental Airlines

A negotiating committee comprised of business agents and rank-and-file members from New Jersey, Florida, Ohio, Texas, California, Hawaii and Massachusetts began negotiations with Continental Airlines in December. Since the first meeting, the Continental Negotiation Committee has had seven sessions with the company and is focusing on securing better wages and benefits for Continental mechanics. The committee is also looking to tighten scope language and will soon be discussing pension matters.



Piedmont Airlines

Negotiations are to commence this week in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The membership voted down by a two-to-one margin the company's best, last and final offer. Teamsters Airline Division Director David Bourne and airline attorney Ed Gleason will be

assisting in negotiations. Business agents are also meeting with mechanics from Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York for more information.

United Airlines

A steering committee comprised of representatives from around the country, including Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, California, Illinois, Virginia and New York, met in January and February and

to prepare Section 6 notifications. The Section 6 notifications were sent out March 10 and bargaining will commence on April 28 in Chicago. United mechanics are looking to rewrite contract language, secure decent wages and benefits that match industry standards, tighten scope language and acquire a respectable and dignified pension plan.

ExpressJet

A Section 6 notice to reopen the contract for collective bargaining was recently sent out. ExpressJet locals are sending proposals out to their membership and are preparing for upcoming collective bargaining.

UPS

The division is meeting with the federal mediator on May 21 to push the negotiations forward and we are hopeful that this meeting will produce a positive outcome.

Hope is on the Horizon

By Rich Chase, Horizon Mechanic

Mechanics and related at Horizon Air, based in Portland, Oregon, were looking for a real union with real power. On April 20, 2009, our search was over when the National Mediation Board announced that 57 percent of those who voted voted for Teamster representation. We successfully chose the Teamsters over AMFA.

Horizon Air Mechanics and Related Choose Teamsters

More than 89 percent of 484 eligible workers cast votes, proving that workers at Horizon were looking for and are ready for a positive change.

Our organizing committee members worked hard to make the change happen. We were, of course, backed by the Teamsters. During our six-month-long organizing campaign, the Teamsters proved that they have the credibility, strength and resources to properly represent mechanics and related at Horizon.

Many of us were not satisfied with AMFA. We had issues with poor representation, weak contract language and pay. The straw that broke the camel's back, however, was the fact that AMFA ignored our concerns about outsourcing. The association often looked the other way when stations were outsourced at our sister company, Alaska Airlines. If outsourcing ever comes to Horizon, we want a union that will fight for us, our jobs and our families.

Throughout our campaign, the Teamsters worked hard to fight outsourcing and even invited Ryan Hurley, a member of our organizing committee, to the sixth annual Teamsters Organizing Conference in Washington, D.C. During the conference, Hurley got a taste of what it's like to be a Teamster and was given the opportunity to speak with Congressional leaders about the dangers of outsourcing. Along with members of the TAMC, Hurley lobbied Congress to pass an outsourcing moratorium.

Now that we are represented by the Teamsters, we look forward to a strong contract with strong scope language, adequate representation and a reputation that is second-to-none. We also look forward to being members of and working with the TAMC in their efforts to fight outsourcing. As we learned during our organizing campaign, our solidarity is our strength. We are the union. We are the Teamsters!

TAMC Tells Washington 'We Are Serious'

Aviation Mechanics Lobby Congress

The Teamsters have made fighting outsourcing a top priority and they mean business.

Over the past year, the Teamster Aviation Mechanic Coalition (TAMC), in conjunction with the Teamsters Airline Division and the union as a whole, has fought hard to protect American jobs. From their 2007 outsourcing summit to their participation at the 7th annual Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing Conference of the Americas and their groundbreaking report on outsourcing titled, "Who is Really Fixing Our Airplanes? An Expose of the 11,000 Missing United Airlines Mechanics," the TAMC has been hard at work to protect our mechanic craft and class from both foreign and domestic outsourcing. They are committed to protecting the flying public from the hazards of outsourced aircraft maintenance.

Outsourcing Moratorium

It is the goal of the TAMC and the Teamsters Airline Division to see anti-outsourcing legislation passed by Congress that would enact a moratorium on outsourcing. To get this done, the TAMC and David Bourne, Director of the Teamsters Airline Division, have made their presence of Capitol Hill known, holding over 180 meetings with key political leaders.

