



Air Transport Local 591
Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO

1905 Stone Myers Parkway, Grapevine, Texas 76051

Office: 817-591-4290

May 24, 2024

To the TWU Local 591 Membership:

On behalf of the Local 591 Executive Board, I would like to wish our AMT's a Happy AMT Day. May 24th is a day dedicated to recognizing the dedication to safety and professionalism that it takes to be an Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT).

This AMT Day, in addition to celebrating a proud profession, we can finally celebrate the passing of the language of the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act by both the House and Senate of Congress and signed into Law by President Biden. That language was incorporated within the FAA Reauthorization Bill. The language from the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act finally becoming Law comes with a great amount of pride for Local 591. Your Local, with the assistance of TWU International and their government affairs office, led all Unions in pushing this bipartisan legislation that will start to level the playing field between foreign maintenance facilities with those in the United States from a regulatory perspective. In other words, the facilities American has chosen to outsource maintenance to will now face the same level of scrutiny from the FAA that we do. They also will be required to have the same drug and alcohol testing that we are required to take. Our expectation is that a leveling of the playing field that removes many foreign non-regulatory advantages will result in jobs starting to flow back to the United States and also in-house.

That said whether through the legislation or the bargaining table we need to demand that the overhaul check work is done in AA facilities. Just today on jetnet American called our AMT's "***The World's Greatest Aviation Maintenance Technicians,***" and I wholeheartedly agree with that statement; however, and know I speak for all AMT's who prefer the greatest AMT's in the world doing all of the overhaul checks instead of the majority being done by foreign and domestic MRO's who do not rank as the world's greatest.

It is also pastime AA puts their money where their mouth is with wages. We are "***The World's Greatest Aviation Maintenance Technicians,***" whose wages are fourth out of the four legacy airlines, and sixth if you include Alaska and JetBlue. These large pay disparities are a big reason why the M&R Negotiating Committee was proactive and prepped for negotiations early, and also why on May 1st the Association filed on our behalf the required section six notice to AA to commence negotiations. American has the ability to fix the inequities we are seeing rather quickly by setting up dates for negotiations, so we can begin the bargaining process. I can speak without hesitation for our negotiating committee, and especially the three Local 591 negotiators, that we are fully committed to achieving the best contract for not just the AMT's, but all our Members in Local 591.

To highlight these inequities, just recently Delta Airlines announced they will raise wages by 5%, which now puts a Delta AMT \$5 an hour ahead of an AA AMT. Southwest this August

will be earning nearly \$8 an hour more than an AA AMT. Alaska Airlines will also be \$8 an hour higher than an AA AMT come this fall. And JetBlue announced this week new wage rates that take effect in July that will push them \$3.50 an hour ahead of AA AMT's. Finally, United Airlines AMTs overwhelmingly rejected an extension to their contract that, with their VEBA \$1.20 an hour active/retiree healthcare contribution, would have placed them over \$9 an hour ahead of AA AMT's by years end. I do realize when you have pay disparities of this level, and based on the promises we heard from the former CEO that he wouldn't allow disparities of this size, the rumors circulating saying that American has offered an extension that would solve for the pay difference by putting us back at the top of the industry; however, no such extension proposal was ever offered to your negotiating committee. The longer the pay disparity continues, the harder it will be for American to attract new AMTs to replace those retiring, and that doesn't go well for the airlines future, as without AMTs, the airline would not be able to operate.

In fact, American's leadership stated such today in an AMT Day letter: "*The airline could not operate without the essential work you do.*" It is with that fact that we need to adjust our perspective on professionalism and raise our expectations contractually. There is nothing wrong with embracing that AMTs are an indispensable part of the company, and without AMTs the airline simply cannot function. Our APA pilots approach their profession with this very same mindset. Much like the pilots, we also must approach our job at all times with a commitment to professionalism. That commitment to being professional entails working safe at all times and ensuring our crew and passengers are safe. Professionalism requires being compliant with the manuals, policies, procedures and CFR's. As professionals, and especially for those entering the profession, you have a responsibility to stop and ask when you are unsure of how to accomplish the task, or demanding the proper number of people, tooling, or PPE to perform the task at hand. Lastly, if someone impedes your ability to be 100% compliant when performing a task, understand that Local 591 will be there to assist you with filing an ASAP or in some cases an AIR21 whistleblower complaint, because no matter how much time-pressure you feel that you might be under, safety and compliance must always come before schedule.

Finally, I am happy to report that since AMT Day 2023, 675 AMTs have been hired at American, of which 130 are Members of Local 591. To those new Local 591 Members celebrating their first AMT Day, or perhaps their first AMT Day at American, welcome to Local 591 and Happy AMT Day. As I do each AMT Day, I would ask all AMTs to please use this day to recommit to the integrity and professionalism that is required to be an AMT and most importantly to never lose sight of enormous responsibility that you have as an AMT.

Faternally,



Gary Schaible
President
TWU Local 591