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Machinists Withdraw From Comair ASAP Program

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) District 142 today announced it has withdrawn from the maintenance Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) at Delta Air Lines' regional subsidiary Comair.

"We have discussed the problems with this dysfunctional program with both Comair and the FAA for months," said IAM District 142 President Tom Higginbotham. "We no longer have any faith that this program will ever be managed according to the regulations."

The ASAP program, a joint initiative between the Machinists Union, Comair and the FAA in place since 2008, was designed to identify potential aircraft maintenance-related safety issues and develop corrective actions to improve air transportation safety. The program is dependant upon technicians submitting reports which are then reviewed by an Event Review Committee (ERC) comprised of FAA, Comair and Machinists Union representatives. The ERC then identifies any problems or systemic issues and develop corrective solutions to prevent a future reoccurrence.

The ASAP program is designed to take place without the reporting technician having to fear any punitive or disciplinary actions. Comair has taken actions against Machinist Union members who have submitted voluntary reports, contrary to the letter and spirit of the FAA's ASAP program. Additionally, Comair has failed to provide a collaborative environment needed for an effective program to work.

"We should not have to wait for an accident to occur before addressing safety issues," said Higginbotham. "We are disappointed that Comair failed to take this program, which is effective and runs well at over 35 other carriers, seriously."

IAM District 142 represents 530 Comair Mechanic and Related employees in Cincinnati, OH; Boston, MA; New York, NY; Greensboro and Raleigh-Durham, NC and Detroit, MI. More information about the IAM at Comair is available at www.iamdl142.org.