



# TEAMSTER AVIATION PROFESSIONAL

*Newsletter of the Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition*

**Volume 5, Issue 1**

## Coalition Launches Investigation into Allegiant Air Maintenance

The Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition has launched an investigation into reports of a disproportionate number of engine failures, air returns and declared emergencies at Allegiant Air. TAMC immediately recognized that a comprehensive investigation into the continuing maintenance failures at Allegiant was imperative after interviewing pilots at the airline.

TAMC is determined to find the root cause of these maintenance failures regardless of where the investigation may lead. The immediate concern is to identify the underlying cause of these incidents and to offer suggestions to mitigate this unacceptable situation before one of these incidents claims the lives of passengers.

The Coalition has been working closely with the Teamster pilots at Allegiant to collect data on the many incidents that are going unreported by the carrier. The TAMC has also been working with the Teamsters Strategic Research Department as well as leading industry safety experts and the media.

Along with the pilots at Allegiant, dispatchers are also represented by the Teamsters Airline Division.



## TAMC Attends MRO Conference

Members of the TAMC attended the annual MRO Conference of the Americas in Phoenix in April as part of the ongoing effort by the Coalition and the Teamsters Airline Division to continually monitor industry trends as they affect our members. Meetings attended included "MRO," "Evolution of the Industry," "Inconsistencies in Regulatory Interpretation," "Contracting Trends," and "Fatigue Risk for Mechanics."

The MRO forecast stated that the US market is still flat but that there is an uptick in outsourcing worldwide. The FAA puts the current percentage of outsourcing at 68 percent and accounts for between \$56 billion and \$60 billion dollars – and consolidation within the MRO industry continues. The biggest acquisition by far is the purchase of TIMCO by HAECO (Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Company) for \$388.8 million, giving the MRO entry to the US market. They are looking to gain a North American footprint to expand their interior MRO (Widebody) and Line Maintenance business. As wages for offshore maintenance increase, the 30 percent cost savings is disappearing and the acquisition of TIMCO puts HEACO in a position to begin Widebody HMV work in the US. Additionally, AAR has taken over Aeroframe in Lake Charles, LA, giving them an additional 520,000 square foot hangar.

## New Entrants to the AP Profession Still Low

As reported last year and again this year, the industry is still searching for ways to attract and retain workers with A & P skills. The recent Government Accountability Office report, GAO-14-273, regarding whether or not a mechanic shortage actually exists was inconclusive. But, at the conference the TAMC was able to speak with a number of vendors that provide AMTs on a contract basis to see

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## TAMC APPLAUDS FAA PROPOSED RULE ON DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR FOREIGN MROS

The announcement by the FAA on March 13 that the agency would be seeking public comments on an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) to require drug and alcohol testing of maintenance personnel who work on aircraft operated by US air carriers (Part 121) in facilities outside the United States was met with strong support by the Airline Division and the TAMC.

“This is a very positive first step,” said TAMC Chairman Chris Moore. “For too long, foreign MRO facilities have been operating on a lower level of compliance than US-based facilities. We believe that there is no justification for anyone who works on a US-registered aircraft to not fall under the same safety and security guidelines that our members must follow,” he continued.

“When it comes to safety issues, there can be only one standard; Foreign Repair Stations working on US carriers’ aircraft must be equal to the standards imposed on US mechanics,” said Airline Division Director David Bourne.

“The American travelling public and all US flight crews deserve nothing less than 100 percent assurance that the people working on the airplanes they fly have been held to the same stringent safety standards as the crewmembers themselves. The Airline Division and TAMC have worked together since 2007 on this issue. We will continue to pursue this issue through the ANPRM process and to a final rule on the matter,” Bourne added.

## TAMC Attends MRO Conference

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if they were in fact having trouble finding AP mechanics. The answer was a resounding yes. We also noted that one OEM is trying a workaround that includes hiring workers at their foreign facility and then eventually transferring them to the US as employees.