Most recently, in an effort to prove how much of a problem outsourcing has become, members of the TAMC—led by TAMC Chair Chris Moore—went to Capitol Hill last month where they visited with Congressional teams about outsourcing maintenance to third-party and overseas vendors. TAMC members who took part in the day's events included Dave Saucedo (UAL), Ralph Salzano (CAL), Ed Smith (Piedmont), Bob Combine (UPS Aviation), Gary Young (UAL), Bob Friend (UPS), John Atkinson (Air-Tran), Cedric Washington (ExpressJet), Joe Gonzalez (Continental), John Vasquez (ExpressJet), Scott Williams (ABX), Kevin Zunker (UAL), Bret Alexander (FedEx Express) and Rafael Garcia (FedEx Express).

TAMC members, told Congressional and Legislative staff their own personal stories about how outsourcing has affected them. From finding broken parts on airplanes to seeing jobs slip away, TAMC mechanics drove home the point that any way you look at it, outsourcing is a raw deal.

"The TAMC is serious about passing this important legislation and we want politicians in Washington to know just how serious we really are," Moore said. "The Teamsters Union and the TAMC are committed to fighting outsourcing and we're not going to back down until the job is done. By having aviation mechanics tell their stories, we were able to put a face on this enormous problem."

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Political Support

During their time on Capitol Hill, Moore and other aviation mechanics encouraged representatives to join the Teamsters and the TAMC in their fight against outsourcing.

As Moore explained, the issue of outsourcing goes beyond protecting American jobs. It also encompasses safety and national security issues.

"We as airline mechanics see the industry from the inside out and we want everyone to know what's going on," Moore said. "We want everyone to be held to the same standard and we want anyone who is flying to be 100 percent safe."

In all, members of the TAMC met with staff from the offices of 24 representatives, including members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Education and Labor Committee and Aviation Subcommittee. Those who the TAMC had meetings with include staffers for Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA), Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO-), Rep. Tim Holden (D-PA), Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Sen. David Vitter (R-LA), Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN), Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO), Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA), Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY), Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ), Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO), Rep. Timothy Johnson (R-IL), Rep. John Hall (D-NY), Rep. Dave Loebsack (D-IA), Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), Rep. Laura Richardson (D-CA) and Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH).

Teamster Outsourcing Defect Report

The TAMC's meetings with Congressional staff comes on the heels of the Teamster Outsourcing Defect Report, a nation-wide system put in place by the TAMC to record and catalogue mistakes made by outsourced maintenance. When completed, the reports are reviewed by qualified members and stored in a databank. Information gathered from the defect reports will be collected and taken to the nation's lawmakers as further proof that outsourcing is a major problem which needs to be dealt with immediately.

The Teamsters Union encourages all airline members, including pilots and especially mechanics, to use the report whenever a defect is discovered involving any MRO facility. It is important to fill out the report as soon as possible. It is also important to note that any pilot or mechanic anywhere can fill out a report; reports are not exclusive to Teamsters members only. The source of all reports are kept confidential.

The Teamster Outsourcing Defect report can be found at www.teamster.org, by clicking on "Industries" on the tabs at the top of the home page, and then selecting "Airline" from the selections. The report is on the Airline Division home page outlined with a blue box. There is no limit to how many reports or how often a report can be made.

Take Action

The Teamsters Union and the TAMC also encourage members to take action on their own by writing to their Congressional Representatives and telling them of the dangers of outsourcing. To contact your House representative, visit www.house.gov. To contact your Senator, visit www.senate.gov. Each website has a step-by-step process that allows patrons to easily find their representatives by name or by state.

Moratorium on Foreign Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing:

Fighting for a Single High Regulatory Standard

By Bernadette McCulloch,

Teamsters Campaign Coordinator

The Teamsters Airline Division is devoting more personnel and resources to lobbying Congressional leaders on the need to enact a single high maintenance standard for all carriers and MROs, both foreign and domestic. There is currently a double standard in maintenance regulations for domestic carriers and foreign repair stations that represents a clear risk to both passenger safety and national security.

Until the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) can promulgate and enforce a single high regulatory standard that governs all repair facilities working on U.S. aircraft worldwide, Congress should impose a moratorium on further foreign outsourcing. The continued unchecked outsourcing of skilled maintenance work to foreign repair stations will also further decimate an already shrinking pool of skilled U.S. aircraft mechanics.

In January, the division hit the ground running, scheduling many visits to congressional leaders. We also waged a letter-writ-

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ing campaign and petition drive urging Congress to pass a moratorium on foreign aircraft outsourcing until the FAA and Congress address the huge lapses in safety and security measures at facilities overseas. The United Airlines mechanics began their own petition drive, urging House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-CA., to add the moratorium to the stimulus bill. General President Jim Hoffa, members of our General Executive Board and principal officers from local unions also wrote letters and made phone calls.

