



P R E S S R E L E A S E

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

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Southwest Pilots Union Begins Strike Preparedness

DALLAS – The Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) today announced staffing and funding for a Strike Preparedness Committee. The committee will work closely with professional outside consultants, staff, other committees and resources of the union to prepare the pilots of Southwest and the flying public for all contingencies available under the Railway Labor Act (RLA) if SWAPA and Southwest Airlines cannot come to an agreement on a new contract in the coming months. The pilots and company have been engaged in federally-mediated talks through the National Mediation Board (NMB) since November in hopes of closing out remaining open items including pay, retirement, scheduling, and job scope.

“While a strike is certainly not in either side’s best interest, the Railway Labor Act clearly defines the procedure for protracted negotiations which can lead to a lock out by management or a suspension of service by our pilots. SWAPA is doing our due diligence to prepare our pilots and passengers for the next steps in this federal mediation process should we not be able to reach a deal” said SWAPA President Capt. Paul Jackson. “We have been in negotiations for more than three years and are seeking a market rate contract for pilots that is in line, economically, with our peers at other major airlines.”

SWAPA’s Strike Preparedness Committee is structured to and tasked with educating SWAPA members and the general public on future steps of the negotiating process, formulating contingency plans for potential job action situations, and maintaining relationships with other airline groups who have self-help experience. They will work in conjunction with the Outreach Committee, which will host events nationwide to talk to pilots and their families about the status of negotiations and the preparations needed should negotiations not come to a conclusion and SWAPA is released by the NMB to proceed to self-help.

“Despite astronomical profits and record-setting forecasts for the coming years, Southwest Airlines management has not come forward with an economic offer that can bring both sides to an agreement,” continued Jackson. “Our offer is very affordable and would not impact the company’s competitive low-cost advantage. It is time for a deal.”

Located in Dallas, Texas, the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization representing the more than 8,000 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through negotiating contracts, defending contractual rights and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association, visit www.swapa.org.