



AMFA/Southwest Airlines Contract AMT Negotiations Update

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Participants for AMFA:

Earl Clark – Director, Region I
Michael Nelson – Director, Region II
Bob Cramer – Airline Representative, Local 4
Matt Townsend – Airline Representative, Local 11
Shane Flachman – Airline Representative, Local 18
Mike Young – Airline Representative, Local 32
Lucas Middlebrook – AMFA Counsel

Participants for Southwest Airlines:

Mike Ryan – VP, Labor Relations
Gerry Anderson – Sr. Director, Labor Relations
Scott Collings – Director, Central Region
Shawn Jensen – Director, MX Control Operations
Don Filippone – Sr. Manager, MX Training
Michelle Jordan – Director, Labor Relations
Mark Lyon – Sr. Manager, Labor Relations
Sam Moser – Manager, Financial Planning

The Negotiating Committee is providing this update to the AMFA Membership at Southwest Airlines. This report is the only official authorized source of negotiating communications by the Committee.

On Wednesday October 15, 2014, we met with the Company in Dallas, Texas for a scheduled two-day Aircraft Maintenance Technician (AMT) and Related negotiation session. Prior to this session the Committee exchanged correspondence with the Company as to the agenda for the session. The Company advised that it was working on proposals (counter) for articles 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20, and 24, and that they wanted to reopen the previously tentatively agreed (TA'd) to Article 7 to address language specific to the Technical Instructors. With the exception of Article 10, all of these articles have been worked on extensively and have undergone multiple passes from both sides. In addition, we had been waiting for a counter offer from the Company on most of these articles related to items we had open in each. The only articles that remain to be opened in these negotiations are Article 2: Scope, Article 14: Wage Rules – Shift Premiums – Longevity, Article 15: Wage Rates, and Letter of Agreement #1. It seemed like a logical plan during this session to work on the articles the Company had identified in an effort to TA so that the parties could move on to the major economic articles; however, the Company failed to clarify during the pre-bargaining correspondence that it only planned to address Maintenance Control and Technical Instructor specific language within each of these articles. We are in complete agreement that these issues need to be resolved, but in order for us to efficiently proceed on these specific items we have to have our Subject Matter Experts (SME) from those affected groups at the negotiation table.

The Company presented a proposal for Article 7: Training, which was basically a cut-and-paste section adding Technical Instructors to the bottom of the previously TA'd language. They then presented their Article 12: Leaves of Absence counter-proposal, in which they exercised the same cut-and-paste approach, only this time including the Controllers and Instructor specific additions. The Company then presented Article 13: Sick Leave and On-The-Job-Injuries which did not include any cut-and-pasted material, but did strike our proposal to change the bereavement leave from four (4) days to forty (40) hours. They then presented their counter offer for Article 20: Insurance Benefits where they reiterated that our group could not break the ice on any of these new concepts, and the best they could do was to offer us a “me too” clause in the event another group obtained the benefit. We feel, especially in these times of uncertainty, that it is very important to have language in our CBA that controls our healthcare costs. It is our opinion that any pay increases we achieve run the risk of being neutralized by the cost of rising healthcare premiums. Therefore, we must hold firm that we expect those costs to be capped. Yet, the Company contends it’s “not going there,” stating they will not alter the healthcare plans for any group.

After a committee caucus and lunch, we presented counter offers to the Company's article 12, 13, 20, and 7 proposals. Much of our counter offers omitted the cut-and-pasted sections that attempted to carve out Maintenance Controllers and Technical Instructors, and we actually identified where the majority of the Company's newly proposed language already existed in the current CBA. We informed the Company we had to hold on moving forward on some items until we contacted our SMEs. We were able to TA Article 7 yet again. We also advised the Company that we were holding firm on our Article 20 healthcare cost proposal; and with that we agreed to "Table" Article 20. The Company then asked for time to caucus.

The remainder of the two-day session was spent going back and forth on the items listed above, but there were a few items to highlight. First, in Article 10: Filling of Vacancies, the Company continues its position to strike the mandatory Inspector backfill language. The Company also acknowledged that it had decided to back off the two-year old 20-hour duty limit desire, but said we should expect to see proposals addressing similar concerns over an employee "scheduling" himself for more than 24 hours. The Company defended its cut-and-paste approach to several sections stating it was easier to find what applies to a Controller or Instructor if it is listed separately; however, we are not interested in the contract-within-a-contract approach to collective bargaining.

The next session is scheduled for November 12 and 13, 2014. We agreed that we need to finish the specific Controller and Instructor issues and, therefore, have scheduled – pending the availability of our SMEs – our next session to work on those items. We again would like to thank those who spent their own time to observe these negotiations. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact your representative. We appreciate your support and willingness to stay informed and remain united.

Sincerely,

Your Negotiating Committee