

The Grapevine

2013 • Issue 1



Inside This Issue:

- New National Executive Council
- AMFA's Affiliation with AEI
- AEI Annual Congress - Malta
- 2013 Dues Objector Notice
- And More...

AMFA PROUD!

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Cover

- 2 Table of Contents
- 3 New National Executive Council
- 4 AMFA's Affiliation with AEI
- 5 AMFA – A Union Focused on its Members
- 6-7 AEI Annual Congress – Malta
- 8 Lobbyit.com
- 9 Alaska Airlines Professional Standards
- 10 Looking Back and Then Forward
- 11 Region II Welcome and Update
- Back Cover** 2013 Dues Objector Notice

National Executive Council

Louie Key	National Director
Aaron Hansen	Assistant National Director
Justin Madden	National Secretary/ Treasurer
David Brooks	National Safety and Standards Director
Earl Clark	Region I Director
Michael P. Nelson	Region II Director

Mission Statement

Disseminate news in any manner to keep the membership alert and well informed.
– an Association Objective, AMFA Constitution

AMFA National produces this publication because it is our firm belief that an informed union membership creates a strong union. AMFA inalterably places the control of the Association with the membership. Every member has a responsibility to stay informed and involved.

Produced By:

AMFA National Executive Council
14001 East Iliff Avenue, Suite 217
Aurora, CO 80014
Office: 303-752-2632
Fax: 303-362-7736

Email: Admin@amfanatl.org

Web: www.amfanational.org

Editor and Publisher: Justin Madden

Copy Editor: Rynne Pelletier

Printing: Fosdick Printing Company

Closing Date: January 17, 2013

The Grapevine's editorial content must be generally consistent with Association policies. The guiding principle governing all submissions is respect for one's fellow member and for the Association. Submitted articles should address issues pertinent to the Association and its members, and must avoid references of a personal nature.

All articles, including guest editorials, should conform with policy positions of the Association as established by the AMFA National Executive Council, AMFA Constitution, and National Policy Manual. The responsibility for monitoring editorial consistency is shared by National Officers.

New National Executive Council Takes Office



AMFA's newly elected National Executive Council (NEC) was sworn into office on January 7, 2013, at the national office in Denver. Four new officers took office following their election in December. National Director Louie Key and Region I Director Earl Clark both ran unopposed in the election.

The new Assistant National Director is Aaron Hansen. Mr. Hansen is an aircraft maintenance technician for Southwest Airlines based in Sacramento and is a member of Local 32, where he served as president of the local. The new National Secretary/Treasurer is Justin Madden. Mr. Madden is an aircraft maintenance technician for Southwest Airlines in Philadelphia and is a member of Local 18. The new National Safety and Standards Director is David Brooks. Mr. Brooks is an aircraft maintenance technician with Southwest Airlines in Phoenix and is a member of Local 32, where he served as the Safety & Standards Chairman. The new Region II Director is Michael P. Nelson. Mr. Nelson is an airline maintenance technician for Southwest Airlines in Kansas City and is a member of Local 18.

The election of new officers is a reminder that one of AMFA's core principles is democracy, and that the Union leadership is elected and controlled by the Membership. It is one of the unique elements that separate AMFA from other unions. Each national officer was elected to a four year term that will run until October 2016. Please join us in congratulating these new Officers!



National Director Louie Key administers the Officer Oath to the new members of the National Executive Council



Left to Right: David Brooks, Mike Nelson, Justin Madden, and Aaron Hansen

AMFA's Affiliation with AEI – What's in it for us?



By: Louie Key
National Director



In November National Safety & Standards Director Fred Digne and I attended the Aircraft Engineers International (AEI) Annual Congress in Malta; AMFA has been an affiliate of AEI since 2007 but this year's congress was the first opportunity for me to attend. Mr. Digne's article in this issue of the Grapevine covers the business side of the AEI Congress but I want to share with you some of the benefits to our Association in advancing our relationship with AEI.

AEI is composed of more than 40 affiliate unions; most affiliates are from Europe and others are from New Zealand and Australia. AMFA is the only affiliate from the "Americas" and, therefore, the only affiliate from the United States. Similar to AMFA, AEI affiliation is restricted to craft unions that only represent aircraft technician and related personnel.

Listening to the reports presented by various delegates from across the globe, it was insightful to learn that aircraft engineers worldwide are facing the identical challenges that we face here in the US. When company pressures to meet schedules and protect revenue conflict with maintenance defects, it can place individual "engineers" in a vulnerable position. Furthermore, engineers abroad do not have the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) protections that we enjoy here in the US. And please be aware that it does not matter where your carrier flies, the airlines can ferry the aircraft anywhere to be worked on.

