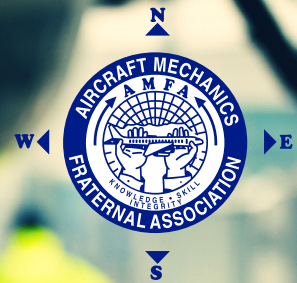


THE GRAPEVINE

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SAFETY ENGAGED



By Louie Key, National Director

2016 is going to be a very eventful year for our Association. In the spring we hold our National Convention, which only occurs every four years, where delegates convene to access constitution amendment proposals and nominate National Officers. In the summer National Officer Elections and a Constitutional Ratification Referendum are held. Local Officer Elections are held in the fall.

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Louie Key,
National Director

We will continue our mediated negotiations for the Southwest Airlines (SWA), Aircraft Maintenance Technicians and Section

6 Contract negotiations for the SWA Facility Maintenance Technicians. I am extremely hopeful that both of the open SWA contracts will reach tentative agreements this year that will earn the support and ratification of the membership. Additionally, Alaska Airlines will continue their recently started Section 6 negotiations and further development of their NTSB Aircraft Accident Investigation Team.

In addition, there will be numerous other issues that we will be focusing on this year, from our Aviation Safety Action Programs, membership communications, legislative pursuits, media outreach, scholarship programs, and industry events like the Aircraft Maintenance Skills Competition, just to name a few.

AEI Affiliation Facilitates Safety

One of the other important items we continuously work on is our affiliation with the Aircraft Engineers International (AEI). They are an affiliation of aircraft maintenance technician/engineer unions from around the world whose main focus is on aviation safety through the

promotion and protection of the licensed aircraft maintenance technician/engineer. AMFA and AEI could not be more aligned in these efforts as evidenced by our motto: "Safety in the air begins with quality maintenance on the ground." AEI recently published a press release regarding the findings of the investigation into the 2014 AirAsia Flight 8501 accident. Some contributing factors were linked to maintenance issues. Some of the issues should be very recognizable as they were discussed in AMFA National's Safety Initiative that was introduced in late 2014, such as the non-reporting of maintenance defects, inadequate maintenance programs that allow a minor fault to escalate to a catastrophic failure, training issues, and a lack of adequate regulatory oversight.

AMFA National Safety Initiative

In regard to the AMFA National Safety Initiative, it was extremely disappointing to review the results of our 2015 Member Survey (which had fewer than 10% participation rate) and to find out that of those who did participate, only 55% were aware of our Safety Initiative and even fewer still (less than 17%) had taken the time to review the presentation.

The Initiative was presented to each local's leadership who were asked to distribute the information to their respective local membership. I also posted the information with links in my monthly updates so members could review the information

on their own. Unfortunately, it appears that these distribution methods fell short, so I am again following up with each one of you in this format and asking that you make a commitment to your profession, and yourself, and take the time to go to our website and review the AMFA National Safety Initiative. It covers some of the most important aspects of doing your job in a professional, safe, and compliant manner, and it is one very significant thing that you can do in 2016 that will genuinely further your craft.

Resolve to be the Best Union Members Possible

Finally, as we venture through 2016 and all of the exciting changes it can bring, let's all resolve to be the best union members possible. We all need to participate in our union elections, attend membership meetings, demonstrate solidarity through supporting our negotiating committees, report safety concerns, and look out for one another. We should each be sure to reach out and speak directly to our negotiating committee representatives and voice our concerns and expectations for our contracts. It is only through this direct, personal engagement that we will ever reach our full potential and make our union as strong as it can be. And remember, the best possible way to demonstrate your greatest value, whether in contract negotiations or not, is to consistently deliver a safe, compliant, and air-worthy aircraft every single day.

Changing Safety Culture



Dave Brooks,
National Safety &
Standard Director

By David Brooks, National Safety and Standards Director

I trust all of you out there have heard of the Safety Initiative that has been ongoing by AMFA National. I just wanted to remind you of its importance and of the consequences to our craft.

