



TAMC Nuts & Bolts

Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition Newsletter

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Airline Division Takes Part in 18th Annual MRO Americas Conference



TAMC mechanics on the Hill

In April, Airline Division Representatives Chris Moore and Bob Fisher attended the 18th annual MRO Americas Conference in Dallas, Texas. They reported that several informative breakout sessions occurred regarding outsourcing and future trends.

Airline Industry Executives Led the Conference with Opening Remarks

The conference opened with remarks from Jon Oberdick, Managing Director of USAirways Technical Operations. Mr. Oberdick informed the attendees that the conference had more than 8,000 participants and 700 vendors selling products and services. A4A (formerly ATA) President Nick Calio then addressed the conference and laid out his legislative plan for the airline industry. Mr. Calio pointed to the rail industry as a model for a new national airline policy. Moving towards a rail-type policy has two significant benefits for the membership: 1) A national pension plan supported through passenger revenue; and 2) A bankruptcy policy that requires negotiation of collective bargaining agreements without the ability to immediately abrogate them. Mr. Calio also suggested that the airlines need to work in a unified manner when sending messages to Congress to ensure positive representation of the industry.

A Discussion of Industry Trends Provided Insight

The cost of fuel is a major issue for airlines. The airlines continue to search for areas where they can reduce costs to offset the rise in energy costs. With current margins, a spike in the price of fuel to an average of \$135 per barrel will flip the projec-

tions for 2012 from an expected profit to an overall loss. Older planes are being retired at a faster pace than in previous years which will give a short-term bump to the used parts market. This factor should help to drive costs down for operating older aircraft over the next five to seven years. New financing in the industry is pushing buyers towards new fuel efficient aircraft. Newer aircraft provide short-term maintenance savings to the carriers as well. Annual spending on MROs was \$49.5 billion dollars last year and is expected to climb to \$68.4 billion annually by 2022. Heavy Airframe, Engine and Composite MRO spending will increase but not dramatically. Line maintenance, however, is expected to be a substantial part of the MRO market, increasing from today's 17 percent to an estimated 42 percent by 2022.

SWA CEO Gary Kelly Discussed AirTran Merger

Aviation Week President Greg Hamilton introduced Gary Kelly. Mr. Kelly reported that the AirTran merger is expected to be complete by 2015. The company should realize a \$400 million dollar savings in synergies when the merger is finalized. Mr. Kelly expressed a desire to achieve maintenance cost controls through productivity gains because the old paradigm of four to five percent increases each year in the maintenance budget was unsustainable. Like every other carrier, SWA is seriously concerned about the rise in fuel costs that could put the carrier in a position where it would have to report its first loss in 29 years.

Representatives Attend Sessions Providing Insights for Future Collective Bargaining

Chris and Bob attended several breakout sessions at the conference. These sessions were panel discussions led by industry leaders including manufacturers, MRO providers, and airlines. In addition, regulators from the FAA sat on several panels. These sessions included "Regulations Aren't Just for the Airlines," "Knowing When and What to Outsource," "Tricks of the Trade: Maintenance Forecasting and Planning," "The Training and Future of the MRO Workforce - Problematic or Not?" and "The Changing Face of Engine MRO." A comprehensive report will be submitted to the Division for its use in bargaining with an eye toward protecting members' careers in the future.

The "Training the Future of the MRO Workforce" session proved once again to be both inspirational and disappointing. The MROs as well as the airlines are grappling with the same issue: how to attract and retain A & P mechanics. As our workforce continues to age, the prospect of attracting new, qualified technicians to the industry is a problem. The inspirational part of the equation is that, industry-wide, management is recogniz-

TAMC Successfully Lobbies Congress for Enactment of New FAA Reauthorization Bill

Since its formation in 2007, the TAMC has grown into a powerful and influential force on Capitol Hill under the direction of Airline Director Captain David Bourne and Division Rep. Chris Moore. One of the key original objectives of the TAMC was to lobby members of the House and Senate for enactment of a new FAA Reauthorization bill. The TAMC recognized the urgency of stemming the tide of aviation maintenance outsourcing to foreign repair stations and the need to update FAA safety rules.