With that in mind, I believe we have many opportunities to work in conjunction with AEI to raise our collective voices to aviation regulators and to ensure positive changes are made that address the shortcomings we are all too aware of. Our voice has an even greater impact with legislators in Washington, DC when we can state to them that as an affiliate of the Aircraft Engineers International, and speaking with our counterparts from across the world, it is not just the technicians at US carriers that are seeing the erosion of the quality of work from the vendors. Airlines continue to compromise safety by pushing more-and-more work to the lowest bidder while technicians and engineers across the world continue to sound the alarm with their regulatory agencies.

By sharing our expertise and working together with the affiliates of AEI, we all benefit. They are fighting the same battles we are. Aircraft maintenance technicians worldwide need to stand together to defend our profession, and the affiliates of AEI are the perfect allies to fight for this cause. Together we can raise public awareness that the cheap tickets they might enjoy, due in part because the airlines outsource their maintenance to the lowest bidder, may come at a very high price.

As we begin 2013, AMFA has been asked to participate with the FAA on the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing (ASIAS) Program. While ASIAS has been in place for several years, it has mostly concentrated on Flight Ops issues. Maintenance activities and ASAP reporting are expanding and we expect more analysis activities in the future. We look forward to participating and sharing our expertise and bringing the perspective



from a very diverse population of aircraft maintenance technicians. This year could prove to be pivotal for our craft. Our work with AEI and with the FAA will continue to raise the issue of safety for the flying public as airlines outsource work to unlicensed mechanics. Your union will continue to hammer this issue on your behalf.

AMFA – A Union Focused on its Members

*By: Aaron Hansen
Assistant National Director*



I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you two of my most memorable events from 2012 when we as a Union helped out our own people in our class and craft.

In the early part of the year, one of our members at Southwest Airlines (SWA) was forced to retire himself from employment. This was obviously a big shock to him and to his family. I was really, really surprised how fast that word spread as to what happened to this individual. Our union brothers and sisters joined together, and the great network of people that we have with AMFA was able to procure him employment with Alaska Airlines. This shows the uniqueness and effectiveness of our great Association.

Later in 2012, another member that worked for Alaska Airlines was displaced from Phoenix (PHX) and relocated to Los Angeles (LAX). The commuting to and from LAX proved to be a major family hardship forcing him to take a voluntary leave in lieu of furlough in effect putting him "on the street." While joining his brothers and sisters at a membership meeting, his situation was made known. The word spread quickly and it was realized that SWA was hiring. Through Association contacts, this person was able to obtain an interview and is now gainfully employed with Southwest Airlines.

Reflecting on both of these situations, it makes me proud to be part of an Association where we are able to network, help each other out, and understand the many facets of aviation because we all live it every day.

AEI Annual Congress – Malta

By: Fred Digne

Former National Safety & Standards Director



Louie Key and Fred Digne at the AEI Congress

Aircraft Engineers International (AEI) is the international body that promotes the interests of Aircraft Engineers and is currently comprised of 40 aircraft technicians unions from around the world. Its formation came about as a result of problems faced by Aircraft Engineers which, due to the very nature of their profession, were not confined to the borders of a single country.

AEI is a worldwide champion of flight safety. Its participation in various international bodies aims at maintaining high standards of Aircraft Maintenance, something which is constantly under threat by the increasing commercial pressures.

This year's 40th Annual Conference held in Valletta, Malta focused on the lack of oversight and effectiveness of the National Aviation Authorities. The aviation industry has for some time now been promoting "self-regulation" and increased outsourcing, not as a means for improving safety but rather as a means of reducing costs and improving profit. It has become clear that airlines worldwide are exploiting the phrase "safety first," using it for nothing more than a marketing catch-phrase. Airlines continue to lobby hard for more self-regulation and have stealthily and successfully convinced politicians to remove or reduce the effectiveness of safety regulations.

History has taught us a lot about human nature, so it should not come as a surprise that government experts and aviation managers often confuse priorities when confronted with challenging and difficult financial situations. Let's be clear, profit, not safety, is more important and this principle is supported by regulators as they too are forced to cut back due to cash poor governments. Weak regulatory oversight doesn't just apply to aviation, think back to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico or the current global financial crisis. In both cases the lack of regulatory oversight was a major factor. And it's alarming to see similar claims are being made about health care and education. Meanwhile top CEO and executives walk away with huge bonuses and "Golden Parachutes."