Despite our best efforts, Congress passed the stimulus package without our proposed moratorium language. Passage would have ensured that the jobs of countless mechanics stay in the United States. Foreign aircraft maintenance outsourcing doesn't only affect mechanics; it also hurts the economy and jeopardizes

passenger safety and national security.

We are looking forward to the next opportunities to advance our cause and we will not stop meeting with congressional leaders, their key staff members and regulatory agencies until we prevail.

The FAA Reauthorization Bill is currently being deliberated. The House version already has many protections that we are seeking at foreign repair stations, such as alcohol and drug testing and twice yearly audits by the FAA. The Division is working toward getting support from Congress to issue rules at foreign repair stations that would include for 10-year background checks for mechanics as well. We need your support and involvement in order to win. Please ensure that you sign up for the weekly Airline Division newsletter at www.teamster.org.

Teamsters Push For Reform at the National Mediation Board

For many years the Teamsters have been concerned about National Mediation Board (NMB) procedures in organizing and bargaining. Now that there is a more worker-friendly administration in Washington, there is a huge opportunity to make positive change in outmoded NMB procedures that favor the Carriers.

The general purpose of the Railway Labor Act was set forth in 1926 and remains unchanged to this day. The Congressional mandate forbids "any limitation upon freedom of association among employees," demands "the prompt and orderly settlement of all disputes concerning rates of pay, rules or working conditions," and requires the "prompt and orderly settlement" of contract grievances. The NMB has done nothing over the past eight years to further these important policy objectives. Indeed, the NMB has engaged in actions which seriously compromise and contravene the national labor policy expressed in the general purposes of the Railway Labor Act.

In order to address these concerns, the Teamsters submitted a transition issues paper to the new Administration's NMB Transition Team recommending a number of changes to NMB procedure, including various changes that would make it far easier for

employees to organize. This is important because currently there are at least 107,000 unorganized aviation mechanics working for both airlines and third-party contractors. If we are to maintain high standards in our craft, we must increase union density, especially at the MROs, so that our carriers cannot take our work in search of lower labor costs.

Another important reform recommended by the transition issues paper is the establishment of procedures to ensure the prompt resolution of mediation cases. Under the current practice, once bargaining is in the mediation stage all types of delays take place that has hugely increased the length of bargaining a contract. This hurts labor at the bargaining table and this issue is a high priority.

Currently the Teamsters are working hard to move our recommendations within the new NMB. We are also addressing these Railway Labor Act issues in Congress. In addition we are pressing Congress to address dangerous foreign outsourcing practices, the mediation delay, bankruptcy reform, pension reform, and other issues. We will keep you posted on our continuing efforts.

FedEx Mechanics Fighting for Express Carrier Protection Act

FAA Reauthorization Bill

On February 9th, the FAA Reauthorization Bill was introduced by the chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Aviation. The part of the bill, H.R. 915, concerning us was included. Here is the summary of the bill pertaining to us:

“Labor: Express Carrier Employee Protection: Amends the Railway Labor Act (“RLA”) to clarify that employees of an “express carrier” shall only be covered by the RLA if they are employed in a position that is eligible for certification under FAA’s rules, such as mechanics or pilots, and they are actually performing that type of work for the express carrier.”

All other express carrier employees would be governed by the National Labor Relations Act.

If you want to read the entire bill, which is 252 pages, you can go to this link:

http://transportation.house.gov/Media/File/Aviation/FAA_Reauthorization_09/HR%20915.pdf

Express Carrier Employee Protection and Employee Free Choice Act

We have heard a lot about two pending bills in Congress: the Express Carrier Employee Protection Act and the Employee Free Choice Act. Both are very important to workers in America and to labor constituents.

But the bills are totally different. At this time, Employee Free Choice Act simply does not apply to aviation mechanics. Here is a brief explanation of both bills.

The Express Carrier Employee Protection legislation is part of the FAA Reauthorization Bill, H.R.915. This bill will help FedEx Express mechanics and other FedEx Express employees regain their rights of freedom of association which FedEx stripped from us back in 1996. The Express Carrier Employee Protection legislation makes sure that FedEx Express employees are covered by the appropriate labor laws: Licensed air employees under the Railway Labor Act and non-licensed employees under the National Labor Relations Act.

Employee Free Choice Act would give organizing under the National Labor Relations Act some teeth and lays out a simpler process for recognizing a union for those employees that are covered by the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Act.

