



AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION

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Dear Members:

Since Southwest's announcement to purchase AirTran there has been a lot of speculation on how this will affect our SWA members and what will happen when the two groups combine at some point down the road. We have put out updates and this communication is intended to further those discussions and respond to some of the more frequently expressed concerns.

AMFA has formed a **Seniority Integration Committee** consisting of two representatives from each local. The members of the Committee are:

Local 11 – Lee Rhame and Craig Mobarack

Local 18 – Bob Cramer and Steve Lewis

Local 32 – Mike Young and Aaron Hansen

AMFA National – Jack Coonrod, Fred Digne, and Louie Key as Committee Chair

Legal Counsel – Lee Seham

We held a conference call on October 19, and will have our first face-to-face meeting on November 2, 2010.

I would like to thank those who have questioned their union officers regarding what is in store. I appreciate it when our members take the time to express their concerns to their union and not just complain without taking the opportunity to discuss their issues. Second, I want to ensure you and stress that the **Southwest members are first and foremost** in our concerns regarding SWA's decision to purchase AirTran.

Regarding that decision, SWA could have moved to simply buy the assets (aircraft/hangars/gates) and not bring the employees aboard; thus, making it mute as to employee seniority integration. However, SWA **chose** to impose this integration process on their existing employees. Now AMFA must respond as to how this **decision by SWA** will directly affect our members. This process **is covered by federal law and both contracts**.

Some have asked if it makes a difference if this deal is considered a merger or acquisition. Yes, in some cases it does make a difference; however, in this case there is no difference as it pertains to our members and our obligations under the McCaskill – Bond legislation, and there is no doubt that this is a “covered transaction” as contemplated under the legislation.

Prior to meeting with the IBT, our Seniority Integration Committee will convene to establish a position on how we will propose the integration to occur. In preparation, we are communicating with our legal counsel who has a great deal of experience with this process, and we are also meeting with SWAPA and talking to the other SWA unions on the matter.

There are many seniority integration models to refer to but one thing is for certain, if we are unable to negotiate a process that the IBT will agree to, and our members vote to accept (whatever we negotiate the **SWA members will be given the right to vote**), then the seniority integration process will be subject to binding arbitration. This means that the unions will present their best case to a neutral arbitrator and he will decide the outcome; therefore, there is **not a vote on that outcome**.

Our Committee may ultimately decide to take the position that the AirTran employees will be stapled to the bottom of the SWA Seniority list, which may be the easy position for our Committee to take because it is what some members state they want. But, due to federal law if we do, then we will most likely be heading to arbitration unless the IBT and AirTran employees agree to being stapled to the bottom. Our preference would be to keep the matter under our control and not turn it over to an unsympathetic third-party neutral arbitrator who has nothing at stake in the outcome.

Despite the above, **AMFA is by no means afraid of taking the case to arbitration**. And, as stated earlier, we have the most experienced legal team on this particular issue in the industry due to the fact they've been dealing with it in the US Air pilot seniority integration for the past several years and have taken it to federal court – **we will put on the best case possible for our SWA members**.

Another thing that is for certain, AMFA will continue the open communications, listening to our members, and protecting the concepts of democracy that are vitally important to all of our members.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louie Key".

Louie Key
National Director