### Inconsistencies of Regulatory Interpretation

A panel on regulatory inconsistencies was led by John Duncan, Director of Flight Standards Service for the FAA. The discussion looked at the ongoing issue of ASI (Aviation Safety Inspectors) and PMI (Primary Maintenance Inspectors) having varying interpretations of FARs and FAA Order 8900, which is guidance for ASIs. FAA Order 8900 is a living document and therefore constantly changing.

The FAA recognizes that there is a system-wide problem and that something needs to be done. A major component of the admittedly-needed cultural change will be better communication. The relationship between the mechanic and the ASI as well as the ASI and his supervisor needs to be consistent and professional. The TAMC has witnessed firsthand the confusion and unnecessary stress that are a result of an ASI misinterpreting the FARs.

### Fatigue Risk: Mechanics Next?

Now that FAR 117 is in place for pilots, the industry is turning its attention toward mechanics. Drs. Katrina Avers from the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute and John French, professor of Human Factors and Aerospace Physiology at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, gave presentations focused on mechanic fatigue.

The session included a very vibrant group discussion on aircraft mechanic fatigue. The TAMC stated its view on the topic by bringing to light the very difficult issues that will have to be dealt with if the industry is to adequately address fatigue. We, as the TAMC, recognize that fatigue is a legitimate issue and we want to work with industry experts to help correct the situation without any negative impact to our members. To that end we will continue to work with the FAA fatigue study group to help reach a solution. For more information, visit the Human Factors in Aviation Maintenance page at [www.FAA.gov](http://www.FAA.gov).

### Contracting Trends

The FAA discussed the upcoming rule changes for MROs based on industry comments from last year’s NPRM in which the TAMC was one of only 45 commenters. The FAA expects the Rule to be published later this summer. This Track Session also covered contracts between MROs and their airline customers, mainly surrounding which party is responsible for which costs.





## TEAMSTER MECHANICS AND RELATED ATTEND FAA SAFETY INFOSHARE

Seattle was home to the latest Aviation Safety InfoShare held in March. The Aviation Safety InfoShare is a semi-annual meeting of air carriers along with government, military and manufacturing safety professionals in a protected environment that facilitates the sharing of safety issues and best practices. With over 860 in attendance, this was the largest InfoShare to date. Eighteen members from the Teamster mechanic and related E.R.C. (Event Review Committee) and Flight Safety Committees attended. They represented members from CAL, UAL, UPS, ASA, XJT, and Horizon – by far the largest union maintenance presence at the meeting. This showed once again the Teamsters Airline Division's commitment to safety.

The meetings were attended by representatives from management, labor, and the FAA. The idea is to create an atmosphere where information can be shared freely in an attempt to improve airworthiness. All conversations and formal meetings while in the InfoShare are considered confidential and protected from outside scrutiny.

Group categories are broken down into five areas: Flight Ops, Maintenance, Dispatch, Ground Ops, and Cabin. Discussions are held on various topics which are related and important to each of the categories. Each discussion is led by speakers and InfoShare moderators who have specific knowledge on the topic. ExpressJet ERC members Johnny Vance and Chatan Patel gave a presentation and led a discussion on how XJT has become more effective over the last two years. The open discussions allowed representa-

tives in attendance to add suggestions or ask questions on the various topics. On the maintenance side, some of the more relevant topics had to do with the continuing ASAP program, the FAA's continued failure to enforce the program uniformly from one district to another (and sometimes from one airline to another), and mechanic fatigue.

ASAP discussions tackled problems such as incomplete or inaccurate documentation or technical information (e.g. work cards, diagrams and manuals) and reports referencing complex or confusing procedures. While the FAA does at least appear to embrace the positive qualities of the ASAP program, some very real and open discussions were had on the involvement of ASAP committees and the path the FAA will take after hearing recommendations from the committees. The meetings were hopeful and offered some worthwhile opinions and information, however, more discussions involving the FAA and views toward the benefits of the ASAP program will likely continue.

