



# AMFA/Southwest Airlines Contract 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*  
*Michelle Jordan – Director, Labor Relations*  
*Mark Lyon – Sr. Manager, Labor Relations*

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.

We met for Aircraft Maintenance Technician and Related (AMT) negotiations on Wednesday, September 10 and the afternoon of Thursday, September 11. The Company began discussions by notifying us that they were prepared to present their counter offers for Article 11: Vacations, Article 12: Leaves of Absence, Article 13: Sick Leave and On-The-Job Injuries, and Article 20: Insurance Benefits. They began with their Article 12 counter offer where they omitted their request to install language detailing a three (3) year limit to any absences, which would result in an employee being removed from the seniority list. They then presented their Article 13 counter offer that included the denial of our proposed language allowing an employee to use their accrued sick time to care for an immediate family member. The Company explained this as a “no go,” but suggested we Tentatively Agree (TA) to the article and leave this issue on the side in case another workgroup is able to obtain this benefit. They then moved to explain their Article 11 counter offer where they said they are seeing the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) week of vacation being requested across the board with all groups in negotiations. They also said they were not ready to “go there” in regards to the vacation sellback or vacation bank programs we had proposed, stating no other workgroup was asking for these types of programs. The Company again stated they would like to TA articles with the items that we agree to and keep the items for which we are not in agreement on the side.

The Company, two years into this process, introduced a “new theme” during this session: the Company, your employer, does not feel you and your AMFA brethren (our workgroup) have the power to “break the ice” on any of the items we seek if they are viewed as a *new benefit*. It is your Committee’s perception that the Company’s new theme is premised on the idea that the Company would like to work through easy items so that their negotiating team can tout bargaining “progress” up the corporate ladder by symbolically “TA-ing” articles, but leaving controversial issues to the side to deal with at a later date. Rest assured, your Negotiating Committee neither buys into the Company’s new theme, nor will we be TA-ing articles in these negotiations unless the entire article has been completed. We are committed to presenting a vote-worthy package to the membership after the hard work has been accomplished, and we are not concerned with generating fabricated “progress” for the sole purpose of getting pats on the back. In addition, we vehemently disagree with the Company’s misplaced assertion that this group does not have the negotiating leverage to break the ice on any new issue. Your Committee is confident that we speak with a unified voice with our members and brethren on this issue – our solidarity is not to be underestimated!

The Company presented an Article 20 counter proposal, which rejected all of the increases we proposed to benefits, saying we would essentially be changing the benefits plans if they received our request. We also had discussions about Company leaders inappropriately negotiating with and polling our members on the floor. We have received notice that this has taken place in at least Dallas and Phoenix. Please notify your Union representative if you are subject to similar conduct. However, to alleviate any Company-generated ambiguity, the Company has NOT presented any proposal containing money. The only time pay has been discussed was in a short presentation about a Company “performance based bonus” philosophy, which we embraced with the same excitement as we did the Company’s new sick time policy presented months ago, which is off the table in these negotiations.

Following lunch we had another presentation on the EPIC maintenance program. We posed several questions that had been sent to the Company several months ago that we hoped would help us understand the impact of the program to the hangar and the line remain overnight (RON) work. There was much information exchanged and our questions were responded to, but when we asked, “if currently we perform an MV3 at line RON which is roughly 16 hours every 45 days and this is being replaced with an EPIC A check which is 30-40 hours every 30 days ?” ..... we didn’t get an answer to what changes they have planned for our workgroup. They seem to be very guarded and we need to know more before we can even begin to discuss the Article 2: Scope proposal they say is coming. Productive negotiations are not fostered by hiding the ball – transparency, which the Company has yet to facilitate in these negotiations, is critical.

We did TA Article 12 for the second time in two years, and on Thursday afternoon we presented our counter offers for articles 5- Hours of Service, 11, and 20. Our counter offers produced a comment from the Company that the negotiations had reached a “tit-for-tat” level, and after the Company caucused they returned to inform us that they felt there may be a need on their side to present a comprehensive package, including economics, to put all the pieces of their proposals together to move the process forward. They said they may present this package at our next session.

Thank you to the observers who participated in this session. We invite everyone to exercise their rights under the AMFA Constitution to observe negotiations. The next session will be in Dallas, TX on October 15 and 16. This should be an interesting session to attend and see for yourself whether your Vice President or Manager is giving you accurate information on the hangar floor.

Sincerely,

Your Negotiating Committee