On the initial visits to many House and Senate offices in Washington, our TAMC mechanics received a sobering message. They were told that Congress was not likely to enact a new far-reaching FAA Reauthorization bill. Even the Democrats on the Aviation Subcommittees in the House and Senate Committees were resigned to the inevitability of most mechanics' jobs involved in heavy check maintenance being outsourced to foreign repair stations.

Our TAMC members were appalled but absolutely determined to turn this situation around. Over the course of the next several years, the TAMC made numerous trips to Capitol Hill to convince Congress to enact a new far-reaching FAA Reauthorization bill and establish tough rules that would require the FAA to impose the same regulatory standards on foreign repair stations that our mechanics conform to in American stations.

These mechanics opened the eyes of Congress to the high quality of America's AP mechanics versus the shoddy work being done at foreign repair stations. In fact, our TAMC members contributed greatly to the enactment of a new groundbreaking FAA bill which sets forth tough new rules regulating foreign repair stations including requirements for foreign mechanics to have AP licenses, criminal background checks, and drug and alcohol testing. The fact is that these legislative achievements will improve the safety of the flying public and will protect, enhance and create more jobs for American aviation mechanics. Great job, TAMC!

MRO Americas Conference

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ing the value of experienced, well-trained Aviation Maintenance Professionals. The disappointing part is that the industry still has its head firmly buried in the sand on what to do about it. A great example of this comes from AAR, which is one of the largest MROs in the country. They have positions available for 500 technicians that they have not been able to fill, resulting in missed opportunities to generate revenue. They have finally found the bottom as far as wage rates and benefits are concerned, but they still will not admit that it is the driving factor behind their inability to hire qualified people.

The overall problem was summed up brilliantly by a Memphis College AP instructor. In an effort to attract more kids to the industry, they have begun an outreach program to the local high schools. The program was presented to 50 students. Of those 50, only five showed interest. And of those five, only two continued into the program. The three that did not were instructed by their parents NOT to get into the aircraft maintenance profession. Why? First, from an institutional standpoint it costs more to train an A & P mechanic than it does to train an RN. Maybe this explains the high cost of obtaining the license since the FAA limits class size to 25 students and the breakeven point is 21 just to cover the instructor's salary. Second – and more telling – is that after the high tuition cost is paid the reward is an average starting wage of around \$12 to \$15 per hour. And that's in an industry that works nights, weekends, holidays and in the elements – an industry with no job stability and a very bleak outlook due to downward pressure on airline workers' wages, retirement and benefits. Finally, when young people do complete the course they are snatched by other industries that require the same skill set but provide more stability and offer more than twice what the airline industry pays. The industry is approaching the problem on a couple of creative fronts by starting to introduce aviation to kids in school at the 4th and 5th grade levels and by training laid-off workers on task-specific work such as sheet metal. Unfortunately, this does not address the real issues of pay, benefits and stability. So, while the industry stands by scratching its head in an effort to solve the problem, we get grayer and the pool of qualified workers shrinks.

Breakout Session Gives an Overview of SMS

One session at the conference also provided a good outline of safety management systems in the industry. The panel discussed various aspects of safety management systems currently in place. They encouraged the audience to formalize SMS at their respective companies and shared thoughts on how to proceed.

Senior VP Tech Ops for United Airlines Jim Keenan Closed the Conference

Jim Keenan, Senior Vice President of Tech Ops at UAL, presented on airline financing and the impact of the rise in fuel costs. Several years ago, fuel was only 20 percent of CASM but that percentage has now increased above 35 percent. He also stated that ancillary fees such as checked baggage would continue and carriers would look to charge for several other items to offset fuel costs. Lastly, he restated the need to overhaul airline regulations and threw his support behind the A4A plan.

American Airlines Mechanics Organizing with Teamsters

Mechanics and related at American Airlines approached the Teamsters Airline Division in May and expressed their desire to become members of the largest union for airline mechanics and related in the country. The Airline Division has answered the call with organizers fanning out at AA stations nationwide.