A related topic to the ASAP reporting subject was the FAA reporting system known as ASIAS (Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing). The FAA developed the ASIAS system to enable users to perform integrated queries across multiple databases, search an extensive warehouse of safety data, and display pertinent elements in an array of useful formats. Additional data sources and capabilities will be available as the system evolves.

The subject of mechanic fatigue dominated a good portion of events and it was clear that this continues to be an issue of great

concern. Dr. John French offered a presentation on the effects of sleep disorder and fatigue. French, who is a professor and Research Director of the Human Factors & Systems Department at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, advocates an alternative to industry habits such as shifts that do not allow for adequate sleep. As chair of the Aerospace Life Science Steering Committee, French specializes in Aerospace Physiology, pilot performance, psychopharmacology, and stress from fatigue and vestibular disruption. He and others advocate for changes to practices like working multiple shifts or midnight shifts that do not allow for a solid eight hours of sleep.

Dr. French suggested in his reports that extreme fatigue can be more physically and mentally impairing than having an alcohol blood level higher than .08, or legally drunk. He was joined by Katrina Avers, PhD from the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute, who – until the 2012 FAA shutdown – ran the Maintenance Fatigue Study Group to which the TAMC was a party.

It was clear that there will need to be much more discussion on the fatigue issue. The Teamsters made the point to the FAA that rules changing the policies of shift schedules should be open to and include mechanic members who will be affected. The TAMC is committed to continuing to work with the FAA and the industry to find a solution to fatigue without negatively impacting our members.

The next InfoShare is scheduled for this coming September in Baltimore.

## LOCAL 986 AND HORIZON MECHANICS FIGHT TO STOP OUTSOURCING

**T**eamsters are pushing back against plans by Horizon Air to move three aircraft to Alaska and have IBT-represented mechanics at Horizon train other, higher-paid mechanics at Alaska Airlines to service the aircraft. The company's plans are a clear violation of Article 2 of the IBT-Horizon Air contract and Airline Division Director David Bourne has sent a letter to Chris Lewless, Managing Director of People and Labor Relations at Horizon about the issue.

### In the letter, Division Director Bourne wrote:

Inasmuch as we fundamentally object to this type of outsourcing as a violation of the basic tenets of the working agreement, we consider this plan to have our members train their replacements as a contemptuous disregard of our members, their families, the collective bargaining agreement and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. We also note that you have worked to facilitate the placement of both pilots and flight attendants in this matter, yet have made no attempt whatsoever to do so with mechanics.

While it is my hope that we can come to a mutually agreeable resolution to this matter, should we be unsuccessful, I would ask that you join us in agreeing to proceeding directly to arbitration.

We will monitor this situation very closely. While I am hopeful that Horizon will work with us to resolve this matter, we will not stand by as we see our members' jobs outsourced to another group.

The announcement by Alaska Air Group, the parent to Alaska and Horizon Airlines, to expand service to the State of Alaska with Horizon

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## TAMC Urges FAA to Halt New MRO Certifications

### Coalition Cites Inadequate Oversight and Calls for Moratorium

**T**he Teamsters Aviation Mechanics Coalition has called on the FAA to stop issuing repair station certifications until adequate oversight is performed on both domestic and foreign repair stations. In a letter to FAA Administrator Michael Huerta in January, the TAMC and Teamsters Airline Division cited IG Audit Report AV-2013-073 and other reports showing that there continues to be serious concerns about the FAA's ability to inspect aircraft maintenance work conducted by outsourced third-party repair stations.

The Coalition points to problems of understaffing, underfunding, and a failure to implement inspection procedures which are endangering the safety of the flying public.

### According to the letter:

For ten years the FAA has been grappling with the responsibility of overseeing more than 4,800 Domestic and 750 Foreign Repair Stations. The FAA inspectors are understaffed and underfunded. Although corrective measures have been put in place, the problem persists.

