



## **AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION**

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Dear AMFA Members:

The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association has been inundated in the past 24 hours with inquiries from the Press regarding Southwest Airlines (SWA) and their aircraft maintenance program. Due to the sensational nature of these inquiries regarding the precautionary and temporary grounding of a fraction of SWA's fleet, I am compelled to provide the following statement:

AMFA represents approximately 1,900 skilled and highly trained aircraft technicians and related personnel at SWA. By virtue of this representation, I am very familiar with many of the technicians who maintain Southwest's fleet of 737 aircraft and their dedication to aviation safety. SWA has operated a very safe airline in the past and I have complete confidence in their safety in the future.

The shrill tone of some of these reporters' voices and the ignorance with which they were drawing conclusions was stunning. I sensed that some of these reporters were actually looking forward to discrediting one of the most admired airlines in the world.

After I explained that SWA was actually responding in a very responsible and rational manner, numerous reporters seemed to lose interest in writing the "story of the decade." Based on the questions asked, it seems clear they had hoped I would confirm their speculation that this was a really big story that would embarrass Southwest Airlines and put their safety record into question.

One prominent reporter called me back about an hour after our initial conversation and told me that after talking to AMFA and other sources they realized this event was not the smoking gun they had thought it was and that they were going to back away from the original tone of the story.

As I scanned the morning news, I was glad to see that the rush to judgment had been slowed to a crawl.

AMFA stands in support of our Southwest members and their fine company. Their actions under the circumstances have been predictable and responsible. The safety of their aircraft, crew members, and passengers has always been of first importance. I personally applaud SWA for their quick and decisive measures taken yesterday to confirm the integrity of their maintenance program.

I have been a frequent flyer on SWA, and in fact will be boarding a Southwest aircraft in about four hours from the time of this report. I have full confidence in SWA and will, in spite of the fact that I can fly for free on some carriers, continue to pay to fly this fine, reputable, and safe airline.

Respectfully,

Steve MacFarlane  
National Director