In the event Congress passes the Express Carrier Employee Protection Act; all of the non-licensed employees of FedEx Express would fall under the rules of the National Labor Relations Act.

What You Can Do

Write to your Congressional representatives today and tell them to support FedEx Express Carrier Legislation. If passed, the FedEx Express Carrier Legislation would mean that a new set of guidelines would cover all aspects of the non-licensed workers' attempt to unionize. Under the National Labor Relations Act, it will be easier for these workers to form a union because they would have the opportunity to organize site by site, location by location and classification by classification. The more members a union has, the stronger its bar-

gaining power becomes. The FedEx Express Carrier Legislation benefits everyone.

To contact your House representative, visit www.house.gov. To contact your Senator, visit www.senate.gov. Each website has a step-by-step process that allows constituents to easily find their representatives by name or by state. Contact your representative and tell them to pass the FedEx Express Carrier Legislation today!

MSAP on the Battlefield

By Vic Austin, Local 961

This is a battle that takes no prisoners. The enemy is elusive and merciless. It is a battle of life and death. Its survivors are handicapped, sometimes maimed for the rest of their lives. The losers are the fatherless, motherless child, the bereaved spouse, the broken dream with tears and heartache left in its wake. This is a war that never ends.

In our industry of aircraft maintenance, we have few margins for error and no excuses for complacency because the lives of many are in the balance. Our actions or inactions could mean the difference between life and death. Take, for example, the simple act of pulling a safety pin from a door-mounted escape slide bottle. What would be the consequence if there is an airplane accident on take-off where the aircraft has caught fire and dozens of passengers are trying to rapidly exit a smoke-filled cabin before the effects of toxic gasses render them unconscious? Seconds count and any hesitation at the point of exit could be fatal to many fleeing for their lives. How is a mother holding her child expected to jump many feet to the ground and then escape the impending inferno if an exit door slide fails? Or what about the failure to properly pin an oxygen generator before shipment, which was the cause of the ValuJet crash in the Florida Everglades which killed all on board?

This is where we battle the human element or error that could start a chain reaction leading to loss of life. The battleground is the "War on Error" and the tool in our arsenal is the Maintenance Safety Awareness Program, or MSAP, in place at United Airlines.

The FAA has identified a systematic approach to recording errors in aviation through their Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) that is more than 33 years old. The goal is to identify trends, determine root causes and implement measures to stop the errors, breaking the chain, thus managing risks instead of responding to disasters. A functioning ASRS program at a company is the key component to heading off tragedy.

The outsourcing of our work places a big burden on safety as a company stretches its quality control structure to meet the logistics of overseeing the MRO providers. It is quite evident that the FAA is not staffed to meet this challenge. This is where the MSAP really comes into play. We are overseeing ourselves, instead of being overseen by the FAA.

The battle lines are drawn. We can only win with the right leadership from management and labor. We must be armed with the right weapons (tooling, manuals and support) and strategy (training, MSAP, safety alerts, NASA, OSHA and FAA oversight). The battlefield is filled with human factor landmines including an over-stressed and aging workforce, pay cuts, loss of pensions and jobs.

In my three-and-a-half years in this role, I have seen many examples of MRO errors and failures by companies to manage. The failure to learn from mistakes and communicate lessons learned to your workforce can be the last chain in a series of events which lead to a catastrophe. Battles have been lost when the critical communication links were broken. Safety rules and regulations were crafted from blood.

TAMC Steering Committee Contact Information

The TAMC Steering Committee Members are here for you. Contact a steering committee member to share your thoughts, concerns or ideas for newsletter articles. Be sure to check out TAMC Steering Committee Member bios in the next edition of the TAMC newsletter.

Chris Moore
Continental Airlines
cjm91@sbcglobal.net

Lloyd Smith
US Airways Piedmont-Allegheny
lesmith240@gmail.com

Bob Friend
UPS
Bob.Friend@local2727.org

John "Pepper" Atkinson
AirTran
johnatkinson@numail.org

Daniel Pimentel
Frontier Airlines
danieljpimentel@yahoo.com

Thomas Perusi
FedEx
Tducksoup1@yahoo.com

Ralph Salzano
Continental Airlines
ralfsalz@aol.com

Dave Saucedo
United Airlines
bittenonce@comcast.net

Cedric Washington
ExpressJet
Washingtoncb@hotmail.com

Francis Diaz
CMI
fmdiaz22@yahoo.com