The TAMC highlighted several issues that were outlined in the IG Report, including: the FAA's failure to provide accurate and timely risk assessments of repair stations; the agency's ineffective risk-based inspection tools; and the "lack of versatility," limited data availability, questionable data quality and inconsistency of the FAA's "Repair Station Assessment Tool." The TAMC letter also pointed to the "Risk Management Process" which inspectors don't use.

Overall, the FAA does not have an effective oversight process for Foreign and Domestic Repair Stations. As the TAMC argues, these deficiencies continue until the FAA can demonstrate adequate oversight.

"This oversight issue has existed for over a decade and will only be exacerbated by air carriers' desire to expand the use of outsourced maintenance," according to the letter.

In a recent letter from the FAA, Associate Administrator Margaret Gilligan explains they plan to correct the problem. Nonetheless, the TAMC stands by our position that until the FAA can prove adequate oversight of the Repair Stations, no new certifications should be issued, either Foreign or Domestic. The Coalition is continuing its fight for a moratorium as a necessary step to ensure the safety of the flying public and to raise standards in our industry.

## LOCAL 986 AND HORIZON MECHANICS FIGHT TO STOP OUTSOURCING

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Air has created serious questions about how the routine maintenance work on the aircraft will be accomplished.

The plan to have three modified Horizon Q400 aircraft perform regular service between cities in Alaska beginning in March 2014 would release some larger Alaska aircraft currently flying these routes to be used in the lower 48 states. Three new aircraft are also being introduced to the Horizon fleet which should trigger an increase in mechanics' overall headcount at the carrier.

"The union continues to hold the position that all planned routine line maintenance work belongs to Teamster-represented QX mechanics, while the company on the other hand is planning from a position that regular maintenance for these aircraft can fall to the Alaska Air mechanics currently stationed in Alaska who are not members of the IBT at Horizon," said International Representative Dave Saucedo.

"A grievance was filed in reaction to these announcements making it officially known that the work belongs to the Horizon mechanics. The company has denied that a violation has occurred, explaining that the maintenance plan has not yet been finalized, although they have continued to move forward with initial steps and training that suggests otherwise," Saucedo added.

"Although the company has announced full descriptive plans to the employees and the public through various publications, the union has not yet been given a final decision of the maintenance intentions," said Airline Division Director David Bourne. "The Local Union has taken steps to continue through the grievance procedure per their agreement and we will join them in monitoring this situation closely for any attempt to violate the working agreement."

## Observing Workers' Memorial Day – in Aviation and Beyond

### Union Workplaces Are Safer Workplaces

Each year on April 28, Workers' Memorial Day (WMD) takes place. It is a day of remembrance for workers who were killed, disabled or injured at work. Across the United States, Canada and other countries around the world, rallies and other gatherings will be held to commemorate and mourn for those workers.

Workers Memorial Day was started by the Canadian Union Public Employee (CUPE) in 1984. The Canadian Labor Congress in 1985 declared April 28 as the annual day of remembrance that coincided with Canada's Workers Compensation Act passed in 1914.

Since 1989, unions and labor groups in North American, Asia, Europe and Africa have staged and organized events on April 28.

The need for a Workers' Memorial Day is clear. Each year 6,000 people are killed at work and another 50,000 workers die from occupational diseases. Millions more are injured and suffer epidemic rates of repetitive motion injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in 2011, nearly 3 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses occurred in the workplace.

For us as AMTs in the aviation field, we face many hazards, including exposure to chemicals and particulates from dust, falls from height, and especially from musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), also known as soft tissue or repetitive motion injuries. Looking at the OSHA General Industry standards (regulations), AMTs are covered by 80 percent of the OSHA standards, more than almost any other work group in any other industry, except for miners under MSHA.

Unions have fought for and won legislation, laws and protections that have made workplaces safer for all workers. Unions and organized labor continue to fight and push for stronger and better safety in the workplace. While statistics show that the number of workers who die on the job has declined in the last decade, the sad truth is that each year millions of workers are still injured on the job and thousands more continue to die. Ask yourself: If unions don't fight for safe workplaces, then who will?