Safety is one sided, and there is only one right way to do it. While you are doing anything, you should know the correct way and accept the risk if you do not adhere to that way. There is no company or union opinion — safety is safety. We can disagree on how it is administered, as in the latest mask fitting incident at SWA; however, to be safe, we need to have the correct attitude and be aware of the consequences at all times. Furthermore, we need to do it right the first time.

Safety and production go hand-in-hand. Too much production and safety goes down, too much safety and production goes down. Our primary job is to perform all maintenance as stated in the manuals, and to disregard schedule and how it may have been done incorrectly in the past, or our past culture. “Safety over schedule” is a mantra that both parties agree upon. Do not allow the “Hurry up” syndrome to rear

its ugly head, whether this comes from peer pressure, self-induced pressure, or from management.

The importance of this Safety Initiative is very evident. You must realize that every action you accomplish will potentially affect you and every passenger that travels on our aircraft. We do not want any technician hurt or killed while in the line of duty, or to have maintenance be the fault of an aircraft accident. To borrow the last line of the mechanics creed: “I realize the grave responsibility that is mine — to exercise my judgment on the airworthiness of aircraft and equipment. I pledge unyielding adherence to these precepts for the advancement of aviation and the dignity of my profession.” We need to take our responsibility as seriously as the creed above declares.

I also need to emphasize that big brother is always watching you. If you are doing your job as it is supposed to be done, then there

are no worries; however, if you are not, supervisors and managers are watching our folks on camera to try and find whatever it is that they are looking for. This is not hearsay — it is happening system-wide. I am not saying it is happening at every station or airline, but it is happening. Be aware! Make sure that you are familiar with our Safety Initiative and realize that the culture of maintenance has taken a shift in the last few years or so, and we have to be aware of this and institute it into our daily jobs.

This culture shift is making all parties reevaluate safety: how we look at it, how we deal with it, and how we improve it to include management. We have had some injuries, and even some who have lost employment because they didn’t follow the culture. Our companies do want you to go home alive and employed. Although you should be concerned about getting fired because of a certain task not being done correctly, please focus your attention on the safety consequences if it is not done correctly. This is something that we as technicians need to be aware of and follow. We need to change the old culture and realize that there will be consequences if we do not.

I encourage all of you to visit the National Website to review the Safety Initiative and talk with your Local Safety and Standards representatives if you have any questions, comments or suggestions about the program.

Are We Listening?

By Justin Madden, National Secretary/Treasurer

It is often much easier to hear than to listen. You might ask: What's the difference? We hear things as we go about our daily work routine — drills being used, florescent lights buzzing, passengers talking as they board an aircraft while we sign off the logbook. These are background noises that we mostly tune out to focus on our job.

Listening is different and requires another step or action. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, listening is defined as “to hear something with thoughtful attention.” It usually involves eye contact if done in person, and definitely requires focus from those actively listening. It also requires input, which is an essential part of the process.

You have tasked AMFA's leadership with representing you. Although we have different roles and purposes, both National and your Local need your input to accomplish it effectively. This is the main goal of the constitutionally required Annual Member Survey. Every year, National mails a letter to each member's house around October containing the instructions on how to participate in the survey. These surveys are usually web-based and intentionally kept as short as possible to reduce the burden on you. Once the survey is complete, the answers, including the open responses, are compiled and presented to leadership. We recently finished the 2015 version with a less-than-stellar 10% response rate, but we are processing the answers, and want to pass along a hearty thank you to those who participated.

The Locals also commit energy and resources to listening to you. General membership meetings are held monthly or bi-monthly and give the membership the opportunity to effect change and communicate their issues. Many times, a National Officer is in attendance. One of our locals has taken it a step further and sets up cameras and televisions at outstations so a larger percentage of folks can participate in the meeting. Still others fly in their outstation representatives so they can pass on the message to those members. When appropriate, some information is shared on company property, although we need to keep in mind that this is not the place to make motions or air out the proverbial dirty laundry.

