



AMFA/Southwest Airlines Contract Negotiations Update

Update #20

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Participants for AMFA:

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Participants for Southwest Airlines:

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The Negotiating Committee is providing this update to the AMFA Membership at Southwest Airlines. This report is the only official authorized source of negotiating communications by the Committee.

We met in Dallas, Texas on Wednesday, June 18 for the first of a scheduled two-day Aircraft Maintenance Technician (AMT) negotiations session. Surprisingly, the Company did not begin this session with yet another presentation, but rather decided to reiterate their five (5) “must have” concessionary items:

- 1) A twenty-hour duty limit.
- 2) Modifications to Article 2: Scope to achieve greater “efficiencies.”
- 3) The contractual ability to utilize vendors to perform International Emergency Field Service.
- 4) An expanded wage scale for new hires.
- 5) Restrictions to paid rest entitlement when a day trade is involved.

Then they added “just two more”:

- 6) Relief from the Arbitrator’s Inspector Backfill Ruling and the contractual obligation to backfill all temporary vacancies.
- 7) “Qualifications” to be determined by the Company, for specific bid locations.

The Company agreed that their list of items is for economics purposes with the exception of the twenty-hour duty limit, which has a two-fold concern: economics and safety.

The Company then presented their Article 7: Training proposal which gave consideration to our members’ adjusting their schedules related to training as long as there is no additional cost to the Company by allowing the schedule adjustment requested. After a short caucus and a few clarifying questions, we agreed to Tentatively Agree (TA) to Article 7. The Company also informed us that they had rejected our proposals in Article 20: Insurance Benefits, which included a percentage cap on how high the Company could raise our healthcare premiums. They proposed that we stay with the current language for Article 20.

We then entered another lengthy discussion on why the Company feels it is necessary to impose “qualifications” for certain bid locations. We explained that the tentacles of such a request are long reaching, and that the Company would also have to train anyone who wished to work overtime in those bid locations where they chose to establish “qualifications” or else they faced the same situation as they did at the Dallas line several years ago regarding fueling.

After lunch and a Company caucus, they returned and presented two lone bullet points related to their Article 2 efficiency concepts. The Company stressed that these are not a proposal of intended language, but are concepts that they would like to see integrated into our Scope language:

- 1) Contract out work which the Company's cost exceeds the vendor charges, less material, with no reduction in headcount.
- 2) Optimize maintenance during outsource events (Heavy Checks, Mod Lines, OTS, etc.) (e.g. Add lower maintenance tasks to improve efficiency of aircraft down times and reduce grievances).

In regards to bullet point #1 above, the Company initially indicated they were talking about shops. Although when questioned further, the Company said our strengths are Line and Intermediate maintenance. During that discussion, the Company indicated that it needs at least two in-house heavy check lines to be efficient, but that any "additional lines and their value to the company are questionable." This highlights the importance of contractual language that guarantees those heavy lines and our victory in arbitration that forced the Company to implement the fourth line. More discussion on the bullet points flushed-out that the "10-hour" task rule, which was part of what we gained in the last negotiations in exchange for Aeroman, is causing aircraft scheduling disruptions, and is not efficient for the Company because most of our aircraft are not scheduled RON for the 10 hours that the tasks take to accomplish. The remainder of our discussions was centered on the EPIC maintenance program and how that will affect our work. The Company contends that EPIC is not costing work but reallocating work from the hangar to the line. The Company contends that the "10 hour" task rule is a problem for the WIZARD or the EPIC program.

After the above discussion, we asked the Company if they had anything else for this session, to which they replied, "No." We notified the Company that our members would not ratify an agreement containing their 5-6 or 7 "must haves." In addition, with the absence of Mike Ryan, our concerns of last month became reality and we had nothing further to work on without his presence. We ended this session after one day, but we look forward to our next session on July 9 and 10. We expect, and are hopeful, that the Company decision makers with sufficient bargaining authority will be present.

Our side continues to be committed to making a concerted effort to reach an agreement that addresses our members' concerns. Our Committee would like to thank the observers that took the time to attend. It is important to remember that your Committee is only as strong as the members that support us – stay engaged, remain united, and together we will maintain a contract that protects our profession and rewards your labor.

Sincerely,

Your Negotiating Committee