On April 28, take a moment to remember our Teamster brothers and sisters – and other workers – who have been injured or killed on the job. Check your city or town to see if a Workers' Memorial event is taking place and attend if you can.

As the 19th/20th Century labor leader Mary Harris "Mother" Jones said, "Mourn for the Dead and Fight for the Living!"

To learn more about Workers' Memorial Day, visit the following websites:  
 Teamsters: <http://teamster.org/workers-memorial-day-april-28-2014>  
 NIOSH/CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workmemorial/>  
 The National Council for Occupational Health and Safety (NaCOSH): <http://www.coshnetwork.org/workers-memorial-week-action-0>

# Negotiations Roundup

**ASA** - After mediated talks in February, negotiations for a stand-alone Technician and Related, Subsidiary ASA contract resumed in April in Baltimore with the union and the company meeting in Federal Mediation.

While the company has yet to respond to the union's proposal that they are interested in accepting their offer of additional wages and work rules with the understanding that it would only apply to the S-ASA side, negotiations continued with the union making passes on Article 3 (Classifications) and Article 22 (General and Miscellaneous). The company passed on Article 7 (Hours of Service). No tentative agreements were reached.

For the stand-alone Sub-ASA contract, agreements have been reached on Articles 4 (Seniority), 5 (Filling of Vacancies), 6 (Reduction in Force and Recall), 13 (Training), 14 (Health and Safety), 16 (Moving Expenses), 20 (Grievance Procedure), 21 (Board of Arbitration) and the Interim Agreement which gives the members a process to fight discipline and discharge up to and including arbitration.

The next meeting with the company is tentatively scheduled for the week of June 16. In the interim, talks will continue in Mediation on the Sub-XJT side.

**NetJets** - The Negotiating Committee met at Local 284 headquarters the week of March 17 to complete and pass counter proposals to the company on Article 7 (Union Representation) and Article 13 (Funeral Leave). The Committee also completed and passed the union's opening proposals on Articles 20 (Training), 25 (Sick Leave) and 32 (Hours of Service). Additionally, the committee began work on Article 14 (Leaves of Absence). The union and the company were able to reach a tentative agreement on Article 35 (Tuition Assistance Policy).

The union and the company will be working to set dates for the next round of talks.

**Piedmont** - Negotiations resumed in late January with discussions on economics moving at a slower than hoped for pace, caused in large part by external factors created by the tentative agreement recently reached – and then rejected – by the American Eagle pilots and the mainline.

That agreement called for Eagle to receive the rest of the jets that have been ordered and would guarantee that Eagle's fleet remains at a minimum of 170 aircraft. Piedmont has yet to receive a commitment of replacement aircraft.

"We remain committed to insuring a fair and equitable agreement for the Piedmont aircraft technicians and related group, while protecting the jobs of our members in a difficult economic environment," said International Representative Bob Luciano.

Piedmont negotiations resumed again in March with a productive week reported as the parties discussed various aspects of both the company and union proposals and some new ideas. While no agreements were reached and the parties did not pass any paper proposals, both sides left with a clearer perspective on what the other side wants in the final agreement.

Discussions also took place regarding external events that may possibly impact the discussions. The company advised the committee that it had reached a tentative agreement with the flight attendants and the ratification process would be concluded in April. In the meantime, American Eagle pilots rejected their proposed contract on March 28.

**UAL** - The company confirmed an agreement on an arbitrator and date for the expedited arbitration regarding the resource

utilization letter. The presentation of the union's case began on April 9, however, it was not completed. The hearing session concluded late that day with the parties reviewing calendars to schedule future dates.

Following discussions between the union and management and barring unforeseen last minute changes or settlement discussions, the union has announced agreement on the following dates for UAL arbitrations.