The common goal amongst carriers around the world is to find ways to cut costs in the interest of shareholder profits, but at whose expense? Maintenance programs worldwide are implementing protocols that reduce the frequency that an aircraft is inspected. These new progressive maintenance





programs are splitting major overhaul activities into smaller packages, thereby effectively removing the potential for unforeseen maintenance costs, if you can't see it then it must not be broken. By extending inspection intervals, carriers reduce costs associated with delayed or canceled flights, materials, and manpower. This is the result of Safety Management Systems (SMS) and Risk Based Oversight programs. All this makes sense on a "Bean Counters" spreadsheet but the fact is that because a failure of a system hasn't occurred in a given time frame doesn't mean that it won't fail at all. If you have package of 100 party balloons and you blow them up one by one, some may stretch further than others while some will explode sooner than expected; yet, maintenance programs seem to believe that all their balloons will have the same reliability.



AEI Congress

AMFA's affiliation with AEI has grown and will most certainly continue to do so as we increase the frequency of conference calls with AEI and continue to share information and data. In addition, increased regulatory meetings and press releases are planned with the goal being that all of the affiliates are speaking with one collective voice. As both the FAA and EASA continue to forge unilateral agreements regarding regulatory oversight and acceptance of Repair Data, these types of arrangements could potentially affect US jobs. The information received from AEI is passed onto AMFA's lobbyists so that we can effectively seek out and address stakeholders in Washington, DC.

So while we may be called mechanics, technicians, or engineers, and we may come from different countries, speak a different language, or wear a different uniform, the message from the carriers remains the same and unclear "SAFETY" or "COST"?





*By: Paul Kanitra
Lobbyit.com President*



Lobbyit.com has been extremely busy working AMFA-related issues, including SIDA badges, foreign repair stations, and the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing (ASIAS) program. Since early December, Lobbyit.com has positioned AMFA as a key contributor and participant in the upcoming ASIAS program – a joint initiative between the FAA, NTSB, and industry leaders and labor groups regarding improvements in aviation safety protocols. This program is intended to provide a

continuous and active pathway for dialogue and suggestions between aviation industry groups. AMFA recently learned of this program and wanted to become an active participant, which Lobbyit facilitated.

Further, Lobbyit has taken numerous meetings regarding SIDA badges and foreign repair stations, and has scheduled follow-up meetings to include Louie Key during his visit to Washington, DC in late January. Louie will be meeting with ASIAS officers at both the FAA and NTSB, as well as the offices of Congressman John Garamendi office and Senator Amy Klobuchar to discuss relevant AMFA concerns and opportunities to work together as the 113th Congress begins.



AMFA on Capitol Hill

Alaska Airlines Professional Standards



*By: Fred Digne
Former National Safety & Standards Director*

I would like to applaud Alaska Airlines management for having the vision to recognize the significance and the value of the AMFA Professional Standards Program.

Alaska Airlines

alaskaair.com

Recently, Alaska Airlines has signed a “Letter of Commitment” agreeing to support the Professional Standards Committee (PSC) at Locals 14 and 32. At Local 14, the Carrier will provide travel to all committee members while performing Professional Standards business as well as sharing the costs associated with traveling to an out-station. At Local 32, the Carrier has agreed to issue travel authority cards to PSC members to provide them the ability to travel and address issues at Alaska Airline stations assigned to the Local. This agreement, without a doubt, will enhance both Committee’s ability to accomplish the goal of “promoting and maintaining the highest degree of professional standards among Association members, officers, and representatives.”

Although the Local 14 PSC is the newest committee to be assembled, they are well on their way to setting a new standard for the program. While the Professional Standards Program at Southwest Airlines has been successful and well received by management, no formal written agreement has yet been presented. I am optimistic that a similar arrangement will be reached at Southwest Airlines as well as any of AMFA’s future carriers.

This agreement is the result of the hard work and dedication of Local 14 PSC Chairman Kevin Kruse; Local 14 officers Jarod Mills, Jason Munson, Marcus Smith; Airline Representative Mark Dahl; and AMFA Region I Director Earl Clark.

MEMBER TIP: The Law and Union Membership

Because of actions taken by state legislatures, twenty-four states -- in the South, Midwest and Southwest -- are “right to work” states. This commonly used term is actually quite misleading since the “right” given by these laws is not in any sense the right to be employed. Rather, those working in a “right to work” state have the “right” to enjoy some of the benefits of union protection without paying a cent for them.

