



# AMFA – Southwest Airlines AMT Contract Negotiations

**Fact Sheet #3**    **November 16, 2016**

**AMFA Negotiating Committee:**

*Earl Clark – Director, Region I*

*Michael Nelson – Director, Region II*

*Bob Cramer – Airline Representative, Local 4*

*Craig Hamlet – Airline Representative, Local 11*

*Shane Flachman – Airline Representative, Local 18*

*Mike Young – Airline Representative, Local 32*

*Lucas Middlebrook – AMFA Counsel*

## Article 10 – Filling of Vacancies (Inspection Backfill).

Article 10, Section 7 reads: “Temporary vacancies of 30 days or less for Inspectors will be filled on a daily basis by seniority preference with a General Inspector working out of his classification in that work group first; if there are none, then the overtime callout procedures will be utilized for General/Alternative Inspectors.”

The above language was negotiated during the 2001 Section 6 negotiations. The reasoning behind this language was safety. It was agreed that overworking an Inspector by not backfilling for a vacancy was not in the best interest of the airline. Although this language was an obvious enhancement to our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), it was only a piece of the entire package that was ratified by the membership. The Company did not give us this language without offsets; but those offsets are long forgotten by this management group. As with many other items that the Company has agreed to in negotiations, its “buyer’s remorse” soon sets in, and it unilaterally breaches our Agreement and forces us to protect negotiated language through the costly arbitration process - as it did with Inspection Backfill three separate times.

Fortunately, after three costly arbitrations, the Company finally was forced to abide by the agreement that it made with our group fifteen years ago. Although the Company has enjoyed the benefits it received from the offsets of the 2001 Agreement for the past fifteen years, our members have only recently begun to recognize the full benefit of that bargain.

In the Company’s original concessionary “must have” proposal related to the Article 10, Section 7 language, it wanted the mandatory backfill language removed entirely; which obviously would take us full circle to where we were prior to the 2001 agreement. Costs savings are this leadership’s sole focus. As troubling as that is to our Committee, we agreed to make major moves towards the Company’s original proposal in hopes that this movement would aid in reaching an agreement. Our current proposal was constructed by taking into consideration the Company’s concern regarding vacancies that it has little control over. Not forgetting that this is a sizeable concessionary move on our part concerning the current CBA language, we proposed giving the Company relief from the mandatory back fill obligation in the following events: Inspector Day Trade with a Mechanic, On the Job Injuries (OJI), Leaves of Absences, Sick Days, Union Business, and Jury Duty.

We must keep in mind that the concessionary “must have” demands from the Company regarding our language affects all of us. When a final agreement is reached in these negotiations it will be a “package deal,” and there will be no clear-cut itemized list of each gain we receive and the exact

concessionary item we gave up. Our CBA is under attack by the Company in these negotiations at a time when Southwest continues to reap record profits. There is no reason we should accept a concessionary contract at this point in our Company's history. Our group has always helped this Company when it needed relief as we proved with the concessions given in the 2009 agreement. Our committee has made major moves to provide the Company the operational relief it requested regarding the Inspection Backfill issue. However, as with all of the Company's "must haves," we again flushed-out that the real reason behind all of the overreaching demands is to reduce costs no matter what – we are now, unfortunately, only seen as a line item on a balance sheet by this Company.

In Solidarity,

Your Negotiating Committee