

FAR 145 Still a Threat to U.S. Airline Workers!

At the TWU 23rd Constitutional Convention on Sept 14-18, 2009, 40 resolutions were adopted which cover issues from retiree health care to global environmental issues. Resolution 10 applies specifically to those of us here at American Airlines as it addresses unfair practices of "outsourced aircraft maintenance". Background info is this: As of last May, the FAA Reauthorization Act (HR 915), which passed the House of Representatives, aims to put an end to the loopholes allowing foreign repair stations to operate under less oversight with no drug testing of maintenance workers and with radical disparities between standards of workmanship at US based and foreign aircraft repair stations. Also US based repair stations are subject to routine unannounced safety inspections by FAA inspectors while foreign repair stations avoid this necessary type of oversight. The Bush Administration undermined the ability of front-line FAA inspectors to provide the oversight of contract repair stations located abroad, a fact which has been documented by the Department of Transportation (DOT), Inspector General (IG). The resolution acknowledges the critical importance of correcting the imbalances between the standards imposed on US based repair stations and foreign repair stations and resolves

that they will be made equitable by the following specific resolution: to continue to advocate to close the loopholes allowing foreign repair stations to operate without the necessary oversight, without the necessary drug and alcohol testing for maintenance personnel, and without a uniform standard of maintenance protocol across all foreign repair stations that are working on US certified and US bound aircraft. Resolution #10 goes on to affirm that TWU will continue to inform its members, the flying public, and Congress of the security risks involved with having such lax standards for mechanics at foreign based aircraft repair stations. It resolves to work with members of Congress to ensure that the Senate version of the FAA Reauthorization Act mandates drug and alcohol testing for mechanics at foreign repair stations and requires a twice yearly inspection by the FAA, with the goal of presenting a bill to President Obama this year, and with his signature finally ending the disparities between standards imposed on US based and foreign based aircraft repair stations. Senator Jim Inhofe was a supporter of TWU when we fought FAR 145 rule changes in the late 1980s. Please contact him now to ensure he understands and supports our position on this critical issue.

Resolution 10 Outsourced Aircraft Maintenance

It is of critical importance that the imbalances between the standards imposed on U.S.-based repair stations and foreign repair stations be made uniform. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act (H.R. 915), which passed the House of Representatives in May, aims to put an end to the loopholes allowing foreign repair stations to operate under less oversight, with no drug testing of maintenance workers, and with radical disparities between standards of workmanship at

U.S.-based and foreign aircraft repair stations. Mechanics at U.S. facilities, whether employed at U.S. carriers or at third party contractors, are subject to stringent drug and alcohol testing as safety-sensitive workers. However, mechanics at foreign repair stations are not required to meet any uniform standard for drug and alcohol testing, despite the fact that they are doing the exact same work on the exact same aircraft.

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Additionally, while U.S.-based repair stations are subject to routine unannounced safety inspections by FAA inspectors, foreign repair stations avoid this necessary type of oversight. These visits ensure that standard keeping is routine and not simply a show. The Bush Administration undermined the ability of front-line FAA inspectors to provide oversight of contract repair stations located abroad, a fact which has been documented by the Department of Transportation (DOT) Inspector General (IG). This has lead some in the industry to partner with the European Union (EU) in opposition of these necessary safety inspection measures. They argue that foreign countries will inspect these facilities based on Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreements (BASA), but we reject this argument because it places the American flying public at risk.

To maintain the safety of aviation workers and the flying public, there can be absolutely no substitute for direct FAA oversight of the work performed on U.S. aircraft. In this time of great economic strain in our country, air carriers seeking to cut costs are increasingly contracting out their repair work to foreign repair stations - over 60% of aircraft maintenance is contracted out- and it is likely that this trend will continue to grow.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transport Workers Union of America will continue to advocate to close the loopholes allowing foreign repair stations to operate without the necessary oversight, without the necessary drug and alcohol testing for maintenance personnel, and without a uniform standard of maintenance protocol across all foreign repair stations that are working on U.S. certified and U.S. bound aircraft.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that TWU will continue to work with Members of Congress to ensure that the Senate version of the FAA Reauthorization Act mandates drug and alcohol testing for mechanics at foreign repair stations and requires twice yearly inspections by the FAA, with the goal of presenting a bill to President Obama this year, and with his signature, finally ending the disparities between standards imposed on U.S. based and foreign based aircraft repair stations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that TWU will continue to inform its members, the public and Congress of the security risks involved with having such lax standards for mechanics at foreign based aircraft repair stations.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the FAA Administrator, President Obama, the leaders of the Congress, and the AFL-CIO President.

Newly Elected TWU International Officers

James C. Little was elected International President of the Transport Workers Union of America

Harry Lombardo was elected Executive Vice President

Joseph C. Gordon was elected Secretary-Treasurer

Hubert Snead and Susan Resch were elected Administrative Vice Presidents

Executive Council Vice Presidents

John Bland
Jeff Brooks
Gary Drummond
J.W. Johnson
Thom McDaniel
Gary Maslanka
Barry Roberts
John Conley
Steve Luis
Roger Toussaint
James Whalen
Curtis Tate
Marsha Spinowitz

Carl Martin
Chuck Cerf
Gary Shults
Willie Brown
Ed Watt

Executive Board

Darrin Pierce
Ben Morgan
Steve Gilboy
Gordon Clark
Bob Zimmerman
Dan Rivera
Tom Lee
Kevin Smith
Portia White
Dave Virella
Donny Tyndall
John Plowman
Don Wright

Charles Little
John Feltz
Don May
Enzo Sinowna
Alice Goodman
Andreeva Pinder
Tom Lenane
Nelson Rivera
David Gollinger
Eddie McLeod
Irwin Lum
Carlos Padilla
Orton Reynolds
Robert Romaine
Jerome Lafragola
Sean Doyle
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Executive Council

Richie Boehm
Richie Adams
Pat Bowden
Brian Clarke