Needless to say, the Association is giving you the opportunity to provide input, but are we listening to that input? We take the survey responses seriously and have made adaptations where possible. For example, a couple of years ago you told us that interactions between members and officers were not as good as they could be. We worked on that and those satisfaction numbers have increased. You told us that

you wanted more content and faster communication, so we created an AMFA app that gives you easy access to information and sends

it right to your smartphone or tablet. Membership meetings are completely driven by members and always have been in this Association. As a member, you can have things placed on the agenda and explain your issues, both in the meeting as well as with local leadership before or after one.

We've all heard the complaint that unions only seem to represent the folks who are always in trouble. Just recently I was having my car safety and emissions inspected, and sparked up a conversation with another guy in the waiting area. When the topic moved to my job, I listened as this fellow complained that his industrial union only represented the lazy and underperforming people. It's a knock that is hard to shake as many times we do find our union involved in unfortunate high profile situations. Although each member deserves our protection, and who knows when you may find yourself in a position where your specific livelihood is at stake, we are keen to the fact that many of you go about your day without our



Justin Madden,
National Secretary/
Treasurer

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visible assistance. We of course represent you in ways you don't necessarily see, such as collective bargaining on your behalf, protecting and promoting the craft, and ensuring that your carrier adheres to the contract.

I explained this and more to the fellow in the waiting area and he understood, but still wondered why so few had such a large impact on his union. The answer is a simple one — we don't often hear from the majority. Your input is a necessary variable in the equation — we need it to listen and understand. As mentioned above, fewer than 10% of the membership participated in the survey. As I attend various membership meetings, some locals have a greater turnout than others, but even the larger turnouts pale in comparison to those actually on the membership rolls. We have the most democratic union in our craft, and that freedom and ability to get directly involved should fuel a desire to participate, particularly if things aren't the way you want them.

Perhaps you are happy. Perhaps your busy family or social life precludes anything more than a minor involvement in our Association. You still have an obligation to be informed with the correct information. Go to the website, download the app, connect via Facebook or Twitter. Reach out to your local officer or representative for accurate information. Vote. Participate in the annual survey. Make your voice heard at the membership meeting. We're listening.

Bargaining Approach: Traditional or Interest-Based



Earl Clark,
Region I Director

By Earl Clark, Region II Director

Most of you are aware that AMFA is currently in negotiations at both of our represented carriers. Currently at Southwest Airlines, AMFA has been negotiating on behalf of the Aircraft Maintenance Technician and Related Employees for around 3 ½ years, and about that same amount of time for the Southwest Facility Maintenance Technicians. At Alaska Airlines, AMFA is in the beginning stage of negotiations.

When AMFA prepares for the process of bargaining, we ask our members to submit proposals for consideration to change the current collective bargaining agreement. After that process is complete, AMFA surveys the affected membership on the proposals submitted from the Locals to determine their importance. Next, the Negotiation Committee receives the results of the survey and lays out a strategy on how to accomplish the goals of the member's prioritization survey. Then the parties meet to exchange opening proposals and/or concerns that they believe need to be addressed within the collective bargaining agreement. These openers could be as simple as a bullet point list of areas of change or as detailed as specific language sought. It's at this point where the parties determine the approach, process, style, or methodologies that will be used to amend the agreement.

There are many different ways to work out the differences in collective bargaining. The two most common are traditional bargaining and interest-based bargaining.

Let's first take a look at the approach that has been around the longest when it comes to bargaining between Unions and Companies: traditional bargaining, which may also be known as conventional, positional, adversarial, power, or disruptive bargaining. The traditional process uses strategies to do whatever it takes to maximize gains or minimize concessions (losses) when reaching an agreement. There is the thought that there are limited resources or a pie, and the task is to maximize our share by using any available strategy. Some of the techniques used to convince the other side to accept their position could include logic, flattery, bluffing, and bluster or threats. This process involves holding on to a fixed idea or position, and it alone. Each side often brings a long laundry list of demands to the bargaining table, some of which may be inflated in order to give some room to bargain. Once both sides have proposed their initial positions, they work through the specific wants with each side accepting, rejecting, or making counter proposals in response to positions taken by the

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other side. this is when you see if either side is unwilling to make movement, it can become a paper pushing exercise where neither side is willing to move off of its position.