**May 14:** ORD Data Center outsourcing with Arbitrator Carol Wittenberg at ORD

**June 4:** Tool Room Operations Grievance with Arbitrator Ed Krinsky - TBD

**June 11:** APU Shutdown with Arbitrator Ralph Berger - TBD

**June 18:** Newark De-Icing Grievance with Arbitrator Carol Wittenberg - TBD

In late February and early March, the economists from both sides met to thoroughly review the respective terms of the last table positions of the parties. Those two meetings produced a better understanding of the valuation of each side's position. The result of the analysis was that while much progress was made in the expedited portion of bargaining, there are still significant issues to overcome. Following these meetings, mediator Gerry McGuckin called the parties together for a meeting of the principals. That meeting was originally scheduled for April 11 in Chicago but was moved to Newark on the April 10.

Mediator McGuckin laid out the ground rules for going forward and informed the two sides that they had now lost control of the pace of negotiations; the parties will now be bound by his schedule availability. With 21 open, active cases, the first date available in his schedule was the week of August 18-22.

# Negotiations Roundup

The parties agreed that there would be an additional meeting for the leadership on May 7 and 8 in Las Vegas following the IBT Unity conference. The time from May to August will be used to reconvene the steering committee to discuss the current state of negotiations and to seek input for the full rank-and-file committee moving forward.

## GUL Deductions

It was reported out of Chicago that some members who have previously opted out of GUL are continuing to see deductions. If this is happening to you, Minnesota Life can be reached at 1-866-887-1043. If you choose to opt out during the last open enrollment, they will send you forms that must be signed and returned to process your refund.

## CLE Hub Status

As everyone has seen, the company is reducing a large amount of flying out of Cleveland. It was reported that most of the reductions will be for regional flights. According to the company, there are no planned reductions for UAL mainline mechanics.

Furloughed members urged to update their addresses.

Members on furlough are advised to keep their addresses current with the company while on layoff. It is predicted that there will be many movements this year and there have been several members that have been removed from the seniority list because old addresses were on file when notices were sent.

**If you are in touch with a furloughed member, please forward this information to them. Updates may be emailed to:**

ESC@united.com. The ESC will provide a fax number and ask members to send the address change accompanied with a signature.

**XJT** - The ExpressJet technician contract negotiations have entered their fifth year. This is partly due to the merger of ExpressJet with ASA, but mostly due to the company's foot-dragging and insistence on degrading the current collective bargaining agreement. The union negotiating committee has been using an outside economic consultant since beginning of the process by putting together opening proposals – the committee has been consistent in using an economist when needed.

### The following is the status of the contract sections:

- 1: Scope - Open, Not discussed
- 2: Definitions - TA
- 3: Classifications - TA
- 4: Seniority - TA
- 5: Filling of Vacancies - TA
- 6: Reduction in Force - Open
- 7: Hours of Service - Open
- 8: Vacation - Open
- 9: Holidays & Personal Days - Open
- 10: Leaves of Absence - TA
- 11: Sick Leave and OJI - Open
- 12: Field Trips - TA
- 13: Training - TA
- 14: Safety & Health - TA
- 15: Compensation - Open, Not discussed
- 16: Moving Expenses - TA
- 17: Benefits - Open, Not discussed
- 18: Overtime - Open
- 19: Union Security - TA
- 20: Grievance Procedure - TA
- 21: System Board of Arbitration - TA
- 22: General & Miscellaneous - Open
- 23: Duration - Open, Not discussed

Most of the open articles are open for one or two issues. Scope, Compensation, Benefits and Duration are interrelated and part of the final negotiations. The majority of open issues are economic issues.

On April 2 the mediator told both parties that he was disappointed that the company had not been able to bring individuals to discuss financial information related to the negotiations, as he had requested. He further informed the parties that he had been assigned several new cases and needed to schedule them for initial meetings and, as the company needed to be prepared for economic discussions, we would not receive new meeting dates until July. He noted that we are always free to meet without the mediator.

The union IBT Negotiating Committee will consider how best to proceed. We will use the time to work on future proposals and determine how best to keep the membership informed and involved in the negotiations for their collective bargaining agreement.