



## **AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION**

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# **Memorandum**

**To:** AMFA–SWA Members  
**From:** National Executive Council (NEC)  
**Date:** February 15, 2019  
**Re:** State of Operational Emergency

AMFA–SWA Members:

By letter dated February 15, 2019, Southwest's Sr. Director Tech Ops Production Lonnie Warren declared a State of Operational Emergency which imposes extra-contractual demands with respect to the services of our Aircraft Maintenance Technicians and Inspectors with the explicit threat of termination if they fail to comply. This declaration of a State of Operation Emergency occurs just eleven (11) days after a CBS News report detailing the efforts of Southwest maintenance to resist coercive pressure to ignore aircraft damage and the FAA's confirmation of the degraded safety culture at Southwest. The CBS report exposed a problem so severe that two United States Senators have called for a congressional investigation.

Unfortunately, Southwest's response has been to increase the level of coercion and further degrade safety. Southwest operates with the lowest ratio of technicians-to-aircraft of any major carrier. As a direct result of the Southwest-created emergency: (1) sick mechanics who have not had the opportunity to see a doctor will have to work through their illness, (2) vacations, holidays, and shift trades will be disrupted, (3) bid seniority will be dishonored, and (4) technicians will be forced to work mandatory overtime irrespective of their child care obligations or state of fatigue. Southwest expressly warns that our compliance will be obtained via threat of termination.

On December 6, 2017, Vice President of Maintenance Operations Landon Nitschke characterized the state of Southwest's safety culture by confessing: "sometimes we hide our compliance issues under the Warrior Spirit." Nitschke vowed at that time: "So big effort this year. We definitely need to repair some things with the FAA not only as a Company, but, I think, as people ... so again, *compliance, compliance, compliance is going to be our theme song for 2018.*"

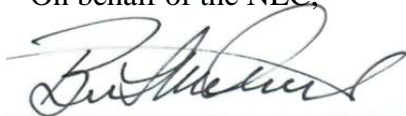
Unfortunately, the year 2019 has commenced with renewed management hostility toward maintenance compliance. The CBS report appears to have inspired a mean-spirited desire for collective punishment.

No matter how severe the provocation, AMFA asks its members not to be baited into acts of defiance that will be characterized as insubordination. We must follow the adage “work now, grieve later.”

Our contract must be respected. In addition, it is a violation of federal law to “intimidate, threaten, restrain, coerce, blacklist, discharge, or in any other manner discriminate against an employee” who seeks to perform his work in conformance with federal aviation standards. 29 C.F.R. § 1979.102(b). Work hard, be productive, and let us get those broken planes back into service in an airworthy condition. This is not a call for a job action, which would be unlawful and further complicate our effort to achieve an equitable agreement. We are only asking that we be permitted to perform our job in accordance with federal law – nothing more and nothing less.

If you feel the contract is being violated, or you are being harassed or pressured to disregard aircraft damage or shortcut the manuals, please let your Airline Representative (ALR) know of such threats and/or contact National Safety and Standards Director Scott King at (214) 801-1505. You may also call the FAA Hotline at 866-TELL-FAA / 866-835-5322 to file a report.

On behalf of the NEC,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bret Oestreich", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Bret Oestreich  
National Director