At this point, a lot of time is spent away from the negotiation table in caucus meetings where the teams meet in private discussions to come up ways to restate their position. This is a very time-consuming process. It can take years.

Now let's take a look at the second option, which is called interest-based bargaining. Interest-based bargaining could also be known as consensus bargaining, problem solving bargaining, win-win, mutual gains, or collaborative bargaining.

This approach to bargaining often uses a neutral facilitator to assist throughout the process, but that is not required. In the interest-based bargaining approach, both sides do not begin in a predetermined position on a proposal or issue. Both sides identify concerns they want to discuss. The two sides work together to explore the issues in depth, and attempt to find mutually acceptable solutions. More work is done together, and less is done in caucus. The parties involved hope to find a win-win outcome that benefits both sides.

In order for interest-based bargaining to be successful, the ability of both sides to establish and maintain a high level of trust is key. Both sides must be willing to freely share information and ideas as well as explore options with an open mind. This process

can be very time consuming, and in many ways more difficult on the Union; however, the results that can be made in this process make it worth the effort, especially if it's a divisive issue. Some issues are easier to resolve than others, and the interest-based bargaining process is not typically used when settling disputes over wages and benefits.

We have utilized a combination of both traditional and interest-based bargaining with our carriers. Neither of these approaches always proceeds smoothly towards a settlement. It can take months and even years of effort, and still both sides may find that they remain so far apart they see no way to reach

an agreement. This situation is known as an impasse.

During an impasse, either side, under the Railway Labor Act, can ask for help from the National Mediation Board, as we are currently experiencing at Southwest with the Aircraft Technician and Related negotiations. Mediators from the National Mediation Board typically use the approach of interest-based bargaining or a combination of the two bargaining approaches to nudge the sides toward an agreement.

Although the process of negotiations may be slow, and the concept of give-and-take can be displeasing, AMFA is working hard to maintain and further the industry-leading wages and benefits that you enjoy.

2015 Local Officer/Representative of the Year

By Justin Madden,
National Secretary/Treasurer

The National Executive Council (NEC) awarded Dan Burgess the 2015 Local Officer/Representative of the Year. Burgess most recently held the Local 4 President position. The NEC presented the award at our September Joint Advisory Council (JAC) meeting in Las Vegas.

Dan began 2015 by stepping up and filling in the remainder of the President's term at Local 4, which is based in Chicago and represents other stations as well, including Atlanta, Baltimore, and several smaller line stations. He was instrumental in helping the Association revise and implement the new Shop Representative Training Program, as well as

several other important projects. Take the time to congratulate Dan the next time you see him. He, along with so many your Association representatives, are deserving of praise.



This is the second year of the award, and as was the case last year, the competition was intense. The NEC believes that it is important to recognize those who have helped the Association achieve success. Locals submit the name of an individual who has gone above and beyond while representing the membership.

Promoting the Craft: You Have the Power

By Michael P. Nelson, Region II Director



Michael Nelson,
Region II Director

“Knowledge, Skill, Integrity” are some of the core values of our Association. While all three are extremely valuable traits for success in

our careers, only knowledge and skill are tangible. The ability to efficiently accomplish a task is a direct reflection of the knowledge and skills we possess and proves our value. The company invests heavily in items such as training, tooling, and protective clothing in the hopes that their investment will pay them high dividends through enhanced production. While company contributions are a part of the equation, the overwhelming component to providing a safe and reliable product efficiently comes from the professionalism within each of us. In my opinion, “integrity” is the foundation upon which our careers are built. As related to this discussion, integrity is a reflection of our work ethics and the confidence level we earn from our coworkers; it can’t be taught but it can be obtained through emulation and hard work. While most of us can overcome a lack of knowledge or a particular skill set from time to time, there is no easy way to overcome a loss of your integrity. Whether a lapse of integrity results in being treated differently by coworkers who no longer trust your judgement, fines from the FAA, or termination from the company, the path to get back what you lost will be long and chal-

lenging — if possible at all.

