



April 2, 2009

A Word About Unions and the Future

Dear Brothers and Sisters;

Brother Lueders and I have discussed what is occurring with American Flight Service Specialists on a few occasions and he has asked me for any insight from my experiences with the Canadian conversion.

You hear often, usually from people that have no idea what they are talking about, that Unions are no longer required, archaic, monolithic, and out of touch with reality. Considering what is going on locally, domestically and nationally in terms of economic chaos and to the Aviation Industry itself, this statement could not be further from the truth.

A Union is a democratic bond between all of its members. It has strength, purpose, a voice and most importantly, power. The more unified a union is, the more power that union has. Power to represent its members. Power to provide a stable, educated work force. Power to negotiate. Power to protect those it serves; both the members and in Flight Services case, the flying public.

The most important right a person in a union has is to vote. This is your voice. This is where the individual is counted. This is where you have a say. Ensure that you take care of yourself; your employer won't do it. In fact, they prefer if you remain quiet, do as your told, and follow instructions. Follow them right out the door. Cast your vote, protect yourself and get yourself heard.

Companies and corporations have a single purpose, to make a profit. Rarely, if ever, are they worried about other issues such as equipment, infrastructure, employees, safety, etc. If they have to sacrifice one of the aforementioned issues to fulfill their purpose, they do. Are there any examples otherwise?

Unions have never been more important. The requirement to collectively bargain to protect your employment, working conditions and your future are vital, especially now. A collective agreement provides guidance and a clear and equal playing field to all those that it applies to, to ensure equality and transparency. It will protect the members if it comes to forced layoffs or departure packages.

It is a misconception that one does not need a union; that one can do better than those within a union. Perhaps one thinks they are better off looking in, rather than looking out. Self-entitlement and favoritism begins to permeate until fear and manipulation are common traits in the workplace. I guarantee without a union, one will never be doing better and in the end, you will all be looking out.

Fraternally,



Derek Yakielashek
President