



**TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA  
AFL /CIO**

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Local 562

JFK-LGA-EWR-PHL-SJU-BOS

[www.twu562.org](http://www.twu562.org)

November 13, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Local 562;

On Monday November 15th the M&R and MLS Negotiating Committees will meet with Mediator Jake Kane for the first time since the rejection of the TAs by both contract groups on August 24th. Our intentions are to resume negotiations with our new table position with the company ASAP, preferably before the year is out. While I think that the vote sent a clear message to both the company and the International we must be prepared to go further if we expect a deal that can bring us real financial relief from the 2003 concessions. Once our proposals are presented to the company we will once again release them to the membership.

While I'm disappointed that the mechanics at Continental opted to accept what amounts to an extension of their concessionary package they did make some modest gains and we must consider the conditions under which that contract was accepted. The merger between CAL and UAL is still in the works, the workforces have not been blended and CAL inserted some merger protection language. The merger of these two workforces could present an opportunity for them to readdress their contract once we pass them up. While the IBT represents both workgroups there reportedly are drives at both carriers for AMFA. Once the two groups are combined the IBT will have to rationalize why they feel that \$46.99 is inadequate for an IBT A&P at EWR that works a 767 for UPS but \$36 is good enough for an IBT A&P working a 767 at EWR for CAL. With AMFA represented SWA earning \$43/hr and most of the heavy OH outsourced as well, the IBT will have to do better or risk losing the new UAL.

At the request of the President of Local 564 Steve Gukelberger and I went out to California this past week and walked the floor of LAX, SAN and SFO. We discussed the TA and our plans going forward with the objective of bringing their expectations up to ours. The margin for rejection out in California was not nearly as great as ours which was over 90%. We assured them that our members in the Northeast face the same financial challenges as they do and reaffirmed our commitment to insure that Geo Pay is included in the final contract.

In other news the company and the union recently came to an agreement on the Internationals 29D in reference to allowing upgrades to fill line maintenance vacancies. The settlement was agreed to by the full Presidents council. The more I look at this the more I'm convinced that my decision to vote against this settlement was the right choice. Admittedly some of what I will share here was not brought forward at the unscheduled short notice meeting that took place to vote on this issue. As I've admitted before I don't like when decisions are rushed upon me because I realize my limitations, sometimes I need time to analyze what the end results can be. The settlement basically says that the experience requirement for line maintenance has been reduced to zero; this means that the experience requirement for line maintenance is lower than Title II and Stores. It's a degradation of standards for AMTs.

Back in 2001 the Junior Mechanic program was eliminated; this concession was hardly noticed at the time. The Junior Mechanic program had been a part of the agreement for many decades and it provided TWU members from other departments the opportunity to upgrade from other classifications to AMT. Problems had arisen when the company abused the program and basically tried to use it to create another B-scale. Junior mechanics were being used as regular AMTs. They included Junior Mechanics in the headcount as AMTs, were assigning them to work alone and even had Junior Mechanics who were RII. Agreeing to eliminate the Junior Mechanic program while leaving in language that would allow people from other classifications to upgrade to an AMT was a colossal mistake, it was compounded when the International insisted that no experience was required for TWU members to upgrade via Article 12. It set the stage for what we see now and what we will likely see in the future.

As I've reported there is a shortage of A&Ps in the industry. Plummeting wages, disappearing benefits and waves of bankruptcy filings have made this industry unappealing to people with the skill sets we have. The union has, hopefully unwittingly, played into the hands of the company and degraded the profession, giving them an avenue to keep our wages low.

More than half the A&P schools in this country have closed their doors since 2003. Since 2003 the FAA has been issuing on average less than 6000 original maintenance certificates a year. An A&P holds two