I have been asked by members “What is our Association doing to promote our craft?” While I believe that the Locals and National are and should be active in promoting the craft of our membership, my answer is consistent that each individual member has the real power to force the change needed to promote our craft and advance their careers. Our true value will be recognized only when each of us understands that, although however painful, we must give the Company accurate information to the “costs” of each task we perform. We must protect our livelihoods by respecting every task and accomplishing them in an efficient and safe manner with a level of professionalism that only each of us, individually, can ensure.

I have a personal viewpoint to share that ties both “integrity” and “What is our Association doing to promote our craft” — the belief that the Association is not in place to protect a member from themselves. If at this point in our careers a person doesn’t know what will get them fired or not, it’s a damn shame. If a single member acts contrary to this knowledge and chooses to jeopardize their career and their family’s security for whatever short-term gain, why is the rest of the membership on the hook? We have been inundated in recent years by a constant message from this Association, and even to some extent our carriers, about always working in a safe and compliant manner. Yet we still have members who are getting themselves terminated from employment for working out of com-

pliance — some with high definition video evidence. Is it fair to expect a Local to spend their membership’s funds defending someone who knowingly commits an action, or lack thereof, that they knew could get them fired?

How can we truly advance our profession if we as technicians tolerate a lack of professionalism within our ranks? How can we truly advance our profession if we as an Association defend those who have acted, and been caught, in a manner that was in opposition to advancing the standing of the membership we represent? If we are to truly advance our professions we must act as professionals — every day, every task.

In closing, I would again like to thank all of those who participate in and educate yourselves about our Association. Being that this may be the last chance I have to write an article for a mailed Grapevine in my tenure as Regional II Director, which is over in October, and since there are many of you who do not apparently receive our electronic Grapevines or other digital information which can easily be accessed via your cellular device or read on the National website, I felt this was the right opportunity to share my opinion about this controversial subject. I truly believe that we, as individuals, have all the power necessary to advance our craft, our professions, and our family’s livelihoods; we just each have to utilize this power on a daily basis. Thank you for your time spent reading this and I hope you and your families have a safe and prosperous 2016 and beyond.



AMFA National

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Dues Objector Notification

Federal law requires that the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) notify all AMFA represented employees annually of its dues objector procedures. These procedures require that you notify AMFA between February 1 and March 15, 2016, if you intend to be a dues objector for that year. Dues objector notices received either before or after these dates will not be accepted and you will not have dues objector status for that year.

Dues objectors are required to pay only the portion of dues that is germane to collective bargaining, including but not limited to grievance adjustment and

contract administration. The non-germane percentage of dues is set annually by June 1 and is based on an independent CPA's verification of germane/non-germane expenses for the prior year. A compilation of 2014 expenses was conducted and the fees paid by dues objectors in 2015 were 91.40% of full membership dues.

If a dues objector disagrees with the calculation of the percentage of the reduction, our policy allows for an appeal before an independent arbitrator. Costs of the arbitrator are paid by the Association. Objectors bear the costs of presenting their appeal.

It is important that if you elect to become a dues objector you will no longer be entitled to the rights and privileges of membership, including but not limited to, the right to hold a National or Local office, vote in National or Local elections, attend union meetings, participate in contract negotiations, or vote on a contract ratification. We suggest you consider these restrictions before deciding whether or not you wish to become a dues objector. To receive more information on filing for dues objector status, please call the AMFA National Office at (303) 752-2632 or write to AMFA National, 14001 E. Iliff Ave, Suite 217, Aurora, CO 80014.