With 11,800 mechanics and related at American Airlines, this organizing campaign has huge implications for the aviation mechanic profession and the airline industry as a whole. The workers are currently members of the Transport Workers Union, but a vote to decertify is all but certain. Meanwhile, bankruptcy and a likely merger with US Airways pose greater challenges and opportunities for AA maintenance workers.

The AMTs reached out to the Teamsters for support as they strive to improve their representation. And the stakes in this campaign couldn't be higher. A win at American would make the TAMC 30,000-strong, strengthening the Coalition's power at the bargaining table and on Capitol Hill to raise standards throughout the industry.

"The Teamsters are the right choice for us at American because of their size and aviation mechanic focus," said Bill Wheeler, an AMT at the main hub in Tulsa.

"We need to get through a bankruptcy and then probably a merger and I want a union with strength and the resources to help us get through," added Mike Dibler, another AMT in Tulsa.



Mechanics and related at AA are ready to become Teamsters, but they also face the threat of AMFA, which has been trying to organize the workers for 10 years.

"AMFA's record of substandard representation and losing jobs at every airline it touches means that their success at American would have devastating consequences for mechanics throughout the industry," the TAMC observed in a recent statement about the campaign. "We have an opportunity to put an end to the failed AMFA experiment once and for all and bring the power and protection of a Teamster contact to the mechanics and related at American."

Teamster AMTs and organizers are on the ground and getting cards signed at AA stations across the country. The response has been overwhelming as

leaders step forward and activist networks are built at maintenance hubs from Miami to Los Angeles.

"My dad is a retired Teamster and I have lived knowing Teamster Power my whole life," said Hank Rogish, an American Airlines AMT in Fort Worth, TX. "It's high time that Aviation mechanics and related at American Airlines enjoy strong, dedicated representation that I know the Teamsters will deliver."

To learn more about the campaign, visit www.teamster.org/aamx. If you would like to help our brothers and sisters at AA become Teamsters, call the campaign hotline at 877-589-4951 or contact your local to get involved.

Horizon Mechanics Fend Off Raid by AMFA, Reaffirm Teamster Support

Mechanics and related workers at Horizon Air reaffirmed their support for the Teamsters Union in March 2012, voting in favor of representation by the Teamsters Airline Division.

"Although AMFA was able to create a representational dispute through a deceitful campaign of misinformation and untruths, our strong Teamster brothers and sisters stood their ground and beat back the raid," said Capt. David Bourne, Director of the Teamsters Airline Division. "Horizon mechanics and related workers recognize the improvements the Teamsters have made for them and I applaud this group for standing together in solidarity."

The mechanics, who have been Teamsters since 2009, had the option of voting for the Teamsters, AMFA or no union. The vote was 151 to 103 with 3 voting for no union. There are 323 workers in the bargaining unit.

The vote followed a contract ratified by the mechanics in December 2010 which secured significant improvements in job security and increased pay and benefits for Horizon mechanics and related workers. The contract included a 13 percent wage increase over four years along with an agreement against foreign outsourcing. Horizon mechanics and related also have the benefit of a stronger grievance system and improved benefits thanks to their Teamster contract.

The Teamster Outsourcing Defect Report (TODR): A Tool for Aviation Mechanics

Third party maintenance has grown exponentially over the last decade. In addition to being dangerous to the flying public, outsourced maintenance has cost us job security, pay, benefits and retirement as airlines race to the bottom in an effort to remain profitable. In many MROs, few A & P mechanics exist and conditions are brutal. Mechanics suffer from a lack of parts and tooling, forced overtime, and the threat of losing their jobs if they deem an aircraft unsafe to fly. As mechanics, we see firsthand the poor quality of work when our aircraft return from foreign vendors. We often spend hours or even days working on items that were repaired improperly, installed incorrectly, or not inspected at all.

