To: AMFA Locals and Members  
Re: National Director’s Monthly Update for November 2019  
Date: December 6, 2019

Dear Members:

We celebrated not one, but two holidays in the month of November - Veteran’s Day and Thanksgiving. These holidays go hand-in-hand as they are both focused on thankfulness and appreciation. As a Veteran, I want to thank all who have ever served for your service, your commitment, and your family’s sacrifice to this Great Nation. Our Nation’s soldiers serve every day to protect our country and its ideals. Additionally, I hope you all enjoyed time celebrating Thanksgiving with your family and friends. God Bless!

Since welcoming the Horizon Air members to AMFA in August, our officers have traveled across the country to meet the newest members, including follow-up station visits in Spokane, Boise, Seattle, and Portland in November. Assistant National Director Gene Painter, Interim Airline Representative (ALR) Tom Imlah, and myself met with Horizon Air aircraft technicians and fleet service (aircraft cleaners) on all shifts to discuss: Area Representative responsibilities; Shop Representative volunteers and training; upcoming ALR, ASAP Representative, and Local 14 elections; and the Annual AMFA National Survey. These face-to-face visits have been a great success and we look forward meeting more members of this group.

We continue to await the National Mediation Board determination for single carrier status for the Alaska Airlines and Legacy Virgin America groups. We have received the review of documents and anticipate a single carrier certificate the first week in December. Please monitor the Alaska Airlines News and Updates page of the AMFA National website for further details.

On November 12, 2019, AMFA put out a press release addressing our growing concerns of the continuing maintenance lapses by Southwest Airlines. Southwest Airlines and Aviation Technical Services (ATS) have collaborated since 2014 to develop a technical fleet integration service, dubbed as the Skyline program, which enables carriers to expediently integrate aircraft into their existing fleet. “ATS has been a committed and reliable partner in Southwest’s fleet modernization efforts,” said Landon Nitschke, Southwest Airlines Vice President of Maintenance Operations. “By working with ATS to centralize technical elements of Southwest’s pre-owned aircraft integration program, we have introduced dozens of aircraft into revenue service.”

The US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation published their concerns with the Skyline program with a Fact Sheet: Southwest Airlines Skyline Aircraft Concerns. Included in this Fact Sheet is an internal FAA memo urging immediate action because Southwest Airlines could not certify to the FAA or passengers that planes met safety standards, and it alleges the carrier provided little or no oversight to the maintenance company that vetted used aircraft acquired from abroad.
SAFETY IN THE AIR BEGINS WITH QUALITY MAINTENANCE ON THE GROUND

As of yet, the Judge has not made a decision on jurisdiction regarding our federal lawsuits being moot. Remember, do not listen to what SWA says, watch what they do. Southwest’s actions show us they are full-speed ahead in an attempt to execute your union, and trying to manipulate the federal courts as a weapon in this court case. The federal litigation cases AMFA is presently fighting, will not only affect our workgroup at SWA, they will affect the entire industry (pilots, flight attendants, AMTs, dispatchers, ground workers, etc.) that fall under the RLA. We are continuing to monitor our legal matters and will keep you updated as developments unfold.

The AMFA Legislative team has been working hard on new fronts and monitoring legislative initiatives that affect our craft. On November 15, 2019, AMFA commended the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) for introducing “The Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act,” calling for unannounced FAA inspections of foreign repair stations, minimum qualifications for mechanics and others working on U.S.-registered aircraft at foreign repair stations, data gathering and analysis, a conditional moratorium on FAA certification of new foreign repair stations, and requiring the FAA to create an online repository for carriers to report heavy maintenance history by location and specific aircraft registration number, as well as other safety metrics.

Furthermore, on November 20, 2019, Congressmen John Garamendi (D-CA), a senior member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, applauded the committee’s passage of his bipartisan “Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing Disclosure Act of 2019” (H.R.4374) as part of a comprehensive bill (H.R.5119) pertaining to safety standards at foreign repair stations. The legislation, H.R. 5119 (116) by Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), will "bring us closer to our national goal of achieving one level of safety," DeFazio said at the markup. "One level of safety has been the pole star of the FAA and this committee ... but there is not one level of safety among repair stations." House Transportation Committee approves bill 39-19 on foreign aircraft repair inspections and now the bill will move to the Senate.

On November 19, 2019, National Safety and Standards Director Scott King, Asst. National Director Gene Painter, and myself attended the public hearing of Southwest Airlines Flight1380 at the NTSB in Washington, DC. After the accident, the FAA ordered airlines to check for cracks in CFM56 engine fan blades and to increase required inspection intervals from 3000 cycles to 1600 cycles. The NTSB called for Boeing to redesign the fan cowl for the 737NG and also recommended new testing methods since the fan blade did not react in the manner observed during previous testing. The full NTSB report is anticipated to be released next week.

On November 18-19, 2019, Region I Director Earl Clark and Region II Director Will Abbott hosted a two-day Shop Representatives Training session in Denver, CO. Professor Don Taylor from University of WI and AMFA Legal Counsel presented Shop, Area, and Airline Representatives from all three carriers with the required knowledge to perform their many duties. Please give these members a big THANK YOU the next time you see them for their commitment to help enforce our respective Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA).

The AMFA National Convention convenes on May, 4, 2020, and each Local has been busy preparing for the big event. Local Delegate elections are either currently underway or have recently concluded. Each Local is also responsible for collecting Constitution Amendment Proposal Forms from their respective members and then submitting them to the Rules Committee; therefore, it is important to check with your Local to confirm their deadline to submit proposals. Additionally, because the
Constitution allows each Local to submit only one nominee per National Office to the Convention. Locals who receive more than one name for any given position will need to conduct a runoff election.

The NEC continues to strive for the best communication practices to reach our membership. Tools are in place for our members to acquire news and updates regarding current events throughout the Association via the National website, AMFA App, and social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Thank you for your continued support in this membership outreach and communication campaign. We will also continue to conduct station and GMM visits system-wide.

Reminder: all Members, the FAA Hotline reporting system may be utilized to report concerns of aviation safety: https://hotline.faa.gov. We must realize our grave responsibility as FAA certified airman to exercise our judgement on the airworthiness of aircraft and equipment. We, therefore, pledge unyielding adherence to these precepts for the advancement of public safety of aviation and for the dignity for our craft.

As always, I ask you please be safe and to stay engaged with your union and officers. For more carrier specific updates and further information regarding AMFA and the airline industry, please visit the AMFA National Website at www.amfanational.org. Our most determined efforts will only succeed with your continued support and participation – please stay informed.

Sincerely,

Bret Oestreich
National Director