*– Adapted from [The Union Members Complete Guide](#)
By: Michael Mauer*

Looking Back and Then Forward



*By: Justin Madden
National Secretary/Treasurer*



First of all, I am very proud to be serving you as the new National Secretary/Treasurer. Because of you and your support, I have been given the opportunity to better the Association as a National Officer. I consider it a great honor to be representing the Membership in this capacity and will strive to maintain the excellence that AMFA stands for. That imperative does not go unnoticed.

Before I continue, I would like to take this chance to wish our outgoing National Secretary/Treasurer the most success in his future endeavors. As a former Republic and then Northwest Airlines mechanic, Steven Nowak has certainly endured the ups and downs of this industry. His contributions to the Association will not be forgotten and I am sure you will join me in thanking Mr. Steve Nowak for his service and dedication. Best wishes to you and your family Steve!

The airline industry has surely changed since I entered almost two decades ago. After serving an honorable enlistment in the United States Marine Corps, I joined Trans World Airlines (TWA). While at TWA, I learned about AMFA from the Ozark mechanics that stayed on after the merger. The experiences with a class and craft based Union that they shared with me were memorable and stayed with me as I transitioned to Southwest Airlines (SWA).

When I arrived at SWA, there was different representation that left the Membership longing for three things in particular: first, direct control over their Local and primarily the finances of it; second, a democratic Union where Officers are elected instead of appointed; and third, open negotiations, where Members are invited to attend and participate in collective bargaining sessions. We started a card drive at SWA and the Members responded quickly and emphatically. We were excited that the concept of a class and craft Union had finally been realized at Southwest Airlines.

Fast forward to today, and I share that same excitement about our Association. Though the landscape of the airline industry has forever changed with the various mergers and loss of carriers, we are more productive than ever and are proud to hone and perfect our craft. Continuing the process of elevating the class and craft and bringing it to the next generation will require accountable leadership, effective communication, and most importantly, increased member participation.

Although challenges do face us, I believe that there are many positive things on AMFA's horizon and I'm looking forward to starting this journey. Right off the bat, I ask that you remain aware as we begin to utilize technology to its fullest. If you have not already, please "like" us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and make regular visits to the website at www.amfanational.org (and register to receive email updates) to stay connected. I wish each and every one of you and your families a happy and healthy 2013.

Region II Welcome and Update



*By: Michael Nelson
Region II Director*



First, I want to thank those of you who participated in the National Officer Elections. Our Association is structured so that each Member has the opportunity, and is encouraged, to provide input for change. I want to ensure you that I will be available to listen and bring those items forward.

For those of you who may not know, the Region Director is a part-time position and therefore, I will continue to work my line position in Kansas City in addition to fulfilling my duties as Region II Director. Adjustments have been made to allow me the ability to effectively serve the Membership.

Currently, I am formulating a layout of the current issues, building a contact network, and trying to get up to speed. I will be attending the on-going mechanics' negotiations at Southwest Airlines and assisting the Transition Committee that is working with National to reestablish Local 4 in Chicago. I also have the duty to assist all Locals in Region II and plan to be available at as many General Membership meetings as possible to answer questions related to National issues. Visiting with the Membership at Local Meetings and on the floor more frequently is an ambition of the new National Executive Council (NEC).

My goal as Region II Director is to earn the trust of the Membership and my objective is the betterment of each of you. I truly feel the new NEC will not disappoint. Furthermore, I am very hopeful that at the end of my term we will be the strongest and most driven group on our respective properties. I believe AMFA can get there and it all starts with earning your trust and respect.

Member Tip: Unionism is Not a Spectator Sport

Unions are far more than a kind of employment insurance policy for working people. Plenty of union members and union officials have learned the hard way that when workers come to think of their union as a business that provides service rather than a group of people banding together to fight for common interests, the union quickly loses the clout and credibility needed to defend and advance the members' interests. When an employer looks and sees only a small handful of paid union staff or elected union leaders, and no one standing behind them, pretty soon the employer starts thinking that "the union" isn't really much to contend with. And the truth is, that's right. If you want a strong, effective union, get involved!

*– Adapted from [The Union Members Complete Guide](#)
By: Michael Mauer*

2013 Dues Objector Notice

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, 2013, if you intend to be a dues objector for that year. Dues objector requests 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 2011 expenses was conducted, and the fees paid by dues objectors in 2012 were 96.99% percent of full membership dues.

If a dues objector disagrees with the calculation of the percentage of the reduction, the 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 to know 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 Office 14001 E. Iliff Ave, Suite 217, Aurora, CO 80014.

AMFA National

14001 East Iliff Avenue, Suite 217
Aurora, CO 80014



PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DETROIT MI
PERMIT NO. 1328