The Teamsters Airline Division and the TAMC are fighting to reverse this trend. We fought the tough battle to keep

our safety language in the FAA Reauthorization bill. And we have designed a tool to help us expose the poor quality of third party maintenance – the Teamsters Outsourcing Defect Report. TODR is a secure form that any mechanic can access to report vendor work that must be repaired as well as un-airworthy aircraft and parts returning from a vendor or MRO. The report is anonymous and easy to use. The collected data is used to build reports. These reports are used to make our point when we engage members of Congress. TODR was an essential aid when we lobbied on Capitol Hill for additional FAA oversight at foreign repair stations. TODR proves to our members of Congress that in-house maintenance is critical to safety.

You can link to the TODR at Team-

sterair.org. The button on the front page will take you directly to the report. Once you have submitted the report, a TAMC steering committee member may contact you. This will only happen if there are follow-up questions. Once the report is on file, we will use the information to develop a narrative that will exclude your personal information.

The problems with third party maintenance are not going away. In fact, the MROs are now breaking into line maintenance with the expectation of having 42 percent of the market by 2022. Brothers and Sisters, we must fight to preserve the safety of the flying public, our jobs, and our standard of living. Information is power and we need to show Congress, the media, the flying public and the airlines the dangers of third party maintenance.

PAPER CERTIFICATES EXPIRE MARCH 31, 2013

For those of you who still hold a paper license, stop procrastinating. Your paper license will no longer be valid on March 31, 2013. That means you can't work! The good news is that it's easy and painless to replace and it only costs \$2.00.

Just go to this link:

http://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/expiring_paper_certificates/

Or search Google for "FAA Paper License Replacement."

All paper certificate holders cannot exercise the privileges of their PAPER certificates after March 31, 2013. This includes all certificates that are issued under 14 CFR Part 63 and 65.

14 CFR 63.15(d) and 65.15(d) reads:

Duration of certificates. Except for temporary certificates issued under §63.15 and 65.15, the holder of a paper certificate issued under this part may not exercise the privileges of that certificate after March 31, 2013.

If your airman certificate was issued after July 2003 and is a plastic certificate, it already meets the paper-to-plastic rule as specified in 14 CFR Parts 63 and 65 and you may disregard this notification.



SEA UAL mechanics show off fun hats. Left to right: Jim Malama, Marle Colvin, Mat McBride, Phil Stewart, Dennis Kinnan, Lloyd Goodwin, Chris Neville, Tim Van Wey, Wendell Nascimento, Dan Cooper, Tim Spencer, John Trott, Ed Karr

BETTER KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT CONGRESSIONAL STAFF AND TITLES

The TAMC takes great pride in our ongoing fight for mechanic and related issues on Capitol Hill. Educating our members on the political process and encouraging them to get involved is paramount to our mission to help our lawmakers understand what we do and how important our profession is!

Each member of Congress has staff to assist him or her during a term in office. To be most effective in communicating with Congress, it is helpful to know the titles and principal functions of key staff. Below is a short list of who does what in the Congressional offices.

Chief of Staff:

The Chief of Staff reports directly to the member of Congress. He/she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. The Chief of Staff is usually the person in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and the supervision of key staff.

Legislative Director, Senior Legislative Assistant, or Legislative Coordinator:

The Legislative Director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In some congressional offices, there are several Legislative Assistants and responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise in specific areas. For example, an office may include a different Legislative Assistant for health issues, environmental matters, taxes, etc. depending on the responsibilities and interests of the member.

Press Secretary or Communications Director:

The Press Secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the member, his/her constituency, and the general public. The Press Secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands, and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to effectively promote the member's views or position on specific issues.

Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary, or Scheduler:

The Appointment Secretary is usually responsible for allocating a member's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, and constituent requests. The Appointment Secretary may also be responsible for making necessary travel arrangements, arranging speaking dates, visits to the district, etc.

Caseworker:

The Caseworker is the staff member assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the member's signature. The Caseworker's responsibilities may also include helping resolve problems constituents present in relation to federal agencies, e.g., Social Security and Medicare issues, veteran's benefits, passports, etc. There are often several Caseworkers in a congressional office.

Other Staff Titles:

Other titles used in a congressional office may include: Executive Assistant, Legislative Correspondent, Executive Secretary, Office Manager, and Receptionist.